

**UPPER ELKHORN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
March 23, 2026 -- 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 at 2:35 P.M. by Chairman Trevor Gotschall. The public notice and Open Meetings Act were all noted by the Chairman.

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:**

Matt Beckman	Kevin Blair	Chris Dierks	Cody Frank	Curtis Gotschall
Trevor Gotschall	Gene Kelly	Aaron Rice	Tony Sanderson	Allen Schueth
Art Tanderup	John Vogel			

**DIRECTORS ABSENT:**

Bruce Anderson      Marv Fritz      Cameron Smith

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Dennis Schueth - General Manager  
Joslynn VanDerslice - Water Resources Manager  
Brett Sholes – Agronomy Resources Technician  
Wayne Frederick - Water Resources Technician  
Grant Mathis – Water Resources Technician

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Brandon Peterson – O'Neill NRCS Office  
Chuck Burr – University of Nebraska  
Helen Tanderup – Neligh

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**

⇒ It was moved by Chris Dierks and seconded by Allen Schueth to adopt the agenda. **AYE:** Beckman, Blair, Dierks, Frank, C. Gotschall, Kelly, Rice, Sanderson, Schueth, Tanderup & Vogel. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT:** Anderson, Fritz, & Smith. **MOTION CARRIED.** Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.

**MINUTES:**

The minutes of the February Board Meeting were reviewed by the Directors. ⇒ It was moved by Art Tanderup and seconded by Chris Dierks to approve the minutes of the February Meeting. **AYE:** Beckman, Blair, Dierks, Frank, C. Gotschall, Kelly, Rice, Sanderson, Schueth & Tanderup. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Vogel. **ABSENT:** Anderson, Fritz, & Smith. **MOTION CARRIED.** Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.

**TREASURERS REPORT:**

The February treasurer's report was reviewed by the Directors. ⇒ It was moved by Curtis Gotschall and seconded by Matt Beckman to approve the February Treasurers Report. **AYE:** Beckman, Blair, Dierks, Frank, C. Gotschall, Kelly, Rice, Sanderson, Schueth, Tanderup & Vogel. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT:** Anderson, Fritz, & Smith. **MOTION CARRIED.** Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.

**PUBLIC FORUM – INPUT:**

**Chuck Burr, University of Nebraska TAPS:** Chuck Burr attended the UENRD board meeting to present information on the history and results of the Testing Agricultural Performance Solutions (TAPS) program. TAPS

was first started in 2017 as a corn competition by the University of Nebraska at the West Central Research, Extension and Education Center (WCREEC) in North Platte, NE. Since then, TAPS has expanded locations across Nebraska and into other states and into multiple crops. In 2026 there will be 10 states hosting TAPS competitions. Chuck showcased results from previous competitions and changes producers have made since TAPS started. An additional new opportunity Chuck has been working on is VTAPS. VTAPS is a program and curriculum for high school agricultural teachers to integrate into their classes that allow students to virtually participate in the TAPS program on a digital platform. This program will help provide information to students about the data needed and decisions to be made when farming. There will be trainings held across Nebraska this summer to train teachers. Chuck asked if the NRD would help spread the word and possibly help support agriculture teachers to get them to the trainings. The nearest training to UENRD will be held at Haskell Ag Lab in Concord, NE.

### **AGENCY & STAFF REPORTS:**

**NARD Report:** Gene Kelly reported that the NARD board met on March 8 & 9. Gene gave an update on the finances. Other items Gene reported on included: the foundation sponsorships; NARD award nominations; the proposed budgets for 2026-2027 and 2027-2028; LB 1219; the NRD recreation exploration program; ACE Camp; State and National Envirothon; and Nebraska Ag Institute dates. Officer elections were held and the new officers are as follows: Ryan Rueter – President; Mason Hoffman – Vice President; Deb VanMatre – Secretary-Treasurer; Marty Graft – Past President; Paul Bethune – Legislative Committee Chair; & Deb Hansen – Information and Education Committee Chair.

**DWEE Report:** Chris Dierks reported that the Commission met February 25<sup>th</sup> in Kearney. Chris reviewed the status of the financials as of the February meeting. Chris noted the Commission won't know what funds are all going to be available until budgetary decisions are made in the Legislature.

