

**UPPER ELKHORN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
September 22, 2025 -- 7:00 P.M.
O'Neill, Nebraska**

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

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order. The statement of advertisement and the open meetings act were all noted at 7:05 P.M. by Secretary/Treasurer Gene Kelly.

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Bruce Anderson	Matt Beckman	Kevin Blair	Cody Frank	Marv Fritz
Curtis Gotschall	Trevor Gotschall	Gene Kelly	Tony Sanderson	Cameron Smith
Art Tanderup	John Vogel			

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Chris Dierks	Aaron Rice	Allen Schueth
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STAFF PRESENT:

Dennis Schueth - General Manager
Jeff Langan - Administrative Secretary
Joslynn VanDerslice - Water Resources Manager
Wayne Frederick – Water Resources Technician
Beth Walsh - Information & Education/Chemigation Coordinator

GUESTS PRESENT:

Brandon Peterson, NRCS – O'Neill

AGENDA:

⇒It was moved by Bruce Anderson and seconded by Tony Sanderson to adopt the agenda. **AYE:** Anderson, Beckman, Blair, Frank, Fritz, C. Gotschall, T. Gotschall, Kelly, Sanderson, Smith, Tanderup & Vogel. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT:** Dierks, Rice & Schueth. **MOTION CARRIED.**

AUGUST 20TH BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES:

⇒It was moved by Curtis Gotschall and seconded by Art Tanderup to approve the minutes of the August Budget Workshop meeting. **AYE:** Anderson, Beckman, Blair, C. Gotschall, T. Gotschall, Kelly, Sanderson, Smith, Tanderup & Vogel. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Frank & Fritz. **ABSENT:** Dierks, Rice & Schueth. **MOTION CARRIED.**

AUGUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

⇒It was moved by Trevor Gotschall and seconded by Matt Beckman to approve the minutes of the August Board Meeting. **AYE:** Anderson, Beckman, Blair, Frank, C. Gotschall, T. Gotschall, Sanderson, Smith, Tanderup & Vogel. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Fritz & Kelly. **ABSENT:** Dierks, Rice & Schueth. **MOTION CARRIED.**

TREASURERS REPORT:

⇒It was moved by Trevor Gotschall and seconded by Tony Sanderson to approve the August Treasurers Report. **AYE:** Anderson, Beckman, Blair, Frank, Fritz, C. Gotschall, T. Gotschall, Kelly, Sanderson, Smith, Tanderup & Vogel. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT:** Dierks, Rice & Schueth. **MOTION CARRIED.**

PUBLIC FORUM-INPUT OR COMMENTS:

None

AGENCY & STAFF REPORTS:

NARD Report: Gene Kelly reported that he has a Zoom Meeting September 23. The NARD Annual Conference is being held September 29 & 30 in Kearney.

NeDWEE Report: No Report.

NRCS Report: Brandon Peterson's report was mailed out to the Directors. Brandon reported that they have 19 EQIP contracts worth \$1.9 million on 10,457 acres. They will be making some changes to the NWQI ranking which will put it more in line with what they would like to accomplish. They were able to fund 4 CSP contracts worth \$303,448 on a total of 15,973 acres. They have accepted 123 CRP offers and are getting interim plans signed so they can work on the contracts at a later date. Brandon also noted we are hosting the North Central Land Judging contest October 15 and the State Range Judging contest will be in Keya Paha County September 24. Brandon handed out the Unfunded Cooperative Agreement between the NRCS and UENRD for the Boards review. ⇨ **It was moved by John Vogel and seconded by Marv Fritz to authorize Dennis Schueth to sign the Unfunded Cooperative Agreement when it is completed. AYE: Anderson, Beckman, Blair, Frank, Fritz, C. Gotschall, T. Gotschall, Kelly, Sanderson, Smith, Tanderup & Vogel. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Dierks, Rice & Schueth. MOTION CARRIED.**

RC&D Reports:

North Central RC&D: Marv Fritz reported that they met on September 10th. They have submitted the grants for the tire amnesty for Springview and O'Neill. Champion out of Kansas will be in charge of collecting and hauling the tires. There will also be a shredding event on Highway 12 on October 20, 2025.

Loup Basin RC&D: No Report.

