

INTERVIEW WITH LARRY MOORE  
BY JOHN TURNBULL

September 10, 2013

1           MR. BARR: This is Jim Barr. It's September 10<sup>th</sup>,  
2           2013, in York. John Turnbull is going to be interviewing  
3           Larry Moore.

4           MR. TURNBULL: All right, we'll get started. So,  
5           we're going to talk a little bit about the formation of NRDs  
6           and legislation. Were you involved at all with the soil  
7           conservation districts or predecessors to the NRDs or  
8           involved in any of the discussion leading up to the  
9           legislation?

10          MR. MOORE: Yeah, my uncle was one of the first  
11          district conservationists in Nebraska. He worked up in the  
12          Dixon County area before the war. He graduated in 1941 in  
13          June, so his term was pretty short his first hitch and then  
14          he made it his lifelong career, so I was always exposed to  
15          this from then. And I grew up tagging along behind Ray  
16          Burke. And, of course, Ray was Mr. Conservation in this  
17          area. He's the one that really got me started. 1955, I was  
18          probably 14 years old or so, we drilled an irrigation well.  
19          And I'd never thought about what's down there and Ray was  
20          running the test hole and he was bringing up the samples and  
21          putting all the piles of everything out there in a row. And  
22          time we got down 270 feet, I'd had a real awakening as to  
23          what was underneath us. And I worked with Ray some in high  
24          school and some in college, and then after I started  
25          farming, Ray did a lot of work for us and now I

1 (indiscernible) for Ray. So, when the NRDs were getting  
2 formed, I really didn't know what they were doing, but I  
3 knew he was gone a lot to a lot of meetings and he was  
4 talking about who he was seeing, who he'd been with, and so  
5 they were names that when I got into the -- active on the  
6 board, they were people that I recognized the names and knew  
7 who they were and kind of where they came from. And then I  
8 had a little bit of contact with Bruce Anderson (phonetic),  
9 because Bruce and Ray were neighbors, and we hauled some  
10 dirt up there. So I guess I don't know when I didn't know  
11 Ray Burke or Bruce Anderson. It's one of those kind of  
12 deals.

13 MR. TURNBULL: Well, Larry, I got to know Bruce,  
14 of course, when I came to work here for the district, but  
15 we, at one time, gave Bruce an award for 50 years of public  
16 service on conservation and NRD boards, continuous service.  
17 And that was, what, two, three years before he died, I  
18 think.

19 MR. MOORE: Yeah. He went clear back. Well,  
20 whenever SWCDs were formed, he was probably a charter member  
21 up there.

22 MR. TURNBULL: He would have been on the Polk  
23 County SWCD.

24 MR. MOORE: At least a member of the organization,  
25 probably a board member.

1 MR. TURNBULL: I think he was on the board.

2 MR. MOORE: I know he was on the board for a long  
3 time, but he was probably involved even before that as a  
4 worker with them.

5 MR. TURNBULL: Were you involved at all with any  
6 of the work at the Legislature?

7 MR. MOORE: No, at that time, I already hadn't got  
8 into that part. I knew what was going on, just like I said,  
9 from listening to Ray and (indiscernible) knows Ray. And I  
10 knew what 1357 was and I knew Maurice Kremer, but I didn't  
11 really understand -- and I had some connections with the  
12 water districts through my cousin, Dale Moore, and we had  
13 talked about forming one of those in Butler County. And we  
14 didn't, because it sounded like this was going to happen.  
15 So, I guess I didn't know what was going on, but I wasn't  
16 really directly there. I was just kind of around the edges  
17 of it.

18 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, those groundwater  
19 conservation districts were authorized under statute and I  
20 think they began forming up in, like, 1967.

21 MR. MOORE: That's about right.

22 MR. TURNBULL: And they were, of course, in  
23 existence up until the mid-'80s when they finally -- most of  
24 them disbanded and finally faded away and the authorization  
25 of the Legislature was pulled.

1           MR. MOORE: Well, at one time, Polk County farmers  
2 belonged down here with the York County District. There  
3 were a few who farmed in Butler, Polk, and sometimes York  
4 County. And so we were having an ad hoc member down here  
5 because of that connection, but we never had organization in  
6 Polk or Butler County that I'm aware of. We just came down  
7 here to meetings and worked with them. And then Mel Noffke  
8 was my college roommate that ran for years, so I had a lot  
9 of connections there.

10           MR. BARR: Were they formally merged into the NRD  
11 or did they just go away?

12           MR. TURNBULL: No, the groundwater conservation  
13 districts were a separate organization. They were -- when  
14 they formed, they were able to form one in each county, as I  
15 recall. So we had four of them here. We had York County,  
16 Hamilton County, Fillmore County --

17           MR. MOORE: Clay County.

18           MR. TURNBULL: -- Clay County --

19           MR. MOORE: And Seward County.

20           MR. TURNBULL: -- and Seward County, so we must  
21 have had five. And so each one had their own separate small  
22 Board. They formed the Blue River Association of  
23 Conservation Districts, and Mel Noffke was the manager of  
24 that when I first came to work here at York. I came in  
25 January of 1978.

1 MR. MOORE: That was a cold and stormy night.

2 MR. TURNBULL: No kidding.

3 MR. MOORE: He came to the meeting and didn't go  
4 home.

5 (Laughter.)

6 MR. TURNBULL: So, yeah, and then Mark Nannon  
7 (phonetic) replaced Mel Noffke as the association manager,  
8 and he was there, then, when they finally disbanded in the  
9 mid-'80s.

10 MR. MOORE: Well, they'd had several debates about  
11 what to do with them and they were -- finally, they --  
12 basically, they ran into the sunset clause what took them  
13 out finally. But we worked side by side, really. We didn't  
14 ever have a conflict. We made sure that we were able to  
15 work parallel with them as long as they were in existence.  
16 We had a good relationship with them, I think.

17 MR. TURNBULL: Yep, they took care of a lot of the  
18 well measurements and dealt with some of the irrigation  
19 (indiscernible), and education programs on irrigation  
20 management, those kinds of things. We ended up doing more  
21 of the heavy regulation work.

22 MR. MOORE: Former board members were on our board  
23 over time. I know Max (indiscernible) was one. Kenny  
24 Rigere (phonetic) is still on our board. He was involved.  
25 I think there were a couple of others in the early times

1       that were involved in, too, so we had, you know, connection  
2       back and forth there.

3               Talk about the start of the NRDs, I was out at  
4       Grand Island today and we were talking about Maurice Kremer  
5       being the father of the NRDs, which I agree he is. But if  
6       you wonder who the nursemaids were with the NRD that got it  
7       going, I think you got to say that the five people that got  
8       it off the ground and nursed this thing into existence would  
9       be Dale Emson (phonetic) and Gale Starr (phonetic) and Jim  
10      Cook (phonetic), and Hazel Jenkins (phonetic). And I may be  
11      wrong on this last name. I want to say Jim Chamberlain  
12      (phonetic).

13             MR. TURNBULL: Duane.

14             MR. MOORE: Duane Chamberlain. Duane was the one  
15      that was out to all the meetings and really kept us flying  
16      straight. But those guys and Hazel, they were our  
17      nursemaids. They need a special place in this, because they  
18      were herding us along. Kremer got us launched, and we just  
19      kind of flew off in every direction, and then those people  
20      kind of kept us all going the same way for a long -- and Lee  
21      Ordin (phonetic), but especially those five. I mean, they  
22      were fairly -- well, Jim was a very young man when he  
23      started out and so was Gale. They just retired in the last  
24      few years. I guess they're all retired now.

