

Story County Conservation Board  
March 13, 2017  
Story County Conservation Center, Ames, Iowa

1. Chair Nancy Franz called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS

Nancy Franz – present  
Jim Pease – present via phone  
Craig Meyers – present  
Ted Tedesco – present  
Rick Sanders - absent

STAFF

Mike Cox  
Jolene Van Waus  
Ryan Wiemold

GUESTS

Greg Vitale

3. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

The parks superintendent's report will occur before the action items.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meyers noted a spelling error of the word "guests" under Public Comments.

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Meyers, to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2017 board meeting as corrected. MCU.

6. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS

MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Tedesco, to approve claims and receipts. MCU.

7. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

Director Cox noted that expenses in the building maintenance line are high due to repairs at the ISU Research Park houses. Budget amendments will be requested in both revenue and expense lines of the FY17 budget in April.

8. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

Chair Franz reminded board members of the county's FY18 budget hearing tomorrow. Franz added the Partners and the Outdoor Alliance of Story County meeting on April 6 at 6:30 to the calendar.

9. CONSIDER SECOND READINGS OF REVISIONS TO BY-LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS, AND SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT POLICY

The board made minor wording changes to the Safety and Health Management Policy:

2.8 – Life Preservers – Employees working over or near water ... shall wear U.S. Coast Guard approved flotation devices. 10.3 – Firearms/Weapons Training -- include or as recommended by the Story County Sheriff's office for other weapons. Franz noted that the severe weather plan for Hickory Grove Park will need to be updated when the new showerhouse is finished. 11.4.b - remove the word CPR in reference to a non-life threatening injury. In the Rules and Regulations, 4.4.2 Possession and Use of Firearms, it was suggested that the first two sentences be combined with the word however.

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Pease, to approve second readings of revisions to Story County Conservation By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, and Safety and Health Management Policy as amended. MCU.

10. **CONSIDER MERIT INCREASE FOR JERRY KEYS**  
MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Meyers, to approve a 2.5% merit increase for Jerry Keys, environmental education coordinator, effective April 2, 2017. MCU.
  
11. **CONSIDER LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION AND PPME LOCAL**  
Cox reported that the PPME union representative has signed the letter of understanding to fill the special projects ranger position—which was vacant when the union contract was approved. Cox added that this will be a non-supervisory position with law enforcement duties at the same grade as the non-union rangers.  
  
MOTION by Meyers, SECOND by Tedesco, to approve letter of understanding between Story County Conservation and PPME Local 2003 to include the salary of the special projects ranger position. MCU.
  
12. **CONSIDER DAKINS LAKE CAMPGROUND ATTENDANT CONTRACT**  
MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Meyers, to approve a campground attendant contract between Story County Conservation and Rodney Schmitt, April 3, 2017 – October 29, 2017, at Dakins Lake for \$7,200. MCU.
  
13. **CONSIDER HICKORY GROVE PARK CAMPGROUND ATTENDANT CONTRACT**  
MOTION by Meyers, SECOND by Pease, to approve a campground attendant contract between Story County Conservation and Tom Foley, April 3, 2017 – October 29, 2017, at Hickory Grove Park for \$7,200. MCU.
  
14. **CONSIDER FISH HABITAT GRANT AGREEMENT**  
MOTION BY Tedesco, SECOND BY Meyers, to approve a fish habitat agreement for \$40,000 between Story County Conservation and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for Robison Acres Pond Renovation. MCU.
  
15. **CONSIDER ELECTRIC LINE EASEMENT AT WAKEFIELD WOODS**  
Cox explained that the proposed easement will allow ITC to move poles closer to the roadway and minimize the need for tree easements. Cox noted that an agreement regarding the easement is included in the supplemental packet.  
  
MOTION by Meyers, SECOND by Tedesco, to approve an electric line easement at Wakefield Woods with ITC Midwest LLC. MCU.
  
16. **CONSIDER MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH OUTDOOR ALLIANCE OF STORY COUNTY**  
MOTION BY Tedesco, SECOND BY Meyers, to approve a memorandum of understanding between Story County Conservation Board and Outdoor Alliance of Story County. MCU.
  
17. **CONSIDER CONSULTANT FOR WATERSHED PLANNING CONSULTING SERVICES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF COUNTY-WIDE WATERSHED ASSESSMENT**  
Cox thanked Meyers for serving on the selection committee and reviewing the proposals. Through this process, it was confirmed Story County is the only county in the state developing a county-wide watershed assessment.

Meyers stated that different areas of emphasis were shown in each of the proposals. EOR has already completed two watershed plans and is familiar with the county, the agencies, and stakeholders involved.

MOTION BY Tedesco, SECOND BY Meyers, to recommend to the Story County Board of Supervisors that they award the project to Emmons & Olivier Resources, Inc. at the proposed cost of \$79,303.