Northeast RC&D: Art Tanderup reported that they are working on an electronic recycling event and looking into different grants for the RC&D. They are also planning a bus tour in Cedar County of the vanishing ghost towns.

Information & Education Report: Beth Walsh's report was mailed out in the Director's packets. Beth reviewed the Directors attending the NARD Annual Conference in Kearney and provided their hotel confirmation numbers.

Water Resources Report: Joslynn VanDerslice's report was mailed out in the Director's packets. Joslynn reported that Producer Connect training dates have been set. The training will run from 10 AM to 2 PM with an overview of the Producer Connect program being held at 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM during each session. They will also be including some nitrogen certification data during these meetings. Due to these training sessions, Phase II reminder letters will be going out in October instead of November.

Bazile Management Report: Joslynn VanDerslice reported that they will be having another field day with Junior Pfanstiel touring his regenerative ag plots. She also reported that herself, Connor Baldwin (LENRD), Connie McCarthy (LNNRD) and Amy Timmerman (UNL Extension) on behalf of the Bazile Groundwater Management Area presented at the Great Plains Water Conference September 18 in Omaha, NE. There have also been requests for this presentation at other upcoming conferences. Dennis Schueth reported that they are getting ready to advertise for the open Bazile Management Area Coordinator position.

UNL Extension: The UNL HR department is still working on the work permit to get the new Extension Educator eligible for his position.

EXCUSED ABSENCES:

⇒ It was moved by John Vogel and seconded by Bruce Anderson to excuse Chris Dierks, Aaron Rice and Allen Schueth. AYE: Anderson, Beckman, Blair, Frank, Fritz, C. Gotschall, T. Gotschall, Kelly, Sanderson, Smith, Tanderup & Vogel. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Dierks, Rice & Schueth. MOTION CARRIED.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Legislative, Finance and Planning:

Action on Current Bills and Cost Share Requests: The Legislative, Finance and Planning Committee met prior to the Board meeting and reviewed all the bills, fuel receipts, credit card receipts, accounts receivable and bank statements. ⇒ It was moved by Marv Fritz and seconded by Tony Sanderson to approve the current bills for payment. AYE: Anderson, Beckman, Blair, Frank, Fritz, C. Gotschall, T. Gotschall, Kelly, Sanderson, Smith, Tanderup & Vogel. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Dierks, Rice & Schueth. MOTION CARRIED.

Water Quality and Watershed: The Committee met prior to the board meeting. John Vogel reported that the Committee discussed acre expansion, the Heiss situation with the delay in getting the Board of Education well permit approved in 2022 and the reverse osmosis program. The weather station on the Gotschall ground has been installed. Joslynn VanDerslice confirmed at the board meeting that the weather station has come on line and shared the link with the board members.

- **October Acre Expansion for 2025:** ⇒ It was moved by Matt Beckman and seconded by Curtis Gotschall to hold an Expansion of Groundwater Irrigated Acres sign-up during the month of October 2025 for up to 150 new groundwater irrigated acres with the focus on pies to finish pivots but not excluding other potential forms of expansion using the same criteria as last year. AYE: Anderson, Beckman, Blair, Frank, Fritz, C. Gotschall, T. Gotschall, Kelly, Sanderson, Smith & Tanderup. NAY: Vogel. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Dierks, Rice & Schueth. MOTION CARRIED.
- **Groundwater Irrigated Acre Certification and Groundwater Acre Transfers:** None.
- **NiRIA and Nitrogen Use Efficiency Program:** Dennis Schueth reported that there has been a lot of discussion surrounding this program with Nebraska Department of Water, Energy & Environment and the Committee of NRD Managers designated to review the project. The Committee has also been informed that the Corn Board is committing \$1 million for the 2026 growing season. A new Nitrogen Use Efficiency Incentive Program (NUEIP) is also being developed and Corn Board is contributing an additional \$1 million for this new program also. A draft outline of what the informative guideline and application would look like was shared with the board. The objective is to try and get producers to improve their nitrogen use efficiency below the UNL recommendation of 1.2lbs of nitrogen per bushel to .8 lbs of nitrogen per bushel using all available credits. It has been stated by many producers that they are below this 1.2 lbs of nitrogen but they may not be taking all available credits from residual nitrogen in the soil or ground water.