25             MR. TURNBULL: Well, when I -- I had been out of

1 state after I got out of college, graduated in summer of '66  
2 at Lincoln and was gone for about 10 years. Came back in  
3 the summer of '75, went to work as the general manager at  
4 Tri-Basin NRD. And that was in June. And within the first  
5 two months, Duane Chamberlain came out from Lincoln to meet  
6 with me. He insisted on the meeting, and just coached me on  
7 the fine art of managing NRDs, particularly in the budgeting  
8 cycles. And then, when I came here in January of '78, then  
9 Duane came out again and helped me really understand how to  
10 establish parts of the budget, what we call the sinking fund  
11 now, how to set money aside for future projects. He was  
12 instrumental in that and worked with all the managers around  
13 the state. And I remember, Larry, when you folks had the  
14 vacancy here as the manager when I got hired, I went on a  
15 water tour in New Mexico, state water tour, and Bruce  
16 Anderson was on that trip. And Bruce kept twisting my arm  
17 that I needed -- I ought to apply for this job. Well, my  
18 wife and I had just moved to Holdrege, hadn't been there a  
19 couple of years, really weren't interested in moving again.  
20 Duane Chamberlain came out to see me and said I needed to  
21 apply. And I said, "But I really don't want to." And he  
22 says, "You will apply. You are going to apply."

23 (Laughter.)

24 So, I did.

25 MR. MOORE: Meantime, Duane had talked to Lavern



1 Peterson (phonetic), who was on our exec committee at that  
2 time and Morris White (phonetic), and I think Henry Burke  
3 (phonetic), and myself, I believe were the four. He had  
4 talked to us and he said, "I'm sending your new manager  
5 down." And he said, "You will like him." And he said, "He  
6 is coming."

7 (Laughter.)

8 And so I don't know how much John knew about that,  
9 but --

10 MR. TURNBULL: I didn't.

11 MR. MOORE: We didn't ever tell John -- I probably  
12 told that to John, I think about five years ago I admitted  
13 that he was a cooked goose before he ever got here.

14 (Laughter.)

15 He didn't know it yet, but he'd had a letter from  
16 his friends and neighbors.

17 MR. TURNBULL: Well, I think Duane, from what I  
18 understand talking to lots of folks, Duane did that with  
19 lots of the districts to get them staffed to begin with.

20 MR. MOORE: Yes, he did. I know he did that. But  
21 he was seeing these other managers and who was developing,  
22 what they were developing, which districts were going to  
23 need the managers with staying power. He knew where those  
24 were going to be. And this district was going to be one  
25 that was going to be under the gun because of the water

1 situation like it is and because of the proximity to  
2 Lincoln. And he could see that, too, that we were going to  
3 always -- should be a really proactive district. And he  
4 knew we had a progressive board. I think John when he first  
5 got here, they were almost overaggressive for a while.

6 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

7 MR. MOORE: We only promised you one thing, John.  
8 We said, if you ever feel bored, feel free to leave. And he  
9 said he's been scared many times, but he's never been bored  
10 yet. That offer still stands. Anytime he's bored, we  
11 understand.

12 MR. TURNBULL: Well, Larry, I got a pamphlet here  
13 that says Upper Big Blue Natural Resource District Progress  
14 Report, 1972 to 1974. And on the last page are a list of  
15 the initial board of directors, which is some 70 names. Can  
16 you take a look at that? Do you remember any other folks  
17 you want to comment about?

18 MR. MOORE: I knew Bruce Anderson, (indiscernible)  
19 Anderson, Bryce (indiscernible), of course, he was a judge  
20 over at Seward County.

21 MR. TURNBULL: Was Henry Klosterman on one of  
22 those early --

23 MR. MOORE: Yes. Raymond Burke, Clyde Ellers  
24 (phonetic), I knew them, Lowell Ellers (phonetic) real well,  
25 and Robert Ellers (phonetic), yeah. Sweet ol' Bob. Orville

1 (indiscernible), worked with those. Carl Epp (phonetic).  
2 Ray Erps (phonetic), I worked for him, Marshall Folts  
3 (phonetic). Man, I didn't know this many guys were on here.  
4 Ray Garg (phonetic) and Florian Geiger (phonetic), I knew  
5 both of those. Wayne Hansen (phonetic), Tom Harrington  
6 (phonetic), Harold Heinz (phonetic), Harold was over at  
7 David City, and Kenny Harold (phonetic) over by Seward.  
8 Russ Holtein (phonetic), Bob Jeery (phonetic), Hans Jensen  
9 (phonetic), Jim Jackson (phonetic), Don Kleinschmit  
10 (phonetic). Jim was another -- was back on later on.  
11 (Indiscernible) Klosterman, John Klosterman (phonetic), Ed  
12 Klute (phonetic), Bill Krazy (phonetic). Kuska (phonetic),  
13 Mel Kuska, Wendell Lawburn (phonetic). Man, I did --  
14 (indiscernible), Norman Luebbe (phonetic), Roger Luebbe,  
15 Bill Luebbe, I knew all those guys.

16 MR. TURNBULL: These folks --

17 MR. MOORE: Devin Miller (phonetic), Dale Moore  
18 (phonetic), Robert Murray (phonetic). I can't believe that  
19 I knew this many guys on this board. Of course, I got  
20 around a little bit. Cleo (Indiscernible), Jerry Ostner  
21 (phonetic), Loren Peterson (phonetic), Cleo Rabe (phonetic),  
22 Jerry Ross (phonetic), Ted Rigere (phonetic), Dewey Rigere  
23 (phonetic). I knew Ted real well, and Dewey was my uncle's  
24 roommate in college, so I met him socially.

25 MR. TURNBULL: Ted Rigere is Hamilton County.

1                   MR. MOORE: Yeah. And Dale Rocker (phonetic), Max  
2 Roney (phonetic), Harold Swecti (phonetic).

3                   MR. BARR: Ted and I used to do a bit for the  
4 University on whether or not we should have water charges.  
5 And I took the unpopular position.

6                   MR. TURNBULL: That you ought to have them.

7                   MR. BARR: I had to get out of the room quick.

8                   (Laughter.)

9                   MR. TURNBULL: Well, I always enjoyed Ted's sense  
10 of humor. He was always great to be around, particularly  
11 meetings. He'd liven things right up.

12                  MR. BARR: Yep, he had the little gadgets and  
13 everything.

14                  MR. MOORE: I didn't ever see this. I can't  
15 believe that I knew that many guys on that list. I worked  
16 with them either before that or after that. Of course, I've  
17 been in a lot of things, but a lot of that is, I was the  
18 oldest son and whenever Dad left the house, my mom said,  
19 "Take that boy with you."

20                  (Laughter.)

21                  And Dad and my uncle did a lot of (indiscernible)  
22 work over there. They thrashed and shelled and harvested  
23 and trucked and everything else, so from the time I was old  
24 enough to follow along, I was always riding and listening.  
25 So a lot of these guys, you know, I knew them from the time

1 I was just a kid. I didn't know what they were doing here,  
2 but I knew who they were and I knew where they lived and who  
3 they were.

4 MR. TURNBULL: Jim, maybe what I should do today  
5 is run you a copy of that page because --

6 MR. BARR: That'd be nice. And I've been  
7 including material with every interview that anybody would  
8 donate. Yeah, that would be great.

