

**UPPER ELKHORN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
February 22, 2021 -- 2:30 P.M.  
O'Neill, Nebraska**

**CALL TO ORDER, STATEMENT OF ADVERTISEMENT AND OPEN MEETING LAW NOTIFICATION:**

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order. The statement of advertisement; and, the open meetings law posting were all noted at 2:30 P.M. by Chairman Michael Moser.

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:**

Kevin Blair	Chris Dierks	Cody Frank	Marv Fritz
Curtis Gotschall (Zoom)	Keith Heithoff	Gene Kelly	Michael Moser
Roy Stewart	Art Tanderup	John Vogel	Chip Whitaker

**DIRECTORS ABSENT:**

Gary Bartak	Jim Keller	Aaron Rice
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**STAFF PRESENT:**

Dennis Schueth - General Manager  
Joslynn Vanderslice - Water Resources Manager  
Kelly Kloppenborg - Water Resources Technician  
Wayne Frederick - Water Resources Technician  
Brett Sholes - Agronomy Resource Technician  
Beth Walsh - Information & Education Coordinator  
Andrea Fisher - Administrative Assistant – Zoom  
Aron Lewis – Forestry, Wildlife, Resource Conservationist - Zoom

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Brandon Peterson – NRCS O'Neill  
Amy Timmerman – UNL Extension - Zoom

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**

⇒ It was moved by Gene Kelly and seconded by Keith Heithoff to adopt the agenda. **AYE:** Blair, Dierks, Frank, Fritz, Gotschall, Heithoff, Kelly, Moser, Stewart, Tanderup, Vogel & Whitaker. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT FROM VOTE:** Bartak, Keller & Rice. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**MINUTES:**

The minutes of the January Meeting were reviewed by the Directors. ⇒ It was moved by Roy Stewart and seconded by Chris Dierks to approve the minutes of the January Meeting. **AYE:** Blair, Dierks, Frank, Fritz, Gotschall, Heithoff, Kelly, Moser, Stewart, Tanderup, Vogel & Whitaker. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT FROM VOTE:** Bartak, Keller & Rice. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**TREASURERS REPORT:**

The January treasurers report was reviewed by the Directors. ⇒ It was moved by Chris Dierks and seconded by Gene Kelly to approve the January Treasurers Report. **AYE:** Blair, Dierks, Frank, Fritz, Gotschall, Heithoff, Kelly, Moser, Stewart, Tanderup, Vogel & Whitaker. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT FROM VOTE:** Bartak, Keller & Rice. **MOTION CARRIED.**

## **PUBLIC FORUM-INPUT:**

None

## **CHARLES WORTMAN PROFESSOR OF AGRONOMY: IRRIGATION WELL WATER: ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS, LIME AND OTHER:**

Professor Charles Wortman, joined the meeting via Zoom, to present a summary of their findings from water sampling during the 2020 irrigation season. Prof. Wortman reviewed the mineral results in the irrigation water samples and what the benefits would be when applied to the crop during the growing season. The analysis of a fields irrigation water will allow producers to credit certain minerals to their crops during the growing season; and, determine what nutrients might be missing.

## **AGENCY & STAFF REPORTS:**

**NARD Report:** Gene Kelly attended the NARD board meeting following the abbreviated NARD Legislative Conference. Gene reported that the NARD benefits program and Risk Pool look good. The NARD has received all of the insurance payments from the damage caused during the peaceful protests/mobs which occurred last May in Lincoln. The compensation was better than expected. Gene also reviewed the breakdown of funding for the new building. A summary of the legislative bills acted upon at the NARD Legislative Conference was also in the directors packets.

**DNR Report:** No Report.

**NRCS Report:** Brandon Peterson's report was mailed out prior to the board meeting. Brandon reported that they will be re-ranking EQIP applications due to a glitch in the program. General signup for CRP ended February 19 and CSP general sign-up will end March 26. The February 10 meeting of the local workgroup went very well and there were only a few minor changes for 2022. Brandon also reported that the O'Neill office is in Covid Phase 2 of re-opening. Cooperators are allowed in by appointment. The Neligh office is still in Phase I which means that customers are not allowed into the office. Facemasks are required in both buildings by order of President Biden. Brandon reported that the NRD/NRCS Unfunded Cooperative Agreement was updated to reflect a couple of clarifications. The updates do not change the agreement and it will need Dennis' signature. ⇒ **It was moved by Gene Kelly and seconded by John Vogel to approve the updates to the NRD/NRCS Unfunded Cooperative Agreement for signature. AYE: Blair, Dierks, Frank, Fritz, Gotschall, Heithoff, Kelly, Moser, Stewart, Tanderup, Vogel & Whitaker. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT FROM VOTE: Bartak, Keller & Rice. MOTION CARRIED.**

## **RC&D Report:**

**North Central RC&D:** No Report.

**Loup Basin RC&D:** No Report.

**Northeast RC&D:** No Report.

**Information & Education Report:** Beth Walsh's report was mailed out in the Directors packets. Beth reported that updates to the Director contact information, committee assignments and NRD officers and representatives were placed in the director folders. A question regarding the status of the website was asked. Beth reported that with Power Pages being bought out we will have to look into upgrading the current website information or developing a new site. She will be gathering this information regarding the website for the April Personnel, Equipment, Promotion and Education committee meeting.

