UPPER ELKHORN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
September 21, 2026 -- 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 7:03 P.M. by Chairman Trevor Gotschall.

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Bruce Anderson	Matt Beckman(arr. 7:09)	Kevin Blair	Chris Dierks	Marv Fritz
Curtis Gotschall	Trevor Gotschall	Gene Kelly	Aaron Rice	Allen Schueth
Cameron Smith	Art Tanderup			

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Cody Frank	Tony Sanderson	John Vogel

STAFF PRESENT:
Dennis Schueth - General Manager
Jeff Langan - Administrative Secretary
Joslynn VanDerslice - Water Resources Manager
Wayne Frederick – Water Resources Technician
Grant Mathis – Water Resources Technician
Brett Sholes – Agronomy Resources Technician
Beth Walsh - Information & Education/Chemigation Coordinator

GUESTS PRESENT:
Brandon Peterson, NRCS – O'Neill
Amy Timmerman – UNL Extension

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

AUGUST 18TH BUDGET WORKSHIP MINUTES:
⇨**It was moved by Art Tanderup and seconded by Chris Dierks to approve the amended minutes of the August Budget Workshop meeting. AYE: Anderson, Blair, Dierks, Fritz, Schueth, Smith & Tanderup. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: C. Gotschall, Kelly & Rice. ABSENT: Beckman, Frank, Sanderson & Vogel. MOTION CARRIED. Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.**

AUGUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES:
⇨**It was moved by Marv Fritz and seconded by Gene Kelly to approve the minutes of the August Board Meeting. AYE: Anderson, Blair, Dierks, Fritz, C. Gotschall, Kelly, Rice, Schueth, Smith & Tanderup. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Beckman, Frank, Sanderson & Vogel. MOTION CARRIED. Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.**

TREASURERS REPORT:

⇨It was moved by Gene Kelly and seconded by Cameron Smith to approve the August Treasurers Report. AYE: Anderson, Blair, Dierks, Fritz, C. Gotschall, Kelly, Rice, Schueth, Smith & Tanderup. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Beckman, Frank, Sanderson & Vogel. MOTION CARRIED. Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.

Matt Beckman arrived at 7:09 P.M.

PUBLIC FORUM-INPUT OR COMMENTS:

None

AGENCY & STAFF REPORTS:

NARD Report: Gene Kelly reported that he has a Zoom Meeting September 22. The NARD Annual Conference is being held September 28 & 29 in Kearney. Gene reported that there are 3 resolutions to be discussed and voted on at the conference. The first one is 2026-1 submitted by the Upper Niobrara White NRD regarding the Chemigation Program. This resolution proposes that the NRDs take over all Chemigation activity from DWEE. Discussion was held regarding the extra workload that the NRDs would have and the lack of legal support if DWEE is not longer part of the program. The second resolution was submitted by Lower Platte South NRD regarding the reporting of expenditures. And, the third resolution was submitted by Lower Platte South NRD regarding the issuance of bonds.

NeDWEE Report: The Commission will be meeting on Tuesday, September 29, 2026 following the NARD Conference.

NRCS Report: Brandon Peterson's report was mailed out to the Directors. Brandon reported that the cutoff date for EQIP and CSP will be October 16. There will be a new way of evaluating applications with a prioritization tool which will hopefully be a more locally led way of funding contracts. They are busy working on Grassland CRP contracts which is proving difficult since their computer program is down. They will complete them with either new plans or interim plans. The Spencer DC position will hopefully be filled soon. The DCs will also be attending the NARD Annual Conference and the Legislative Conference.

RC&D Reports:

North Central RC&D: Marv Fritz reported that they met on September 9th. They are having paper shredding events on September 24 and 28 and are also trying to get more battery recycling boxes to distribute across the RC&D area. The RC&D has acquired pallets from CVA for electronic recycling. They will be having a trial run at some point in time. Marv has been working to get one of the recycled tire benches to the O'Neill area. They are planning to drop one of the benches off next time they are in the area.

Loup Basin RC&D: No Report.

Northeast RC&D: Art Tanderup reported that they met on August 25 and had a presentation by Jamie Bachmann. They have applied for a hazardous waste grant and are also planning to participate in the battery recycling boxes. They also held a murder mystery cemetery bus tour across Antelope and Pierce counties which was well attended. Some the NE RC&D Council are planning to attend the Loess Hills RC&D's next meeting to see what activities they are working on in their area.

Information & Education Report: Beth Walsh's report was mailed out in the Director's packets. Beth reminded Directors attending the conference that if they have a change in their plans, they will need to contact the hotel themselves.

Water Resources Report: Joslynn VanDerslice's report was mailed out in the Director's packets. Joslynn reported that she has been busy working on the rules and regulations. Water samples are still being collected, Grant Mathis has been out measuring elevations at the monitoring wells and Brett Sholes is out gathering field information for the Phase III sampling program. The deadline for phase II reports is December 31 and reminder letters will be going out in November.

Bazile Management Report: Marcus Blunck, BGMA Coordinator, and Pablo Duarte Hernandez, UNL Extension Educator reports were included in the Directors mailing.

UNL Extension: Amy Timmerman, UNL Extension, thanked the UENRD for sending staff to help with the Area 2 Range Judging contest held near Valentine. They had 386 students compete that day. Amy noted that there are many hazardous chemicals around the state that need to be properly disposed of; however, with the different issues surrounding the different chemicals it is hard to know how to properly get rid of them. Amy also noted that there have been reports of shallow kernels in the corn crops which is decreasing the number of bushels per acre. She will also be starting on winter programing if any of the Directors have suggestions for her.