9 MR. TURNBULL: Because otherwise, whoever is going  
10 to type this out is going to really be lost on these names.

11 MR. BARR: No, no, just a copy is fine.

12 MR. TURNBULL: And as I understand, Larry, this  
13 initial board was made up of people from the soil and water  
14 conservation districts --

15 MR. MOORE: Yeah.

16 MR. TURNBULL: -- and the watersheds, because  
17 Wayne Hansen came from (indiscernible) Watershed.

18 MR. MOORE: They took all those shed districts,  
19 then they made what they called a superboard or they kind of  
20 culled it down to --

21 MR. TURNBULL: Twenty-one were on the exec  
22 committee.

23 MR. MOORE: Yeah, the exec committee out of this  
24 group. And I think there was more names than just that. I  
25 think there was probably some that had dropped out along the

1 way that weren't interested, because when I got involved in  
2 it, at that time, they were at the 21 board members and  
3 that's when Clyde Ellers said, this is going to be too fast  
4 a track for me to run on, and he came up and gave me the big  
5 talk. And about an hour later, Ray Burke drove in and about  
6 the next morning, Bruce Anderson drove in.

7 MR. TURNBULL: Did you feel Duane --

8 MR. MOORE: And about the next day, Morris White  
9 called me, and I felt like maybe I just as well go down and  
10 sign up. Of course, you had to go through the election  
11 process.

12 MR. TURNBULL: Do you suppose Duane Chamberlain  
13 was involved in that?

14 MR. MOORE: Well, I'm sure Morris White and Ray  
15 Burke and -- but Duane could have been. I don't know. But  
16 those four guys -- it's pretty hard to say no when you get  
17 Clyde and those guys all at once working on you. And I was  
18 interested in it, but I just had other things going on, too.  
19 And I really just didn't know. What I'd seen of this  
20 outfit, they were firing pretty big shots back and forth  
21 close to the bow. I didn't know if I wanted to get into it  
22 or not.

23 MR. TURNBULL: So you ran for the first elected  
24 board?

25 MR. MOORE: Yes, I was elected to the four-year

1 term, first election, and Morris got the two-year term.

2 MR. TURNBULL: And that was November of '74, then?

3 MR. MOORE: '74, yeah.

4 MR. TURNBULL: When the election was held. So you  
5 took seat January of '75?

6 MR. MOORE: Yeah. And the one that got the most  
7 votes took the four-year term, and the one that got the  
8 least took the two-year term. And that's the way it worked  
9 out. Morris had the two, and I had the four. Morris was on  
10 the Superboard. First Henry Klosterman was on, and Henry  
11 stayed a while, but it was really more than he wanted to be  
12 on. And John was just a little bit and he said, "I just  
13 don't have the time." He was so active with other things.  
14 I knew Morris was real interested, so then Morris stepped  
15 in, and Morris served a couple two or three terms or longer.  
16 He was on several -- probably ten years altogether, at  
17 least. And so that's how we wound up being where we were on  
18 the situation.

19 But I didn't -- when I walked in there, I was  
20 really dumbfounded. But I'd looked around the table and I  
21 knew some of the guys sitting there from other places. I  
22 didn't realize I would. I probably had dealt with over half  
23 the guys there while I was over in Pierce. I knew Lavern  
24 from the 4-H and I knew Bob Schneider (phonetic) from the  
25 bank. And Max Roney (phonetic) of course, was -- worked for

1 Miller's. We've gotten old friends, really, so --

2 MR. TURNBULL: Now, the first manager was Floyd  
3 Marsh (phonetic).

4 MR. MOORE: Yeah.

5 MR. TURNBULL: And he was -- he started right when  
6 the district started.

7 MR. MOORE: Yeah, they hired Floyd as the -- right  
8 as the first employee they had.

9 MR. TURNBULL: As the first employee.

10 MR. MOORE: Yeah, and then the secretary -- you'd  
11 have to look in our roster, because we went through several  
12 of them in pretty short order getting things organized.  
13 Well, they were moving their husbands' -- they realized in  
14 the '70s, there were a lot of people coming back and forth  
15 from the service and moving through and this was kind of a  
16 transitional job. And so we had -- we had some good ones,  
17 but their husbands would get transferred and they'd be gone.

18 Then the second employee we hired was a young man  
19 out of Beatrice, Gary --

20 MR. TURNBULL: Gary Morgan (phonetic)?

21 MR. MOORE: Gary Morgan. He was our water -- kind  
22 of water associate manager. And then, Gary went to Wyoming  
23 for the environmentalists in the coal country, reclamation  
24 in the prairie out there in the coal country. And that's  
25 the last time that Gary was doing that. He was very



1 interested in range management and that kind of thing, so  
2 that really fit his job description. He talked to me quite  
3 a little before he applied out there and he said, "I just  
4 don't have the management skills that it's going to take  
5 to" -- he said, "I've got the technical skills, but," he  
6 said "I just don't think I've got the management skills to  
7 handle a big board and keep from getting run over in the  
8 shuffle."

9 MR. TURNBULL: And you guys thought I did.

10 MR. MOORE: (Indiscernible).

11 (Laughter.)

12 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, right.

13 MR. MOORE: We figured between us, we'd teach each  
14 other.

15 MR. TURNBULL: I remember going to an interview in  
16 Holdrege for that job. And I'd worked for companies,  
17 private companies, before then. And the executive committee  
18 interviewed me and two other fellows, and Russ Cideel  
19 (phonetic) was the chairman and Russ came out after that  
20 meeting and wanted to know if I could stick around to the  
21 next night for the board meeting, and I was hungry and I  
22 needed work, and I said yes. And I went to the board  
23 meeting and there were 13 board members, and I was petrified  
24 during that interview while those 13 fired questions at me.  
25 Then I came here and it was 17. I went, oh, boy.

1           MR. MOORE: I'd never met John, of course, and I  
2 had never met any of his family, but one of Duane's comments  
3 just kind of off-the-cuff comment, if he's as tough as his  
4 uncle is, he'll be a tough bird. (Indiscernible). He had  
5 me talk about him, because that's the only uncle you ever  
6 had -- I ever heard you talk about.

7           MR. TURNBULL: Yes. My uncle, Tom Calloway  
8 (phonetic). Yep, he --

9           MR. MOORE: Somehow, Duane had crossed his path.

10          MR. TURNBULL: Yes.

11          MR. MOORE: Knew him from background. That was  
12 his comment, was, "Tom is his uncle. He'll hang in here."

13          MR. TURNBULL: Well, my uncle had been a --  
14 graduated from Fairbury High School and wanted to fly in the  
15 Navy. And when he wanted to go in, they had to have some  
16 sort of aviation background, so he went into northeast  
17 Missouri and found a guy to teach him how to fly in an old  
18 Jenny biplane. And then he enlisted in the Navy in 1927 as  
19 an enlisted naval aviator, and retired in 1957, had worked  
20 his way clear up through jets at the time, with just a high  
21 school education. And then went to work for the big  
22 aerospace companies, Lockheed and Grumman, United Aircraft.  
23 His specialty was as an efficiency engineer. He would go  
24 into a place where they had management problems and he would  
25 sort out what was wrong with their organization and get it

1 back on track. Did that for a number of years and then  
2 decided that -- during this whole time, he'd been investing  
3 in farmland in Jefferson County, bought a quarter section.  
4 My grandad had farmed down there for years, so it wasn't  
5 very far from that place. And he decided he wanted to get a  
6 college degree. So he went to the University of Nebraska in  
7 animal science, the same time I was there. So, he was in  
8 his 50s and I'm 18. And my family always said to me, well,  
9 how come can't you get the same grades as your uncle? And I  
10 couldn't tell them that I was 18 and chasing women and he  
11 was all passed that.