ACTION ON UENRD FY 25-26 BUDGET:

- **Resolution to Set FY 25-26 Tax Asking and Setting Mill-levy:** Gene Kelly presented the resolution to set the tax asking and mill levy for the FY 25-26 budget. ⇒ It was moved by Curtis Gotschall and seconded by Marv Fritz to adopt the Resolution for setting the Tax Request and Mill-Levy for the FY 25-26 UENRD Budget. AYE: Anderson, Beckman, Frank, Fritz, C. Gotschall, T. Gotschall, Kelly, Sanderson, Smith, Tanderup & Vogel. NAY: Blair. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Dierks, Rice & Schueth. MOTION CARRIED. A copy of this resolution is attached to the minutes.

COALITION/TASK FORCE UPDATE:

- **Niobrara River Basin Alliance:** Dennis Schueth reported that the LR 158 Interim Study Hearing scheduled for September 19 was cancelled. The senator who scheduled the hearing had a family issue and was unable to hold the hearing.
- **Lower Platte River Basin Water Management Plan Coalition:** No Report.
- **Nebraska Habitat Conservation Coalition (Piping Plover):** No Report.
- **Nebraska Ground Water Management Coalition:** No Report.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:

Dennis Schueth's report was mailed out to the directors prior to the board meeting in their packets. A copy is included with the official copy of the minutes in the office. Dennis reported that our new employee Grant Mathis and his wife had their baby. Grant is planning to call in on September 24, to discuss when he will be able to start. He also updated the board on a situation with a landowner pumping lagoon water to a field and it was noted that this is part of his Livestock Waste Control Plan.

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING: The next regular meeting of the Upper Elkhorn NRD Board of Directors will be held October 27, 2025 at the NRD office in O'Neill.

⇒It was moved by John Vogel and seconded by Matt Beckman to adjourn at 8:18 PM. **AYE:** Anderson, Beckman, Blair, Frank, Fritz, C. Gotschall, T. Gotschall, Kelly, Sanderson, Smith, Tanderup & Vogel. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT:** Dierks, Rice & Schueth. **MOTION CARRIED.**

I, the undersigned Secretary 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 September 22, 2025 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.

Gene Kelly, Secretary/Treasurer

RESOLUTION/MOTION SETTING TAX REQUEST & MILL-LEVY FOR 2025-2026 FISCAL YEAR

WHEREAS, Nebraska Revised Statute 77-1601.02 provides that the property tax request for the prior year shall be the property tax request for the current year for purposes of the levy set by the County Board of Equalization unless the Governing Body of the Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District (District) passes by a majority vote resolution or ordinance setting the tax request at a different amount; and

WHEREAS, a special public hearing was held as required by law to hear and consider comments concerning the property tax request; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the District that the property tax request for the FY25-26 be lower than the property tax request for FY24-25.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District, in the COUNTY of Holt, Nebraska in accordance with State Statute 77-1601-02, by a majority vote, resolves that:

1. The Property tax request for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025 is set at **\$1,459,979.24**.
2. The total assessed value of property differs from last year's total assessed value by **21.00%**
3. The tax rate which would levy the same amount of property taxes as last year, when multiplied by the new total assessed value of property, would be a mill levy of .023974 or 2.41 cents per \$100.
4. The Upper Elkhorn NRD will adopt a property tax request that will cause its tax rate to be .021720 or 2.17 cents per \$100.
5. Based on the property tax request and changes in other revenue, the total operating budget of Upper Elkhorn NRD will increase from last year's budget by 10.77% but overall tax asking went down 9%.
6. A copy of this resolution shall be certified and forwarded to the County Clerk prior to October 15, 2025.

7. Motion to adopt FY25-26 Budget Resolution by:

Motion by: Curtis Gotschall **Seconded by:** Marv Fritz

Voting Aye: Bruce Anderson, Matt Beckman, Cody Frank, Curtis Gotschall, Trevor Gotschall, Gene Kelly, Tony Sanderson, Cameron Smith, Art Tanderup and John Vogel

Voting Nay: Kevin Blair

Absent: Chris Dierks Aaron Rice & Allen Schueth

Vote Count: Aye: 11 Naye: 1 Absent: 3

Adopted this 22nd day of September, 2025

Secretary Treasurer
Thomas E. Kelly
Or other board member of the UENRD

General Manager of UENRD
Dennis Schueth