EXCUSED ABSENCES:

⇨**It was moved by Gene Kelly and seconded by Matt Beckman to excuse the absences of Cody Frank, Tony Sanderson and John Vogel. AYE: Anderson, Beckman, Blair, Dierks, Fritz, C. Gotschall, Kelly, Rice, Schueth, Smith & Tanderup. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Frank, Sanderson & Vogel. MOTION CARRIED. Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.**

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 Bruce Anderson to approve the current bills for payment. AYE: Anderson, Beckman, Blair, Dierks, Fritz, C. Gotschall, Kelly, Rice, Schueth, Smith & Tanderup. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Frank, Sanderson & Vogel. MOTION CARRIED. Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.** There was a question regarding the medical supplies bill for the medicine cabinet. Should the district be getting the supplies from a vendor or should they be purchasing what is needed locally. Staff will look into the expenses and report back.

Water Quality and Watershed: The Committee met prior to the board meeting. Curtis Gotschall reported that the Committee discussed the final draft of the Groundwater Management Plan Rules and Regulations. ⇨**It was moved by Curtis Gotschall and seconded by Gene Kelly to approve the revised GWMP Rules and Regulations and prepare them for public hearing on October 26, 2026 at 4:00 PM. AYE: Anderson, Beckman, Blair, Dierks, Fritz, C. Gotschall, Kelly, Rice, Schueth, Smith & Tanderup. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Frank, Sanderson & Vogel. MOTION CARRIED. Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.** It was also noted that the revised rules and regulations would not become effective until January 1, 2027. Joslynn VanDerslice, Water Resources Manager, reviewed the main changes to the GWMP Rules and Regulations which included:

- Cleanup of definitions
- Updates to the enforcement section
- Restructure & renumber rules to make more user friendly
- Update references to DEE and DNR to DWEE
- Grammatical updates
- Updates to District Phase Levels

- Bring in and updates to Phase Level Designations and Controls into the Rules as part of Groundwater Controls, not separate section
- Updates to Phase III Trigger Levels to account for organic matter
- Include specific wording requiring the landowner/POA signs well permits
- Update the Nitrogen Certification expiration date from Dec. 31 to March 1
- Update Phase Level Report Requirements – update to using Producer Connect
- Updates to terminology in transfers section to clarify use of the word transfer
- Updated the Hydrologic Evaluation section – made it part of water wells permits section
- Cleanup of duplicated rules
- Added Upper Elkhorn NRD Moratorium and Stay Designations Map as an Appendix

Since there were no further comments from the board members, the public hearing will be held prior to the board meeting at 4:00 P.M. at the UENRD office in O'Neill, October 26, 2026.

ACTION ON UENRD FY 26-27 PROPERTY TAX ASKING AND SETTING OF THE MILL LEVY:

- **Resolution to Set FY 26-27 Property Tax Asking and Setting Mill-levy:** Dennis Schueth presented the resolution to set the tax asking and mill levy for the FY 26-27 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 26-27 UENRD Budget. AYE: Anderson, Beckman, Blair, Dierks, Fritz, C. Gotschall, Kelly, Rice, Schueth, Smith & Tanderup. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Frank, Sanderson & Vogel. MOTION CARRIED. Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.** A copy of this resolution is attached to the minutes.

COALITION/TASK FORCE UPDATE:

- **Niobrara River Basin Alliance:** No Report.
- **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 there have been some issues with the phones in the Spencer Service Center. Brandon Peterson, District Conservationist, reported that the service centers have been issued new phone numbers which are being routed through their computers. Dennis commented that these numbers have a 512 prefix and appear as spam. This may be an issue in the future when trying to reach cooperators,

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING: The next regular meeting of the Upper Elkhorn NRD Board of Directors will be held October 26, 2026 at the NRD office in O'Neill.

⇨**It was moved by Art Tanderup and seconded by Chris Dierks to adjourn at 8:15 PM. AYE: Anderson, Beckman, Blair, Dierks, Fritz, C. Gotschall, Kelly, Rice, Schueth, Smith & Tanderup. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Frank, Sanderson & Vogel. MOTION CARRIED. Chairman T. Gotschall not voting.**

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 21, 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

RESOLUTION/MOTION SETTING TAX REQUEST & MILL-LEVY FOR 2026-2027 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 FY26-27 be higher than the property tax request for FY25-26.

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, 2026 is set at **$1,541,777.76.**

2. The total assessed value of property differs from last year's total assessed value by **4.65**%

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 .020755 or 2.08 cents per $100.

4. The Upper Elkhorn NRD will adopt a property tax request that will cause its mill levy to be **.021918** or 2.19 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 9% and overall tax asking went up 5.6%.

6. A copy of this resolution shall be certified and forwarded to the County Clerk prior to October 15, 2026.

7. Motion to adopt the Budget Resolution for the FY26-27 Budget, tax asking and setting mill-levy.

Motion by Thomas E. Kelly **Seconded by:** Marv Fritz

Voting Aye: Bruce Anderson, Matt Beckman, Kevin Blair, Chris Dierks, Marv Fritz, Curtis Gotshall, Thomas E. Kelly, Aaron Rice, Allen Schueth, Cameron Smith and Art Tanderup

Voting Nay-No vote: Trevor Gotshall

Absent: Cody Frank, Tony Sanderson and John Vogel

Vote Count: Aye: 10 Naye/no vote: 1 Absent: 4

Adopted 21st day of September 2026

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UENRD Secretary Treasurer
Thomas E. Kelly

General Manager of UENRD
Dennis Schueth