12 (Laughter.)

13 MR. MOORE: But I suspect he had done that.

14 MR. TURNBULL: I'm sure he had, yes. So then,  
15 when he got finished with his college education, his wife  
16 was a librarian at Love Library on the city campus. She had  
17 two master's degrees, one in English and I don't remember  
18 what the other one was in. They moved to Fairbury and he  
19 became what he called a gentleman farmer. He said, "I'm not  
20 doing this for money. I'm doing it because I want to do  
21 it." And he got interested in flood control works and  
22 conservation and was on the Buckley Creek Watershed Board.  
23 And from that, then, got merged into the Little Blue Board.  
24 And so he was on the initial Little Blue NRD Board. He was  
25 their treasurer for a while. Then he later ran for county

1 commissioner in Jefferson County and served a term and we  
2 moved to York to be a little closer to them, and the same  
3 year he and his wife moved to California and he took up sail  
4 planing in the Sierra Nevadas doing ridge flying.

5 (Laughter.)

6 Yeah, I was scared of him until I was about 30  
7 years old. You're right, Larry, he was tough.

8 MR. MOORE: One of the guys I served on --

9 MR. TURNBULL: He was fair, but you always wanted  
10 to have your facts together. You didn't want to try to  
11 smoke him.

12 MR. MOORE: One of the guys I served on the  
13 Commission was from Fairbury, and he'd served with your  
14 uncle down --

15 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, Noble (phonetic)?

16 MR. MOORE: No, it was before Noble. I can't  
17 really think of the name any more. I'd have to look at my  
18 records, but he knew Cal from down there, so he would tell  
19 me stories, too, about if Turnbull gets a little testy  
20 sometimes, don't worry about it. And he has gotten testy  
21 once or twice.

22 (Laughter.)

23 Of course, I would have to say that he's been  
24 pretty peaceful with us, too, but we've had some frank  
25 discussions. I think he'd have to say that I've probably

1       been testy once or twice, too.

2               MR. TURNBULL: Once in a while.

3               MR. MOORE: I came in one time through that door.  
4 I was on the snort. I didn't realize I was quite on the  
5 snort. There were secretaries going out the back and some  
6 little gal, it was her first day here, and she almost didn't  
7 come back the next day.

8               (Laughter.)

9               I was the first live NRD director she'd ever seen  
10 and I was on the prowl. I think that was the day they were  
11 going to have that riot at the water meeting or something.  
12 I come here, I wanted the agenda, a bunch of stuff, I wanted  
13 it now, I wanted it printed, and I wanted it like this, and  
14 I wanted it five minutes ago. And she --

15              MR. TURNBULL: So, Larry, when you first got on  
16 the board, what were the big things the district was  
17 wrestling with in '75?

18              MR. MOORE: The first item I remember talking  
19 about on the board after the elections were in in January of  
20 '75 was, "We need to do something about that David City  
21 drainage problem." And I think it's done this year,  
22 finally.

23              MR. TURNBULL: We finished in December 2012.

24              MR. MOORE: And it was on the agenda at least  
25 sometime during every year, some part of it. We got pieces

1 of it done, but there'd always be a snag some place along  
2 the line. We never quite get the whole thing done.

3 And the second thing was -- that was in January,  
4 and the next meeting we talked to, they said, "Oh, we got  
5 this Plum Creek problem in Seward. Need to do something  
6 about the flooding in Seward." Well, we still haven't got  
7 that quite all done, but we're close. But we had so much  
8 problem there, we could not get support. Seward wanted  
9 something done upstream, which economically, we could never  
10 make it work. And we couldn't really ever get the right  
11 people in the office in Seward in the city administration,  
12 city managers, and in the board over there to see that it  
13 needed to be done down in the creek itself. Finally, when  
14 it finally got the right people there and they realized what  
15 we were trying to do, then it just went so quick it was  
16 unbelievable after we really got the ball rolling. But it  
17 took us a long time to get that through what with the --  
18 basically, bought them out through FEMA and built a stream  
19 down through the Plum Creek -- or trail and everything. And  
20 now I ride it and you can't go over there anytime there  
21 isn't somebody riding or walking. It's close to college  
22 over there, it's just -- it's the way to do it.

23 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, that buyout happened in 1995  
24 with the federal grant with both the City and the district,  
25 and Dale Winson (phonetic) was instrumental in getting us

1 lined up for that grant work.

2 MR. MOORE: That started in 1975, so -- in that,  
3 it was a lot of people that was sincere about doing but it  
4 was just a matter, you had to just keep putting a little  
5 pressure here, a little pressure there. And like I used to  
6 tell John sometimes, we just keep counting votes until we  
7 get (indiscernible) we want.

8 (Laughter.)

9 He's making (indiscernible). Sooner or later  
10 you'll get the right one to work.

11 MR. TURNBULL: I remember early on, you told me  
12 two things. One was, "Never take no for an answer. If they  
13 say no, three times, then that's the answer." And the other  
14 advice you gave me was, "On a 17-member board, all you need  
15 is nine votes. Any more than that's just gravy."

16 MR. MOORE: And that's still true. Well, that's  
17 just a fact of life. People are going to have their own  
18 opinions and they have good reasons for having their own  
19 opinions. You've got to realize that -- why the guy thinks  
20 that way. Maybe he actually believes that way. You should  
21 respect his thoughts. And then go about trying to reason  
22 with enough other people to make your point. I think  
23 tonight's going to be a good example of that. The things  
24 that I've dreamed and fought and begged and everything on  
25 this water board or this committee since I got on in '75 is

1 just about to come into fruit now. And I'm not even on the  
2 committee this year and I think it's going to -- 99 percent  
3 of what I wanted 25 years ago, I think it's going to get  
4 adopted this time around.

5 MR. TURNBULL: So, when you first got on the  
6 board, you talked about the David City project. You talked  
7 about Plum Creek. And they had a pretty active conservation  
8 program then, didn't they, for terraces and so on?

9 MR. MOORE: Yeah. And we were just at that point  
10 starting to get interested in water quantity, because that  
11 was the early '70s and if you remember, about '81 or '82, we  
12 had a -- that's pretty dry years in there, so we were always  
13 interested in quantity more than research, and there was  
14 more into -- like the Benedict project where we worked with  
15 the groundwater district on how much water guys were  
16 pumping. And you were part of that. How much maybe they  
17 were wasting and trying to get efficient. We were involved  
18 in that from the very start, because we just bought into  
19 that with them. I remember that Benedict project, they came  
20 up with average pumpage of about 20 inches up there when  
21 they did it. And they thought by extreme management  
22 maybe -- extreme management, they could get it to 16 without  
23 yields. Well, now we're at the point what was  
24 (indiscernible) yield is six-something including 2012  
25 (indiscernible) pumping?



1           MR. TURNBULL: Yes. The last five years,  
2 including last year, is 6.7. Last year's use was 12.2 and  
3 that's based on a million acres across the district.

