

MINUTES

Nebraska Environmental Trust
Grants Committee Meeting
Thursday, December 11, 2025
1:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order

Grants Committee Chair Coleman called the Grants Committee meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. in Suite 310 at 2077 N St, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Advanced notice of the meeting was published in the Lincoln Journal Star on December 4, 2025. The agenda and documents to be considered at the meeting were provided. The Open Meetings Act was posted near the meeting room entrance and on the Nebraska Environmental Trust website.

Roll call was conducted, and a quorum was present.

Members Present (4):

District I: Jeff Kanger, Lincoln

District II: Grants Committee Chair Garfield Coleman, Omaha

District III: Josh Andersen, Edgar; Rod Christen, Steinauer

Members Absent (2):

State Agency Representative: Jesse Bradley, Director, Nebraska Department of Water, Energy & Environment; Tim McCoy, Director, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

Staff Present:

Holly Adams, Executive Director; Lana Merani, Grants Administrator; Madison Moe, Grants Assistant; Karen Plautz-Castro, Administrative Specialist

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of October 16, 2025, Grants Committee Meeting Minutes

Motion by Christen, seconded by Kanger, "I move to approve the October 16, 2025, Grants Committee meeting minutes."

Discussion: None.

Voting Aye: Andersen, Christen, Kanger, Coleman

4 Voted Aye. Motion carried.

4. Grants Committee determinations and recommendations for funding for 2026 Grant Applications

Executive Director Adams briefly explained the scoring process wherein the Board members had utilized the Rank Scoring system via the NET Grants Portal to score applicants (71 total) using previously established criteria and awarded each one a score out of 50 possible points. It was noted for clarification that some scores, wherein the score was to be based solely on historical data, was entered on behalf of the Grants Committee by NET staff. Executive Director Adams also brought to the Committee's attention that some of the applicant's requested dollar amounts had been adjusted to account for NET's cap on Administration Expenses (if requested, the amount must be either \$10,000 or 5%, whichever is less). Also, Title 137 states that "projects which receive fewer than 25%

of the maximum points will not be funded,” but there were no applications that fell below the 25% threshold. Executive Director Adams discussed what types of cutlines for awarding applications were used by previous Grants Committees (examples of prior cutlines: an average of the points, Olympic scoring, utilizing the bell curve to establish a cutline at one standard deviation off from the peak of the bell curve, etcetera). The Grants Committee is under no obligation to establish a cutline which limits the number of awardees but is granted the power to do so under NET’s Rules & Regulations.

Motion by Andersen, seconded by Christen, “I make a motion that the grant applications must have at least 30 points or more to be considered for available funding.”

Discussion: Discussion was had regarding previous cutlines and whether it was appropriate or not to award all projects for which NET has available funding. It was noted that there was over \$25 million in funding which could be awarded to grantees, but there was only about \$23 million in requested funding. Discussion concluded that this Grants Committee was aiming to prioritize and reward applicants with quality applications and would therefore endeavor to establish a qualitative cutline. Discussion was had regarding multiple options for possible cutlines which would take into consideration the pros and cons of various qualitative cuts based upon the scores. After careful consideration of the alternative options for cutlines and the data regarding the distribution of scores – with particular attention paid to the total amount of points available, the peak data on the bell curve, and the location on the bell curve where there was a fall-off in the number of points scored – the Grants Committee ultimately chose a cutline of 30 points due to the drop-off in perceived application quality for those applications that were scored below 30 points out of the 50 points possible.

Voting Aye: Kanger, Andersen, Christen, Coleman

4 Voted Aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Christen, seconded by Andersen, “I move that the Grants Committee recommends projects 26-109, 26-166, 26-134, 26-107, 26-113, 26-168, 26-157, 26-140, 26-160, 26-112, 26-106, 26-122, 26-120, 26-114, 26-145, 26-131, 26-137, 26-115, 26-117, 26-151, 26-161, 26-167, 26-116, 26-149, 26-148, 26-102, 26-170, 26-150, 26-164, 26-169, 26-143, 26-165, 26-138, 26-163, 26-139, 26-162, 26-172, 26-123, 26-136, 26-147, 26-154, 26-126, 26-141, 26-130, 26-173, 26-133, 26-124, 26-125, 26-128, 26-108, 26-110, 26-105, and 26-171 for the full amount eligible and to be moved on for consideration by the Nebraska Environmental Trust Board.”

Discussion: None.

Voting Aye: Christen, Kanger, Andersen, Coleman

4 Voted Aye. Motion carried.

5. Next Meeting

The next Grants Committee date has yet to be determined.

6. Adjourn

Chair Coleman adjourned the meeting at 2:09 p.m.



Holly Adams, Executive Director