**NRCS Report:** Brandon Peterson's report was handed out to the Directors at the board meeting. Brandon reported that they are ranking EQIP applications, but a deadline hasn't been announced yet. Brandon said there is now EQIP funding for virtual fencing if anyone is interested in applying. Brandon also reported while there has been no official word yet, it is expected there will be a special EQIP signup for individual affected by the wildfires. Brandon also mentioned the Secretary of Agriculture was in Nebraska today touring the fire areas.

### **RC&D Report:**

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

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

**Northeast RC&D:** Art Tanderup reported that they are waiting to hear on their NET grant application yet and discussing funding opportunities for projects. Art also reported the Northeast RC&D is working on updating their bylaws.

**Information & Education Report:** Beth Walsh's report was mailed out in the Directors packets.

**Water Resources Report:** Joslynn VanDerslice's report was mailed out in the Directors packets. Joslynn reported on Phase II reporting and program updates with Longitude 103; spring static water level measurements have started; 4 applications are ready for payment in the Nitrate Treatment Program; and the UENRD Lower Platte River Basin Report will be reviewed in April.

**Bazile Management Area:** Marcus Blunck & Pablo Duarte's reports was mailed out in the Directors packets. Joslynn VanDerslice reported Pablo is looking for on farm research sites and anyone interested should reach out to him.

**UNL - Holt County Extension:** No Report.

**EXCUSED ABSENCES:**

⇒ It was moved by Chris Dierks and seconded by John Vogel to excuse the absence of Bruce Anderson, Marv Fritz, and Cameron Smith. **AYE:** Beckman, Blair, Dierks, Frank, C. Gotschall, Kelly, Rice, Sanderson, Schueth, Tanderup & Vogel. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT:** Anderson, Fritz, & Smith. **MOTION CARRIED.** Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Legislative, Finance and Planning:**

- 1. Action on Current bills and Cost Share Requests:** The Committee met prior to the board meeting and reviewed the current bills, bank statements and accounts receivable. ⇒ It was moved by Trevor Gotschall and seconded by Gene Kelly to approve the current bills for payment. **AYE:** Beckman, Blair, Dierks, Frank, C. Gotschall, Kelly, Rice, Sanderson, Schueth, Tanderup & Vogel. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT:** Anderson, Fritz, & Smith. **MOTION CARRIED.** Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.

**Water Resources & Watershed:** John Vogel reported that the committee met prior to the board meeting and had also met March 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss rules and regulations and NUE guidelines.

- 1. Groundwater Irrigated Acre Certification and Groundwater Acre Transfers:** No Report.
- 2. March 16<sup>th</sup> Committee Update:** The Committee met March 16<sup>th</sup> and discussed changes to rules and regulations.
- 3. NUE/NiRIA Guidelines:** The Committee discussed any additional guidelines for the NUE program. The additional guidelines are similar to the ones established for NiRIA.

**COALITION/TASK FORCE UPDATE:**

**Niobrara River Basin Alliance:** Dennis Schueth reported that the Spencer Dam is gone and almost all of the construction to deconstruct it is complete.

**Lower Platte River Basin Water Management Plan Coalition:** The annual meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2026, in Wahoo which will involve the UENRD representatives to this coalition Tony Sanderson and Curtis Gotschall.

**Nebraska Habitat Conservation Coalition (Piping Plover):** The annual meeting will be held April 13, 2026 via Zoom.

**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 also reported and Cody Frank had requested a discussion on soil sampling. Cody discussed his view on the presentation from Lower Loup NRD last month being a good report card for those producers and he would like to do something similar in UENRD. Conversation discussed the likelihood of doing a project like this and if it was possible for 2026 or would be something to start in 2027. Dennis also reported he has reached out to Lower Loup as they are expanding into Wheeler County in 2026.

**APRIL BOARD MEETING:**

The next meeting of the Upper Elkhorn NRD Board of Directors is April 27, 2026, at 7:00 PM.

⇒ It was moved by John Vogel and seconded by Cody Frank to adjourn at 4:03 PM. AYE: Beckman, Blair, Dierks, Frank, C. Gotschall, Kelly, Rice, Sanderson, Schueth, Tanderup & Vogel. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Anderson, Fritz, & Smith. MOTION CARRIED. Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.

I, the undersigned Secretary/Treasurer 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 March 23, 2026 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