4           MR. MOORE: And so we basically tripled the acres  
5 since I got on the board. And we cut the pumpage about a  
6 third. So, I'd say when farmers get accused of not doing  
7 their work, I think the farm community, as a group, has done  
8 a pretty good job of adopting the equipment and adopting  
9 techniques they need to. And they'll get better. But the  
10 big pieces are whipped off of it now. I mean, it's going to  
11 be now chiseling off a quarter inch here and a quarter inch  
12 surface. We've chopped off all the big chunks there is to  
13 chop off out there. And the good thing that's going for us  
14 now, when I first got on the board, people my dad's age grew  
15 up in the '30s and remember developing wells in the '50s.  
16 And, oh, boy, Dad (indiscernible) irrigating for fear he was  
17 going to lose some water, you know. Well, then, us young  
18 tigers came along in the lower '70s and you're in the age  
19 enough to know what the lower '70s were. You couldn't not  
20 make money in the '70s. I mean, just no matter what  
21 happened, you could make money. And so, my generation got  
22 the idea we don't ever look back. We just pull bore all the  
23 time.

24           Well, then, along come the '80s and we found out  
25 that it wasn't quite that way and we were going to have to

1        maybe be -- make some changes we didn't like and adopt. And  
2        we were hard to deal with. When regulations come along, my  
3        generation said, "By God, I don't need this." Well, our  
4        kids that are doing the farming now that are 50 now, they  
5        grew up during the '80s, and they watched some of their dads  
6        survived and some of their neighbors didn't survive. So  
7        they've got a whole different outlook on how you manage a  
8        farm. They manage it more as a business. They really do.  
9        Sure, it's a way of life and it's a lifestyle and that, but  
10       they're better managers than we were across the board,  
11       because they saw how close it was to -- it was just that  
12       close. The guys that made it, made it by that much. I  
13       mean, you know how that was. And they were there growing up  
14       through that, so they're easier to work with now, they're  
15       sharper, they're more computer-oriented, and they're just  
16       better conservation all the way around than we were. They  
17       really are. I've been lucky enough to go through, starting  
18       with my uncle back, and seeing all this happen, and now  
19       watching these young guys take over.

20                I guess our family kind of illustrates that. Dad  
21       always said when I was a kid, I walked behind him. And then  
22       when I came from college, we walked side by side. This was  
23       dad telling this. He said, "Then I started getting older  
24       and slower and Larry kind of started walking away and making  
25       a decision, and I just kind of went along behind. And then,

1       pretty soon, I started hearing footsteps behind me.

2       (Indiscernible) was a grandson walking behind me, gaining on  
3       me." Well, now, that grandson is out in front of me. And  
4       I'm hearing footsteps back behind me. I can't tell if it's  
5       a granddaughter or grandson, but I can hear footsteps coming  
6       up behind me, and I think it's pretty neat. Now some guys  
7       don't look at it that way, but I think that's pretty neat to  
8       be able to have that perspective to see that happen.

9                 That's happened with the district. That's why I  
10       think this water thing is developing. It's a progression of  
11       expertise these kids have developed, because they've --  
12       these computers aren't strange to them. They've grown up in  
13       a time of shortage. They know nothing is infinite anymore,  
14       everything's finite. So they got that attitude. And that's  
15       going to be our salvation, I think.

16                MR. TURNBULL: Jim, is there some other of the  
17       early years' stuff we should cover, you think?

18                MR. BARR: As long as you got into the sorts of  
19       things you -- any kind of problems in getting organized or  
20       any particular challenges in that regard?

21                MR. TURNBULL: No, there haven't been any problems  
22       here.

23                (Laughter.)

24                MR. MOORE: I remember one time we took 13 drafts  
25       of water regulations to the Seward County paper and he kept

1       yelling he wanted to print our regulations, and I went up  
2       there and threw out 13 drafts and said, "You pick the one  
3       we're going to do, because we sure don't know." He just  
4       gave them all back to me and said, "Call me when you get  
5       one."

6               Our biggest thing, and I think it's because we  
7       were a young organization growing, until we finally got a  
8       committee structure up and running and the committees to  
9       respect each others' expertise and judgment, our meetings  
10      would go until 2:00 in the morning. I mean, just  
11      (indiscernible). Now, we do way more business and the  
12      committee meetings get long sometimes, but a two-hour board  
13      meeting, unless it's a hearing involved in it or a special  
14      presentation, a two-hour board meeting's, probably --

15             MR. TURNBULL: It's on the long side.

16             MR. MOORE: Yeah, it probably is the long side.

17             MR. TURNBULL: Hour and a half is probably more --

18             MR. MOORE: The committee meetings can sometimes  
19      get long, but the committees, we do the heavy lifting and  
20      the heavy work.

21             MR. TURNBULL: Well, I think, Larry, looking back  
22      on it, you know, you folks, before I came here were  
23      wrestling with those projects you talked about and you have  
24      concerns about the groundwater levels. There were some  
25      studies underway on groundwater declines, and people were

1       reluctant to listen about possible regulations. And Senator  
2       Kremer and others got the Nebraska Groundwater Management  
3       Act passed. That happened in 1975. And so, that set up the  
4       authorities for districts to establish management areas  
5       under the direction of the State Department of Water  
6       Resources. And then to draft regulations which were then  
7       approved by the State to carry them out for water  
8       management. The first district to go through that was the  
9       Upper Republican at Imperial. And the second district was  
10      this one. This area was declared as what they called a  
11      control area in those days, what's now the management area.  
12      That was in December of 1977. And that was just before I  
13      came here. And then, of course, the next step was to write  
14      a set of regulations to carry out the intent of that  
15      management area, and that's what Floyd, my predecessor, had  
16      started working on with the committees. But there was a lot  
17      of hard feelings, I think because nobody really knew what to  
18      expect, much like what we see has gone on in the Republican  
19      Basin in the last five or six years. And people really get  
20      wrapped around the axle about it, because they don't  
21      understand what's coming. They don't know what to expect.  
22      They don't know what the penalties are going to be. They're  
23      not sure they can survive it. They're going to have to do a  
24      change in their farming operations to comply with potential  
25      regulations. And so that was going on in these communities

1       around York. And so the board, I think, was really  
2       representing those people, because each board member came  
3       from a particular community and reflected that community's  
4       views.

5               MR. MOORE: We did have a lot of (indiscernible)  
6       board members. We still have one or two. That's the  
7       biggest thing. And I was fortunate enough, I live in a  
8       four-county corner. I don't really have a home county or a  
9       home district. And that helped me, because I didn't really  
10      feel like I had to protect Polk County or Butler County or  
11      York County or Seward County, because I was in all four of  
12      them all the time. So that helped me in that point of view.  
13      The other guys said, "Well, I'm from York County." "I'm  
14      from Clay County. I got to watch out." Well, you can't on  
15      this board. You're elected at large. You got to represent  
16      at large. And I've hammered that from, of course, Maurice  
17      Kremer and Ray Burke gave me the lecture early. I had a  
18      couple pretty good mentors there, too. I had Ray lead me by  
19      the hand and Maurice patting me on the back. Sometimes a  
20      little lower when I needed it, in a nice way.

21               (Laughter.)

22               So I was really lucky to be a young guy and have  
23      guys like that that I was comfortable talking to. Hans  
24      Jensen was a pretty long thinker, too. And Mel Kuska could  
25      teach you a lesson or two about politics, too.

1           MR. TURNBULL: Hans Jensen had been the mayor of  
2 Aurora. And Kuska was from east of Geneva.

3           MR. MOORE: Mel worked for International Harvester  
4 for years. But Mel could teach you a thing or two about how  
5 to get a motion taken care of.

6           MR. TURNBULL: He was a parliamentary procedure  
7 expert.

8           MR. MOORE: (Indiscernible) a lesson one time.

9           MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, tell him about that one.

10          MR. MOORE: Roy came in and he was against reuse  
11 pits and water things in general. So Roy got the board  
12 excited. Roy's a good talker.