18. REPORT FROM OUTDOOR ALLIANCE OF STORY COUNTY

Greg Vitale gave an update on the Outdoor Alliance of Story County (OASC). Currently, seven people are driving the alliance. Their goals include attaining 25 members and hiring a part-time staff person to provide support and continuity. The group was successful in receiving a \$10,000 grant from Danfoss, and their winter hikes in Ames parks have been well received. A joint members appreciation night for OASC and SCC Partners is being held on April 6 at 6:30 at the conservation center.

Pease believes there is some confusion on how people become members of OASC and the levels of participation. Franz suggested developing a brochure highlighting both OASC and SCC Partners and their similarities/differences. She also recommended that OASC board representatives attend local DOVIA meetings to recruit and involve volunteers. Applying for Ames city grants and writing guest articles for the Prairie Horizons were other suggestions given as ways to promote the OASC. Board members commented that the OASC has come a long way in the past year.

19. PARKS UPDATE

Ryan Wiemold, promoted to the new parks superintendent position in June, gave a report on Story County Conservation's field operations. Currently, there are nine full-time and nine seasonal field staff. The special projects ranger position will be filled this spring. Wiemold's goals are to utilize a team approach with staff, improve communication, and coordinate work by holding bi-weekly field manager meetings.

Current projects being managed include Tedesco Environmental Learning Corridor, Hickory Grove shower house/storm shelter construction, Hickory Grove Shoreline Stabilization, Dakins Lake vault toilet, and Jordan Acres acquisition. The shower house (started in December) will be completed in May, the vault toilet will be installed in April, and the Hickory Grove Shoreline Stabilization project is scheduled for completion in March 2019. The lake will be drawn down to accomplish dredging and shoreline armoring.

Currently, three rangers are law enforcement certified, and two additional staff enforce rules. The laptop computers in the ranger trucks have been a huge help in communicating with Story County Sheriff's office and accessing information in the field. Body-worn cameras were purchased last year, and new firearms—the same model the Story County Sheriff's office uses—have been ordered. Rangers have benefited from interagency training, including abduction response, firearms qualification, active shooter, defensive tactics, use of force, and pepper spray/ECD recertification.

Wiemold serves on the Story County Trails Advisory Committee, a County Conservation Peace Officers Association committee, High Trestle Trail Committee, Central Iowa Pedestrian/Bicycle Roundtable, and District I Fish Habitat Grant Committee.

Other projects in progress include installing trail counters on the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail, planning for the Praeri Rail Trail extension through Zearing, planning for cabins at Dakins Lake, GIS implementation, and review of the law enforcement policy. Wiemold and Natural Resource Specialist Yoakum plan to attend a grant writing workshop in April.

The board thanked Wiemold for his report and all his hard work and offered their assistance in overcoming any challenges.

## 20. GENERAL UPDATES

Director Cox gave the following updates.

- While attending ISAC meetings in Des Moines last week, Cox talked to legislators and received legislative briefings. A revenue neutral bill will be introduced on March 14 to fund IWill in phases of 1/8 of a cent/year for three years. Cox emphasized that this constitutionally protected fund needs to be approved!
- The FY18 budget hearing will be part of the March 14 board of supervisors meeting. Cox said he is comfortable with SCC's proposed budgets. The board of supervisors is supportive of the projects and timeline utilizing Energy Transfer Funds. These projects will not be represented in the FY18 budget but will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Cox submitted a water trail enhancement grant application to the Iowa DNR for two river accesses-- Peterson Park and Askew Bridge. Energy Transfer Funds will serve as matching funds.

## 21. BOARD REPORTS

- Franz helped staff celebrate the Service Enterprise Initiative and provided *Learn. Know. Go.* training. She also assisted Environmental Education Coordinator Keys in developing an on-line survey for *Partners* members. There has been a 40% response to the survey, with strong themes of connecting with others, supporting environmental education and conservation, approval of the newsletter, and earmarking funds for projects.
- Pease reported that he joined Tedesco and staff members Wiemold, Yoakum, and Cox in the 30% review of the Tedesco Environmental Learning Corridor design plan. He added that this was a good opportunity to gauge the architect's progress and direction.
- Tedesco reported that he and Cox have met with a private landowner wanting to develop land. SCC has looked at trail connections, and the City of Ames will be involved in establishing a city park. Cox added that one of the new businesses at the ISU RP is interested in installing solar panels.

Cox acknowledged the entire board's active involvement on numerous projects and thanked them for their commitment to Story County Conservation.

## ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Meyers, to adjourn the meeting. MCU.  
Chair Franz adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

  
Recording Secretary

  
Story County Conservation Board