**Water Resources Department Reports:** Joslynn Vanderslice's report was mailed out in the Directors packets. Joslynn reported that they had 91 cooperators attend the Nitrogen Certification meetings February 16 & 17. They had very good comments from the class which included NRCS Soil Survey Staff, Aaron Hird's, presentation on soil health. Cooperators can also receive their certification by attending one of the virtual Bazile Groundwater Management Program meetings. The first virtual meeting was held February 19<sup>th</sup> with 54 participants. The two remaining virtual meetings are scheduled for February 26 and March 5 from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM.

**Bazile Groundwater Management Area Report:** Whitney Gappa has been hired as the new Bazile Groundwater Management Coordinator. There are two remaining virtual winter meetings being sponsored by the Bazile GW Management project scheduled for February 26 and March 5 both starting at 12:00 noon.

**Holt County Extension Agent:** Amy Timmerman reported via Zoom. Amy reported that they were very happy with the turnout for the first virtual meeting sponsored by the BGMA. Forty-one surveys were returned out of the 54 participants with several stating they would use the information that had been provided during the presentation. Chemigation training is underway. Amy is also looking into cover crop seeding plots for the upcoming growing season.

#### **EXCUSED ABSENCES:**

⇒ It was moved by Chris Dierks and seconded by Keith Heithoff to excuse the absence of Gary Bartak, Jim Keller & Aaron Rice. **AYE:** Blair, Dierks, Frank, Fritz, Gotschall, Heithoff, Kelly, Moser, Stewart, Tanderup, Vogel & Whitaker. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT FROM VOTE:** Bartak, Keller & Rice. **MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

##### **Legislative, Finance and Planning:**

- **Action on Current bills and Cost Share Requests:** The Committee met prior to the Board meeting and reviewed the current bills. ⇒ It was moved by Roy Stewart and seconded by John Vogel to approve the current bills for payment. **AYE:** Blair, Dierks, Frank, Fritz, Gotschall, Heithoff, Kelly, Moser, Stewart, Tanderup, Vogel & Whitaker. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT FROM VOTE:** Bartak, Keller & Rice. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**Water Resources & Watershed:** The Committee met prior to the Board meeting.

- **General Discussion:** Marv Fritz reported that the committee reviewed two transfer applications. ⇒ It was moved by Marv Fritz and seconded by Chris Dierks to approve the Groundwater Irrigated Acre Transfer requests pending completion of all the paperwork. **AYE:** Blair, Dierks, Frank, Fritz, Gotschall, Heithoff, Moser, Stewart, Tanderup, Vogel & Whitaker. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Kelly. **ABSENT FROM VOTE:** Bartak, Keller & Rice. **MOTION CARRIED.** Brett Sholes, UENRD Agronomy Resource Technician, gave an update on the Phase III cooperator meetings he has conducted. He reported that there have not been any negative issues and that there is always an educational component to the meetings. The Water Department have received good feedback regarding Aaron Hird's presentation during the Nitrogen Certification meetings. The NRD is still missing approximately 700 Phase II reports from the 2020 growing season. Staff will continue to try and contact these cooperators to complete their reports. The Water Department will also be looking into the possibility of combining current water resources software programs so they can be utilized together.

### **COALITION/TASK FORCE UPDATE:**

**Niobrara River Basin Alliance:** There is a meeting scheduled for March 2 in Lincoln with Nebraska DNR Director Tom Riley. This meeting was postponed from January due to the weather.

**Lower Platte River Basin Water Management Plan Coalition:** The annual report for the coalition is due March 1. A copy should be available for the Directors at the next board meeting.

**Nebraska Habitat Conservation Coalition (Piping Plover):** No Report.

**Nebraska Ground Water Management Coalition:** No Report

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:**

Dennis Schueth's report was mailed out in the Director's packets and a copy is kept on file at the NRD office. Dennis reported that the Lower Niobrara NRD will be hosting a Director Responsibility Seminar Zoom meeting March 1 at 2:00 PM at the Butte Community building. This meeting will be conducted by attorney Don Blankenau and will review the overall responsibilities for NRD Directors. You may either attend by Zoom or in person.

Following the Administrative Report, ⇨ **It was moved by Keith Heithoff and seconded by Roy Stewart to go into Executive Session.** Since this item was not on the agenda, the motion was not acted upon at this meeting.

### **MARCH BOARD MEETING:**

The next Upper Elkhorn NRD Board Meeting will be held on March 22, 2021 at 2:30 PM.

⇨ **It was moved by Keith Heithoff and seconded by Gene Kelly to adjourn at 3:38 PM. AYE: Blair, Dierks, Frank, Fritz, Gotschall, Heithoff, Kelly, Moser, Stewart, Tanderup, Vogel & Whitaker. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT FROM VOTE: Bartak, Keller & Rice. MOTION CARRIED.**

I, the undersigned Chairman of the Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the proceedings had and done by the Board of Directors on February 22, 2021 that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior to said meeting, the minutes of the Chairman and the Board were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days and prior to the next convened meeting of said body, that all news media requesting notification of the time and place of said meeting and the subjects to be discussed at said meeting.

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Gene Kelly, Secretary/Treasurer