13          MR. TURNBULL: You're talking about Roy Stuer  
14 (phonetic).

15          MR. MOORE: Yeah, but Roy could get people  
16 excited. But, you know, I always got along with Roy,  
17 because I just -- I could handle him. (Indiscernible)  
18 later. But anyway, Roy (indiscernible) so Kuska got the  
19 list down and he says, "Hmmm, Roy." He said, "I think you  
20 got a pretty good motion, but, you know, this one over  
21 here," he said, "don't you think that's worth leaving in?"  
22 "Yeah, that's a pretty good one. Okay, I move we put that  
23 one back." And then we talked a little bit and Mel says,  
24 "I've been looking, Roy. You know, this one over here, you  
25 know, that don't look too -- don't you" -- "Yeah, I suppose.

1 I would put that back." We finally get down, there's three  
2 pieces left in this proposal that's still on the list to  
3 take out. And Roy goes, "Just put them all back in."  
4 (Indiscernible).

5 (Laughter.)

6 And Mel had never raised his voice and never  
7 argued with Roy at all. He just kind of keep visiting and  
8 changing the subject. "Yeah, that looks okay."

9 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, Mel was slick that way.

10 MR. MOORE: But Mel was impressive. Mel knew what  
11 he was doing. He could look at a piece of paper and  
12 remember what he read. And so he was tough, kind of like  
13 Bob -- Bob Ellers was tough that way, too. Bob Ellers had a  
14 tremendous memory. And, of course, Bob and I didn't always  
15 agree. We agreed a lot of times, some we didn't. But Bob  
16 never forgot anything. I mean, anything. So sometimes you  
17 wished he would, but --

18 MR. TURNBULL: You live close to Bob.

19 MR. MOORE: Oh, yes. I've known Bob since I was a  
20 teenager, through my uncle. So I've watched Bob blow up for  
21 50 years. And so, when he'd have one of his patented  
22 explosions, you know, it didn't bother me, because I'd seen  
23 it happening for so long that other guys were running for  
24 cover and I was just kind of waiting to see how hot he was  
25 going to go this time.



1           MR. TURNBULL: Well, I'll tell you a quick little  
2 story about after I came here. The staff had grown and we  
3 needed to keep in touch with folks in the field. And I  
4 wanted to set up two-way radios in the vehicles so the staff  
5 could communicate with the office and vice versa. And I  
6 brought a recommendation to the board and I thought I had it  
7 pretty well put together. I had it figured out on the cost  
8 and the numbers and what all we needed and brought it to the  
9 board and Roy Stuer talked against it and got the motion  
10 defeated. And I went back to the exec committee. We  
11 reworked all the stuff and we came back the next month with  
12 a different proposal and Roy got that thing defeated. And I  
13 was really getting discouraged that, can't this guy  
14 understand that I've got to be able to talk to the staff in  
15 the field? And Bob Ellers pulled me to one side, and he  
16 says, "John, you don't understand how to do this. You got  
17 to convince Roy it's his idea." And he says, "Why don't you  
18 ask Roy what kind of radios he would get and let's see how  
19 that works?" And so I went to Roy and asked him and he told  
20 me, "Well, John, why didn't you ask before? This is what  
21 you need. You've been down the damn wrong fool road. This  
22 is where you need to go." And we took it to the next board  
23 meeting, went through on a unanimous vote.

24           (Laughter.)

25           MR. MOORE: See, you're talking to a couple of old

1 warriors here.

2 MR. BARR: I had a version of that. We got to  
3 ride up on the wilderness area where the buffalo go across  
4 the Buffalo Bridge at the Niobrara Wilderness Area. And I  
5 can't think of the guy's -- Bob-something was the manager  
6 and he says -- and he showed us kind of how, you know,  
7 they've got the corrals to run them across the bridge from  
8 the regular one where they've got the pens. But, once you  
9 get over there, there's no fence. It's just the outside  
10 perimeter fence. And he showed us where you've got them  
11 down by the river and then they go up the hill and go across  
12 the bridge. And he said, "Just remember, you never chase a  
13 buffalo. You let them escape in the direction you want them  
14 to."

15 (Laughter.)

16 MR. MOORE: Yeah, that's exactly right. You let  
17 them escape. That's kind of like herding a horse into a  
18 trailer.

19 MR. BARR: I've got one thing that we have had  
20 some discussion of Ann doing a paper based on some of these  
21 interviews that could explore the possibility for the Water  
22 Center -- or for the Water Improvement Center to look at  
23 natural resource districts as an example of a way to  
24 organize institutional arrangements for natural resource  
25 related issues throughout the world. And I guess I just

1       raise the question to you whether you've got any thoughts on  
2       that general -- either of you, or both of you, on that  
3       general idea.

4               MR. TURNBULL: Well, I think that, one, that if  
5       some other country's going to try it, I think they need to  
6       have a pretty well-established democracy setup, that it  
7       can't be a government from the top down, because this is  
8       certainly not that way. This is pretty grassroots and it's  
9       local, even though we cover several counties. And we think  
10      it works pretty well from the local level. The board  
11      tackles some really hard issues. They wrestle with a lot.  
12      They finally reach some kind of decisions. It's funded  
13      locally. If you, as a farmer or an irrigator, don't like  
14      what we're doing, you can walk in this office any day of the  
15      week and talk to me about it, or you can go find Larry at  
16      his farm and talk to him about it or any of the other  
17      directors or staff members. And if it's coming from the  
18      state or federal level, you know as being associated with  
19      the federal government, the state -- it's very difficult to  
20      find somebody who actually is in the decision-making power  
21      to be able to talk to them. But I think, unless a country  
22      is structured right and they have that working knowledge,  
23      I'm not sure that would work very well for them. It can't  
24      be dictated from above. It has to come up from the bottom.

25              MR. MOORE: And there's three things that need to

1       make it work and one is that it's local. One is, like John  
2       said, this local. And it needs to be small enough to be so  
3       the people on that board know the area, and big enough to  
4       have a resource base that can generate some income to do the  
5       work. But the thing that is going to have to really make it  
6       work to start with, is you're going to have, like John said,  
7       it's got to be a democracy, and it's going to have to be  
8       people that have enough just plain honesty in them to not  
9       start siphoning the money out of the pot, because so many  
10      times, you have these self-help groups, especially if the  
11      money is coming from downstairs, well, we're seeing that  
12      over there overseas now, there's too many guys taking a  
13      piece along the way. And we've had some managers and  
14      probably some board members who have tried to get  
15      (indiscernible) in this organization. But they have been  
16      fairly summarily dealt with.

17               MR. TURNBULL: It didn't take long.

18               MR. MOORE: And it's not just slap on the fingers.  
19      I mean, it's not, you know, go --

20               MR. TURNBULL: They're essentially gone.

21               MR. MOORE: Yeah, it's don't let the door hit you  
22      on the way out. And we'll help shut the door, too, while  
23      you're going. That's the biggest thing I think it takes.  
24      Nebraska doesn't really have political graft. There's a  
25      (indiscernible). I'm sure there's some shenanigans going.

1 But in, I'd say, small town Nebraska, all of Nebraska is  
2 small town, even Omaha, is still a fairly honest type of  
3 government. There's not anybody trying to skim the  
4 government. We did get a board member, though, that came in  
5 here not too many elections ago, that really thought this  
6 was going to be a nice retirement program. He thought he'd  
7 be able to get on the district's insurance and the per diem  
8 and make a nice little living, you know. He was disabused  
9 of that within --

10 MR. TURNBULL: Minutes.

11 MR. MOORE: -- an hour (indiscernible).

12 (Laughter.)

