

Story County Conservation Board
Monday, January 12, 2015
Story County Conservation Center, Ames, Iowa

1. Vice-Chair Ted Tedesco called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS

Ted Tedesco - present
Craig Meyers - present
Allen Weber – present
Jim Pease – present
Nancy Franz – present
Wayne Clinton – present

STAFF

Mike Cox
Jolene Van Waus
Joe Kooiker
Tyler Kelley

GUESTS

Marty Jacobs
Tom Wynia
Joyce Hornstein
Mike Meetz
Aaron Schill

3. ADMINISTER OATH OF OFFICE

Tedesco administered the oath of office to new board member Nancy Franz. Franz gave some background about her professional experience, and she was welcomed to the board.

Tedesco acknowledged Joyce Hornstein’s 10-year term with the board and her leadership over the years. Board members thanked Hornstein for her service to Story County Conservation as well as the Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards. Hornstein remarked that she enjoyed working with the board and staff.

4. ELECTION OF 2015 OFFICERS

MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Weber, nominating Tedesco as chair. MCU.
MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Weber, nominating Meyers as vice-chair. MCU.
MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Franz, nominating Weber as secretary. MCU.

5. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Chair Tedesco invited guests to introduce themselves and welcomed them to the meeting.

6. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

Tedesco announced that consideration of the real estate contract with Pleasant Valley Grove Community Church will be removed from tonight's agenda, and the IRVM update report will follow public comments.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Weber, SECOND by Meyers, to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2014 board meeting. MCU.

8. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS

MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Meyers, to approve claims and receipts as submitted. MCU.

9. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

Director Cox reported that the budget is on track at this time with no anomalies to report.

10. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

Upcoming meetings and events, including IWill Day at the Capital on January 26, were reviewed. Tedesco noted that all 2015 meetings are scheduled for 5:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Weber said he will be absent for the February meeting.

11. COMMUNICATIONS

Tedesco noted correspondence re: septic systems in the East Indian Creek Watershed. Cox will discuss this later in the meeting.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tom Wynia commented that the Story City Economic Development Group is in support of plans to pave the Praeri Rail Trail. Wynia added that he would also like to see a trail along the Skunk River Greenbelt to Story City. He thanked the Story County Conservation Board for their efforts and invited anyone to attend Story City's economic development meetings.

Hornstein reminded the board that she served as a representative to the Story County Trails Committee during her tenure; therefore, the committee will need a replacement.

13. IRVM UPDATE

Vegetation Management Biologist Joe Kooiker and Vegetation Management Specialist Tyler Kelley gave a presentation on the IRVM program. Highlights during FY14 were:

Drainage district work began in 55 miles of open ditches in the county. Over \$25,000 in revenue was received. Three in-house clear cutting projects and several planting projects were completed.

Repairs on the pole barn necessitated by 2013 storm damage were completed with FEMA funding.

Weed complaints (mostly within city limits) were addressed. Notices were sent to four individuals and five public entities regarding noxious weeds on their property.

A total of 51 roadside sites (24 acres) and conservation areas (36 acres) were planted; over 290 miles of noxious weeds and 138 miles of brush were sprayed; five sites (15.25 acres) of right-of-ways were burned; and over 240 pounds of usable prairie seed were harvested. Equipment was rented to ten landowners to plant almost 80 acres of cool season grasses, warm season grasses, and food plots.

Work zone lighting, a tractor loader, a pesticide storage safety cabinet, and a Bowie hydroseeder were purchased with Living Roadway Trust Fund grant funds, and a John Deere 5115M utility tractor was purchased with county funds. Repairs were made on seed drills, combines, and vehicles. The IRVM shop was utilized as a site to repair the Iowa DOT's drills, and re-conditioned units were distributed to counties through Living Roadway Trust Fund grants.

Future plans include spring burning and planting preparations, equipment maintenance, and billing drainage district revenue. Kooiker is working with the NRCS office to get more landowners signed up for CRP, especially in drainage district locations where brush was removed.

14. CONSIDER AMENDMENT TO AGREEMENT WITH SHIVE-HATTERY FOR DESIGN SERVICES FOR DAKINS LAKE EXPANSION PROJECT

Cox explained that the amendment will include additional services by Shive-Hattery for increased interpretative signage design, additional masonry strength testing, and additional sanitary sewer design and construction management.

MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Meyers, to consider an amendment to the agreement with Shive-Hattery for design services for Dakins Lake Expansion project and recommend approval by the Story County Board of Supervisors. MCU.

15. CONSIDER RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT #2015-01 APPROVING A LIVING ROADWAY TRUST FUND

MOTION by Meyers, SECOND by Weber, to approve Resolution #2015-01 approving an agreement between Story County Conservation and the Iowa Department of Transportation for a Living Roadway Trust Fund grant to purchase a Truax seed drill. MCU.

16. CONSIDER RESOLUTION #2015-02 APPROVING SIGNATURE AUTHORITY FOR A CHECKING ACCOUNT WITH STATE BANK & TRUST FOR IOWA HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSES

MOTION by Franz, SECOND by Pease, to approve Resolution #2015-02 giving signature authority for a checking account with State Bank & Trust for Iowa hunting and fishing licenses. MCU.

17. CONSIDER RESOLUTION #2015-03 APPROVING SIGNATURE AUTHORITY FOR A CHECKING ACCOUNT WITH STATE BANK & TRUST FOR ONLINE PAYMENTS

MOTION by Meyers, SECOND by Franz, to approve Resolution #2015-03 giving signature authority for a checking account with State Bank & Trust for online payments. MCU.

18. CONSIDER APPLICATION FOR A PAYMENT GATEWAY AND ONLINE MERCHANT ACCOUNT WITH AUTHORIZE.NET

MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Meyers, to approve application to Authorize.net for a payment gateway and online merchant account. MCU.

Cox said staff will be reviewing fees in the near future and added that on-line reservations and payments do not include camping at this time.

19. GENERAL UPDATES

Director Cox reported on the following:

- Due to some unresolved details, the real estate contract with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and Pleasant Valley Grove Church will be brought forward at the next meeting.

- An agreement with the ISU Research Park is also anticipated for approval next month. A draft of capital costs for the project was distributed by Cox. Cox anticipates that a portion of the open space funding will be cost shared by the Iowa DOT and the project may need to be split into phases.

- Work on the Hickory Grove Watershed Project continues. Cox just received 60 percent design documents, which he forwarded to the Iowa DNR and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship for review and comments. He anticipates that

construction will still begin this summer. A saturated buffer may be part of the project instead of a bioreactor. Landowner negotiations are ongoing.

- SCC is working with Prairie Rivers of Iowa to submit a full application for a Water Quality Initiative Grant. Several different groups are working on this project, focusing on Hickory Grove and the Squaw Creek and East Indian Creek watersheds. Prairie Rivers is taking the lead on writing the grant proposal and will administer the project.

- Cox announced that the board of supervisors agreed to fund one water quality monitor for East Indian Creek. This expense will be added to the Conservation budget proposal and discussed at the budget work session later this week.

- The City of Cambridge started their sewer project today. Cox noted that he had the contract ready for the board chair's signature tonight.

- Several delays have occurred on the Dakins Lake project due to weather, but progress is being made. The contractor is currently working on the shelter building. Cox has given another deadline for completion so the park opening can occur by the end of May 2015.

- The board of supervisors has sent notice to employees that the county's flex benefit package is changing. The option of offering cash to employees to secure their own health insurance was determined illegal under the federal care act, so that practice will end as of July 1. The supervisors are looking at options to correct this situation and hope to have answers in the next few weeks.

- Surveys regarding the legislators reception have been received and tabulated by the outreach coordinator. Cox will send those results to board members.

- Cox distributed spreadsheets showing proposed salary increases in the FY16 budget and explained the formulas used in calculating those increases. His goal is to bring Story County Conservation staff salaries up to similar positions in the state and to mitigate turnover. The revised formulas, which also reflect years of experience, result in an increase of \$45,000 to staff salaries (instead of the \$33,000 listed in the budget proposal presented in early December).

After discussion by the board, Tedesco summarized that it is a detriment to the Conservation department not to be able to compensate current staff and hire new staff at competitive salaries. The board agreed with Cox's proposal and thanked him for his efforts.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Weber, that the meeting be adjourned.

Chair Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Recording Secretary

Story County Conservation Board