

Story County Conservation Board
Monday, October 10, 2011
Story County Conservation Center, McFarland Park

1. Chair T. Tedesco called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS	STAFF	GUESTS
Ted Tedesco – present	Mike Cox	Mike & Linda Meetz
Wayne Clinton – present	Jolene Van Waus	Linda Murken
Jim Pease – present	Rick Carter	
Erin Wilgenbusch – absent		
Joyce Hornstein – present		
3. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS
Chair Tedesco welcomed guests to the meeting.
4. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS
There were no comments on the agenda or additional handouts.
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 12, 2001 MEETING
MOTION by J. Pease, SECOND by J. Hornstein to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2011 board meeting. MCU.
6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 3, 2011 BOARD RETREAT
J. Pease noted a misspelling of board member Wilgenbusch's name.
MOTION by W. Clinton, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to to approve the minutes of the October 3, 2011 board retreat as amended. MCU.
7. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS
MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by W. Clinton, to approve all claims and receipts as submitted. MCU.
8. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES
There were no comments regarding the financial reports.
9. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS
Tedesco said he will be absent for the November 14 meeting. J. Hornstein noted that board member Pease is presenting the November 8 O.W.L.S. program.
10. COMMUNICATIONS
There were no other communications.
11. PUBLIC COMMENTS
M. Meetz commented that the Partners Fall Festival was a great event with good music, good food, and a good time enjoyed by all.

12. APPROVE GRANT AGREEMENT WITH IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR WATER TRAILS DEVELOPMENT GRANT – SIGNAGE ON SKUNK RIVER

MOTION by J. Pease, SECOND by W. Clinton, to approve grant agreement with the Iowa DNR for A Water Trails Development Grant. MCU.

13. APPROVE PROJECT AGREEMENT WITH IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND GRANT – DAKINS LAKE EXPANSION

MOTION by W. Clinton, SECOND by J. Pease, to approve project agreement with the Iowa DNR for A Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant. MCU.

14. APPROVE ADDITION TO STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION OPERATIONS MANUAL RE: NAMING CONSERVATION AREAS AND PLACING MEMORIALS
Director Cox explained that there is currently no procedure in place for naming conservation areas or placing memorials. It would be helpful to have some structure to use in the future, and this procedure will address both issues. Cox added that would be a 12-month waiting period before any changes are made. J. Pease suggested that funding sources be identified with memorial plaques.

MOTION by J. Pease, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve this addition to the Story County Conservation Operations Manual. MCU.

15. APPROVE RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT NAMING THE E-18 CANOE ACCESS THE LEKWA ACCESS

Cox confirmed that this area was previously known as the Lekwa E-18 Canoe Access, adding that the previous director was modest and did not want the area named after him or his family. However, Cox feels the Lekwa family's contribution to conservation warrants restoring that name to the area.

MOTION by W. Clinton, SECOND by J. Pease, to approve the resolution of support renaming the E-18 Canoe Access the Lekwa Access. MCU.

16. FIELD OPERATIONS UPDATE

Unit Ranger Rick Carter reported on projects that staff accomplished this summer.

- Hickory Grove Park – At the primitive campground, a circle loop road was installed, gravel was added, picnic tables were anchored, and rates were raised to \$12/night. These factors helped remove the party atmosphere at the area. Another major water blowout occurred in the main campground, and staff spent 4-5 weeks making repairs. Campsites were leveled, registration posts were replaced, and mulberry trees and bushes were removed or trimmed to improve the appearance of the campground. Removal of overgrown brush expanded into the main park area. Volunteers cleared hilltops to open up views of the lake. This increased visibility will also give staff a better view to monitor location and use of rental boats. Carter said staff has done a good job in improving the overall look of the park.
- Jennett Heritage Area – A significant amount of time was spent putting in a parking lot and fence at this new area. Staff is now harvesting seed and will chop stalks before broadcasting prairie seed this fall.

- Dakins Lake – Staff also concentrated on changing the look at this park. They leveled campsites, replaced posts, and added new kiosks. Old steps to the dock were removed, and the dock was moved to the boat ramp area. The circuit breaker to the lake’s aerator is being replaced, and the wooden play structure was removed because it did not meet safety standards. The old bridge by the parking lot was also removed, and a berm was installed for a complete trail around the lake.
- Cooper’s Prairie Marsh – The 30-acre addition was planted by NRCS and mowed twice. Wetlands should be created next year in the Reed’s canary patch to the west.
- Ketelsen Marsh – Carter worked with Luethje Tiling to unplug tile and repair holes in tiles.
- Robison Wildlife Acres – Another big facelift occurred at this park. Staff replaced fence, lowered the sign, and made a new driveway. Next, they will be focusing on trails. Carter remarked that the goats brought in for invasive species control cleaned the ground cover really well.
- FEMA projects – Carter is working on wrapping up FEMA projects. All repairs on the HOINT have been completed.
- Praeri Rail Trail – The trail was mowed in McCallsburg, and staff also trimmed and mulched trees. A growth retardant was sprayed along areas of the trail, but it didn’t seem to help—so staff ended up mowing all of it.
- Miscellaneous – Gravel was added to the Shreck Access and Hickory Grove East Game Area. Drainage problems are being repaired at Kalsem Prairie, and trees need to be removed along the HOINT.