13 Yeah, probably minutes, but within the first hour,  
14 he definitely had that straightened out. But it took him  
15 about six months for him to leave. He was just convinced  
16 that there had to be some way that we were all making  
17 nice -- this was a nice retirement program and that we all  
18 had insurance and benefits and vacations. Well, if they do,  
19 I've sure been lied to for 40 years. I'll still --  
20 somebody's kept me fooled.

21 But it would work, I think, like, in Canada it  
22 would work. I think what I've seen of that type up there.  
23 Now, if you get into an area that doesn't really trust the  
24 government, I don't know if it would work there or not,  
25 because you got to have some money coming from the bottom,

1 but you've got to have some money coming down to you, too.  
2 And you got to have the money getting to where it needs to  
3 go. That's the biggest thing.

4 MR. TURNBULL: Well, I think public trust is super  
5 important.

6 MR. MOORE: Yeah. And I'm convinced here, I  
7 wouldn't be sitting here if I had any doubts about it, that  
8 anybody can walk in here anytime and look at our books, and  
9 there's no doubt in my mind they might be off a postage  
10 stamp, but there'd be hell to pay if there was a dollar  
11 gone. Somebody'd keep digging for a while here. I mean,  
12 sure there's times when there's -- where in the heck, how  
13 come this don't balance, but it always balances before the  
14 dust settled. I mean, that just happens.

15 MR. TURNBULL: Let me kind of follow up on that,  
16 going back to our earlier conversation about our initial  
17 days dealing with the water regulations. We talked a bit  
18 about the discord on the board because of the local  
19 community's thoughts. Well, when I first came here, there  
20 was -- the board was really split politically on what to do  
21 about water regulation. Of course, we had the committee  
22 meetings that Larry had talked about, and what we were  
23 finding was, a committee, no matter whether it was working  
24 with the David City project, or whether it was working on  
25 water regulations, or some education program, they would do

1 a lot of work on it, take that recommendation to the board,  
2 and the board would do the work all over again. And it was  
3 really frustrating to me coming in here to see that going  
4 on. It took me a while to figure out what was happening.  
5 And finally, it dawned on me that the prior manager, he  
6 didn't do this to try to keep things secret, but he did it  
7 to streamline things, and that would be, he would send a  
8 notice of the meeting out for a committee meeting to those  
9 committee members, only those on the projects committee or  
10 only those on the water committee. And the meeting would be  
11 held, and the other directors felt they were left out and  
12 that something was going on in secret. But it was not.  
13 Those meetings were open, but they hadn't -- they didn't  
14 feel that they were included. So, one of the first things I  
15 did, then, was to send those committee notices out to the  
16 entire board and say everybody can come. And it took about  
17 a year after that, but things started to settle down and the  
18 board started to trust what the committee was coming up  
19 with. But the same time, all this controversy about the  
20 groundwater regulation potential was going on. And about  
21 the second day I was on the job, we had that big hearing at  
22 the city auditorium. There were, like, 400 mad farmers at  
23 that thing. And the board had proposed a draft set of  
24 regulations, and we were trying to explain to the crowd what  
25 those were. The crowd was explaining to us that they didn't

1 want anything to do with any of that stuff. And so it was a  
2 very contentious meeting. And from that, then, we developed  
3 some more drafts, and the paper thought sure that we were  
4 keeping things from the public, that we just weren't being  
5 honest with people. And as Larry said earlier, then finally  
6 we demanded to go see the editor of the local paper and  
7 said, you know, "Why are you keeping on our case?" And he  
8 says, "Well, you're not giving me the draft so I can publish  
9 the draft so the public has their right to read this and  
10 know what you folks are talking about." And Larry said,  
11 "Well, here are 13 drafts. You pick which one you think  
12 we're going to settle on."

13 MR. MOORE: Because we didn't know.

14 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, there hadn't been a decision  
15 made and the editor picked those all up and just pushed them  
16 back across the desk and said, "Well, you guys let me know  
17 when you get it settled." "Okay." But that first year was  
18 super contentious and it took a long time to get over that.

19 The other thing that was going on at the same  
20 time, because the district was new, the board was really  
21 involved in the day-to-day management of the staff. When we  
22 had a field office secretary that would quit, those field  
23 office secretaries work for the Soil Conservation Service,  
24 as our employee, but worked with the federal agency. When  
25 one of them would move on, we'd need to replace them. Well,



1 the board wanted to be involved in the interviewing of that  
2 clerk, and that's several rungs down from the board members.  
3 And they also wanted to -- we got over that hurdle, then  
4 they wanted to be involved in setting the salary for each  
5 individual. And it took a long time to get the trust  
6 established with the board that that ought to be my job and  
7 not the board's job. That they set the boundaries, I got to  
8 stay within the boundaries. But once we started that, that  
9 took a lot of those little decisions off the board's back,  
10 and I think the board's been much more content since then,  
11 because they can concentrate on the big stuff and not worry  
12 about the little stuff.

13 MR. MOORE: I've got two things I want to say  
14 (indiscernible). Finish yours, John.

15 MR. TURNBULL: So, anyway, the board now is  
16 really -- deals with the budget and deals with the policy.  
17 And we, the staff, deal with the day-to-day. And I think  
18 that's something, if somebody else is looking to set  
19 something up like this, they really got to think about is,  
20 you've got to have that distinction between the two. And if  
21 there's a problem with a staff member out here, the board  
22 lets me know and I've got to deal with it, because they know  
23 how to cure the problem, and that's, like I said, it takes  
24 nine votes and I'm toast, so --

25 MR. MOORE: That worked out as it did, though,

1       because John brought in the military mindset, you know,  
2       chain of command and responsibility. And there was a  
3       nucleus on the board, and I was one of the nucleus, there  
4       was about five that were trying to drive that way, that the  
5       board adopts the budget. The board makes sure the funding  
6       is there. The board sets the staffing numbers and job  
7       descriptions, and gives the manager the authorization to  
8       fill those descriptions. And then, if I don't like what  
9       that employee's doing, that's too damn bad. He's got to  
10      make John happy. But that employee still has a right, if  
11      he's getting yanked, to come to the board. So once we got  
12      that established, what our level -- our level is to fund it,  
13      establish the plans, establish the perimeters, and then each  
14      buddy fits in his notch and stays there. And it works  
15      slicker than a button now. It took a while.

16               MR. TURNBULL: It took a while, yes.

17               MR. MOORE: But the thing on the regulations that  
18      was hard, that was so contentious, we were all working with  
19      guesses and opinions on water levels and what was going to  
20      happen. We were looking -- we knew what happened so far and  
21      trying to guess what was going to happen. Now, with all the  
22      data we've collected in the last 40 years, just like I said,  
23      6.7 inches, we know we've pumped 6.7 inches the last six  
24      years. We've got the meter readings to prove it, and so  
25      people accept that. And we've got a lot better

1 understanding of what's down there from all the resources.  
2 So it's easier to defend a position.

3 And with that, I'm going to let John tell the  
4 story about when Roy wanted a gavel. That's how you handle,  
5 sometimes, a board member that needs a little help.

6 MR. TURNBULL: We used to meet up in the 4-H  
7 building before we moved down to this facility, for our  
8 board meetings. And we traditionally set up a U-shaped  
9 table for the board members. And the chairman sits in the  
10 center of the head table and I sit next to the chairman.  
11 And the two of us are conversing in the board meeting what  
12 the next agenda item is, who needs to speak, what points  
13 need to be covered, and just the procedural stuff. And  
14 Larry was chairman at the time and he was sitting on my  
15 right. I no longer sit on the chairman's right. I sit on  
16 the other side of them. But anyway, Larry's sitting on the  
17 right and I'm sitting on the left at this head table, and  
18 the directors are out here and we're having some heated  
19 discussion. I don't even remember what it was about. And  
20 Roy Stuer starts telling Larry how things ought to be done  
21 and how the meeting ought to be run.

22 MR. MOORE: And he wished he had a gavel.

23 MR. TURNBULL: And Larry is left-handed. And  
24 Larry picks up this gavel and he goes, "Well, then, Roy, you  
25 run the god-damned meeting." And he flung that gavel across

1 my chest and zipped Roy right in the chest with that thing.

2 (Laughter.)

3 MR. MOORE: Roy slid back about two feet in the  
4 chair. I didn't really mean to put that much whip on it,  
5 but I got (indiscernible). I heard it hit.

6 (Laughter.)

7 And it hit the floor and Roy picked it up and he  
8 walked around very quietly said, "I think maybe you dropped  
9 this."

10 (Laughter.)

11 And Roy and I had always gotten along pretty good,  
12 but we solved the problem and it needed to be solved,  
13 because Roy was just having fun being Roy that night. We  
14 didn't have time for that that night. But, yeah, Max Roney  
15 and John just both of them turned white. I hadn't realized  
16 I was that -- I must have backhanded John, because I  
17 didn't --

18 MR. TURNBULL: You did backhand me, yes.

19 MR. MOORE: You know, I remember my wrist -- well,  
20 you know, you can do that, and being left-handed, it was a  
21 perfect shot. I couldn't have done that if I had thrown a  
22 baseball over.

23 MR. TURNBULL: Well, things have settled down  
24 considerably.

25 MR. MOORE: Yeah, we haven't had to throw a gavel

1       in years.

2                   MR. TURNBULL: The other quick one that folks will  
3       enjoy is was when we worked on the David City project in  
4       early years, Al Smith, who you interviewed not long ago, was  
5       the manager at the Lower Platte North. And he and the city  
6       administrator came down to meet with our projects committee  
7       about some details in the agreements. Ray Burke was  
8       chairing the projects committee. And in the middle of this  
9       projects committee, Al Smith and Roy Stuer got into an  
10      argument about how something ought to be done. And Roy,  
11      being his usual self, lipped of and said, "Al, I'll kiss  
12      your butt before we'll do this." So, Al stood up, unbuckled  
13      his pants and dropped them, right there in the meeting.

14                   And Ray said, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, wait a minute,  
15      wait a minute."

16                   (Laughter.)

17                   That meeting was completely out of control. But  
18      we haven't had that sort of thing happen for a long time.

19                   MR. MOORE: John's got a meeting. I've got to  
20      catch a ride. I'm riding with him today, so I've got to go.

21                   MR. BARR: Thank you very much for doing this.

22                   MR. MOORE: Doug Dickenson's (phonetic) on the  
23      board, what, 20 years or so?

24                   MR. TURNBULL: Yes, more than that. Thirty years.

25                   MR. MOORE: Anyway, the first -- the last meeting

1 before he was going to take office, he was succeeding Jerry  
2 Higelholz (phonetic). So Jerry brought him along and said,  
3 "Doug, you ought to come and sit here once so you kind of  
4 get your feet wet." So, we're meeting upstairs here and  
5 Doug's in the back of the room, and it's one of those  
6 contentious nights when I was chairing the meeting and Bob  
7 was on a rip. And Bob and I were going back and forth, and  
8 not pulling any punches. We were getting pretty sharp. And  
9 Doug's back there. And there's some other guys jumping in,  
10 too. It's coffee break time. I said, "Okay, it's break  
11 time." We all get up and go back in the back where the  
12 coffee pots, and Bob tells a story to me and, "Yeah." I  
13 tell Bob a story, we have our coffee and donuts and we go  
14 back and sit down. "Okay, we're back in session again."  
15 And it's "Boom," it's Bob and me right back face-to-face.  
16 Now, Doug was just really quiet, and Jerry says, about  
17 halfway home Doug says, "How in the hell do you know when to  
18 stand up and when to sit down?"

19 (Laughter.)

20 And Jerry said, "You'll learn." Doug said, "I  
21 understood how they fought, you know, and all that." Then  
22 he said, "They took this coffee break and everybody's  
23 telling stories." Kind of like that old cartoon with the  
24 coyote and the dog, you know, and then he said, "They sat  
25 down again and it's just boom, it's instant." He said, "I

1 just couldn't believe it." He said, "They were just like  
2 they didn't even have that break. It was just like it was a  
3 boxing match or something." And, of course, we'd always  
4 (indiscernible) we could do that. And I could ride home  
5 with Bob Ellers. I could ride to Kansas City with Bob  
6 Ellers, but we'd probably have a fight in Kansas City  
7 (indiscernible). And we could have the best time going back  
8 and forth together and sharing meals, because business was  
9 business, and social was social. That's the way it is now  
10 on the board. Young members coming in or new members coming  
11 in, we have to really work with them off in the corner, tell  
12 them, "Now, if you get your nose slapped, don't go pouting,  
13 because you're expected to -- if you take a position, you  
14 better defend it. And we expect you to. But we're not  
15 going to pick on you either." But then once they understand  
16 that, that's just the way it is. Then your committees work,  
17 because they know there hasn't been anything good ol' boy  
18 system done over in the corner.

19 Of course, we'll go now, but that's where Scott  
20 Moore when he worked the Legislature, first time he had to  
21 make a speech, he and Senator Chambers got into a juggle,  
22 and, of course, Scott, being senator, was being paid, but  
23 Chambers, "I want to (indiscernible). I'd like to ask  
24 Senator Moore where he learned to have this -- such  
25 devastating one-liners that cut to the bone so quick for a

1 junior senator." And Scott says, "When I was five years old  
2 under my Uncle Kenny Moore's kitchen table, I learned, you  
3 can take any position you want, but you got to fry your own  
4 fish."

5 (Laughter.)

6 And Ernie never let that drop. He said, "Okay."  
7 You can have any position you want, but you got to fry your  
8 own fish. Ernie said, "I've never heard any comment like  
9 that." And Scott was political, and Scott is a master of  
10 the one-liner. He can get to the point with one line and  
11 either win or lose on it. And you won't realize he's done  
12 it until you try to walk away, and discover all your parts  
13 aren't attached.

14 Well, we got to go. John's got to be in Ulysses  
15 in an hour, don't you?

16 MR. BARR: Well, thank you very much, Larry.

17 MR. TURNBULL: Thanks, Larry, see you. You coming  
18 in tonight?

19 MR. MOORE: I think I better.

20 MR. TURNBULL: Okay, be a good idea.

21 MR. MOORE: Since I'm not on the committee, I can  
22 sit back and do this now. He just wants me sitting back  
23 there just looking grim, don't you?

24 MR. TURNBULL: I need my two gorillas tonight.

25 MR. MOORE: No, Rigere and I, we're the gorillas.



1       You can tell him the story how that came about. We don't  
2       know how they're spelling it, for sure. There's two  
3       versions of which gorilla we are, but anyway, we're his  
4       gorillas.

5               MR. BARR: Anything else you want to add?

6               MR. TURNBULL: I don't think so. I think we  
7       covered a lot of ground.

8               MR. BARR: Thank you.

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