For upcoming projects, Carter will be working with Director Cox regarding the vacant park ranger position, harvesting seed at Grant Ridge and Peterson Park, and finishing FEMA projects. Carter hopes to finish the extension to the Touch-A-Life Trail, apply gravel this fall, and install concrete next spring. Staff also plans to add more dirt to Breezy Bay Campground sites for patrons to have more room in front of their campers. Finally, equipment maintenance will occur during the winter months.

Director Cox noted the long list of tasks that staff completed and complimented Carter for his supervision of all of these. Referring to a question from Tedesco, Cox said he will continue follow up on the waterline problems with the Underground Company with the county attorney’s office.

17. GENERAL UPDATES

Director Cox reported that there was an incredible turnout at the *Partners* Fall Festival, and there were many positive comments from people in attendance. Cox recognized Special Projects Ranger for an outstanding job coordinating and running the event.

Cox distributed a conceptual design plan and cost estimates from Fox Engineering for Dakins Lake development. Cox stated that development could be accomplished in two or more phases as money and community desire supports the project. The first phase of the design includes the addition of approximately 20 camping sites, while a second phase shows a new boat access and cabins. With this plan, Story County Conservation is poised to move forward when the time comes and if funding is secured. Cox will share these plans with Zearing’s mayor this winter and envisions a more concerted design effort with community input. Cox added that in addition to the capital expense of the project, the board’s operating budget will be affected by increased maintenance and personnel costs.

Cox reported that Jean Eells is willing to work with the board on strategic planning. A tentative date of November 21 was suggested for a meeting with Eells and the board. Cox will continue to work with Eells during November to move this process forward.

Based on past years, the FY13 budget proposal needs to be submitted to the county auditor the first Tuesday of December. Cox asked if the November board meeting could be moved from the 14th to the 28th to give the board the opportunity to review and give input on the budget proposal before approval at the December 5 board meeting. Board members were receptive to this plan and scheduled the November board meeting for the 28th at 6:30 p.m.

Cox accepted the resignation of Park Ranger Ryan Wiemold effective October 28. Wiemold will be making a lateral move to Plymouth County Conservation to be closer to his family. Per contract, Wiemold will be reimbursing Story County for law enforcement training costs. Cox anticipates advertising for the position after the strategic planning process but hopes to have the position filled before spring.

Cox reported that over 30 applications were received for the outreach coordinator position previously held by Amber Tiarks. Cox remarked that there are some good candidates, and interviews will be held in the next couple of weeks.

Cox will be attending the IACCB District I meeting on October 13 in Warren County and the REAP Assembly meeting in Des Moines on October 27.

Guest Mike Meetz announced the October 24 deadline for Olav Smedal Award nominations. Two representatives from SCC (the director and one board member) and three members of the Ames Isaac Walton League serve on the selection committee. Joyce Hornstein will be the board's representative.

18. IOWA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARDS UPDATE

Joyce Hornstein, District I IACCB representative, gave a report on the recent board of directors meeting.

- Since the board voted to increase dues last year, only five counties still owe for FY12.
- A survey will be distributed to all counties regarding marketing and updates to the mycountyparks.com site. The site is continually evolving, and Chief Executive Officer Tom Hazelton is spending approximately 15-20 percent of his time on the website. As of September, 173,600 users had visited the site—an 88 percent increase from a year ago.
- The 2012 fall conference will be held at Honey Creek Resort, and conference locations have been scheduled through 2015. In past years, the conference has provided 30-40 percent of the IACCB budget. With increased dues helping the budget, it is hoped that more of the smaller counties can participate.
- The importance of attendance at upcoming REAP assemblies was stressed. There is a concern that non-conservation oriented people will attend in large quantities in an effort to be elected to the Congress in January, which would dilute the conservation focus and change the funding formula.
- The spring board workshop will be March 10 at Reiman Gardens. Hornstein advised board members to watch for more details in the newsletter.
- A new contract has been draft for lobbyist Don Brazelton.

19. OTHER

There were no additional comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Recording Secretary

Story County Conservation Board