

Story County Conservation Board
Monday, February 13, 2012
Story County Conservation Center, McFarland Park

1. Chair J. Pease called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.
2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS	STAFF	GUESTS
Jim Pease – present	Mike Cox	Mike Meetz
Ted Tedesco – present	Jolene Van Waus	
Joyce Hornstein – present	Joe Kooiker	
Sandy Opstvedt - present		
Allen Weber – present		
Wayne Clinton - present (ex-officio)		
3. ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE TO NEW BOARD MEMBERS
Jim Pease administered the oath of office to new board members Allen Weber and Sandy Optsvedt and welcomed them to the board.
4. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS
Mike Meetz, interested Nevada citizen, and Scott Renaud, Fox Engineering, introduced themselves and were welcomed.
5. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS
Chair Pease noted supplemental materials and added that agenda items #15 and #16 awaiting comments from the county attorney and not ready for approval at tonight’s meeting.
6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2012 meeting. MCU.
7. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS
MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve all claims and receipts as submitted. MCU.
8. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES
Director Cox reported that income from the Gladys Leui Estate might not be as high as previous years due to tiling work completed in 2011. Revenue of \$55,000 has been received to date in FY12 with at least one more distribution anticipated.
9. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS
Chair Pease noted that the March 12 meeting is set for 5:30 p.m. Since the county budget hearing is scheduled the same evening for 7:00 p.m., the conservation board will meet at the county administration building. T. Tedesco will chair the meeting in Pease’s absence.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

Director Cox commented on a letter complaining about horses damaging the E-18 Greenbelt Trail. Cox and Special Projects Ranger walked the trail and confirmed that horses have been on the trail, and Cox followed up with the complainant. Additional signage has been suggested in the parking lot asking riders to stay off the trail if conditions warrant. J. Hornstein said the trails committee has discussed this problem and feels that established horse groups are adhering to park rules. T. Tedesco suggested contacting 4-H groups to spread the word.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS

M. Meetz announced that the 2011 Olav Smedal Award went to Dr. Tom Rosburg, biology professor at Drake University. The award was presented to Dr. Rosburg at the Iowa Prairie Network meeting in January. Meetz added that the committee welcomes nominations for future awards.

12. APPROVE RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT TO ACQUIRE HERTZ FAMILY WOODS AND NATURE PRESERVE

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve the resolution of support to acquire Hertz Family Woods and Nature Preserve. MCU. Cox has heard from the Hertz family, and Sunday, May 27, has been set for dedication of the area.

13. APPROVE RECOMMENDATION TO AWARD ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES CONTRACT FOR DAKINS LAKE EXPANSION

After receiving requests for proposals, scoring the written proposals, and interviewing all five engineering firms, Director Cox reported that the design team unanimously recommended that the contract be offered to Shive-Hattery of Des Moines. Cox specifically acknowledged Scott Renaud and Fox Engineering for their work and cooperation in preparing the original concept plan for this project and expressed Story County Conservation's appreciation for this valuable service.

MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by T. Tedesco, to approve recommendation to award engineering and architectural services contract for Dakins Lake expansion to Shive-Hattery. MCU.

After receiving a contract from Shive-Hattery, Cox will forward it to the board of supervisors for approval.

14. APPROVE FIRST READINGS OF REVISIONS TO SCCB BY-LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS, PERSONNEL POLICY, DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES, SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT POLICY, AND OPERATIONS MANUAL

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve first reading of Story County Conservation Board By-Laws. MCU.

MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by S. Optsvedt, to approve first reading of Story County Conservation Rules and Regulations. MCU.

MOTION by A. Weber, SECOND by T. Tedesco, to approve first reading of Story County Conservation Personnel Policy. MCU.

MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by T. Tedesco, to approve first reading of Story County Conservation Departmental Policies with the removal of extra wording (“at the”) in Section II. A. Application Procedures. MCU.

MOTION by A. Weber, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve first reading of Story County Conservation Safety and Health Management Policy. MCU.

MOTION by A. Weber, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve first reading of Story County Conservation Operations Manual with reinstatement of the word “REAP” that had been stricken in **Section I. G. Funding, 4. Promoting Increased Funding for REAP**. MCU.

15. APPROVE WATER TRAILS ASSISTANCE GRANT AGREEMENT

16. APPROVE AMENDMENT TO HIGH TRESTLE TRAIL 28E AGREEMENT

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by A. Weber, to table action on these agenda items MCU.

17. INTEGRATED ROADSIDE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

Roadside Biologist Joe Kooiker gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the IRVM’s program accomplishments.

- IRVM maintains right of ways for over 200 miles of hard surface roads and 700 miles of gravel roads in Story County.
- Nineteen pioneer cemeteries are maintained by IRVM.
- Story County performs more burning than any other county in the state. Kooiker is a wildlife fire instructor. In 2011, IRVM assisted with fall burning at Hertz Family Woods and Story City Prairie Park.
- IRVM staff monitors and maintains American kestrel nesting boxes.
- Kooiker works with the public through the private lands program, renting seed drills and providing assistance with seed selection.
- IRVM has office space in the county engineer’s building and works closely with the Secondary Roads Department re: plantings, erosion mats, and brush control. In FY12, IRVM has taken on drainage district maintenance.
- A 40x40 shop building was completed in rural Nevada in FY10, which has provided needed space for equipment and maintenance.
- New noxious and invasive weeds are being targeted and controlled by spraying.
- Kooiker added that specialized equipment (including a Polaris UTV) has been acquired through Living Roadway Trust Fund grants. Equipment maintenance is an ongoing process as not much new equipment has been purchased since 2004. A flatbed truck is being converted for the burn rig during FY12.
- Kooiker serve on the Conservation department’s safety committee as well as the county’s safety committee. He is also serving at the Iowa Weed Commissioner’s Association president and will be stepping down after six years.

18. GENERAL UPDATES

Director Cox gave the following updates:

- The FY13 budget worksession with the board of supervisors was held on January 12 with few changes made to the submitted proposals. Revenue in the boat rental line was increased by \$200, the health and safety expense line was decreased to \$3,000 for the

purchase of two automatic external defibrillators (instead of six requested), and the wind energy program was eliminated with reciprocating increases made in the utility line. In the IRVM budget, drainage district revenue was reduced to \$15,000 as the program is implemented, and the ¼-time data entry position and benefits were eliminated. Billing for drainage district reimbursements will be processed by the engineer's office or the board of supervisors' office.

- Annual staff evaluations are being completed by supervisors and the director.
- An additional \$8,000 is being awarded for the LAWCON grant for Dakins Lake. The original grant award was \$26,000.
- Pat Schlarbaum, Iowa DNR non-game biologist, has met with Cox to identify locations for osprey nesting platforms. Cox has talked with Midland Power, and they are willing to place utility poles at two locations—East Peterson and West Peterson.
- Cox met with a landowner who would like to sell a parcel of land north of Roland. The property is enrolled in the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), and monies have been identified for this potential acquisition from Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, and Whitetails Unlimited. In addition, the DNR may be able to provide funding through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) utilizing Wildlife Habitat Stamp grant money received for the Jennett Heritage Area as matching funds. Cox will continue to pursue options for acquiring this parcel.
- Head Ranger Rick Carter has transferred to the Facilities Maintenance Department, leaving two full-time vacancies in the field staff. Cox has been reviewing staffing options and is ready to move ahead with filling the park ranger position. A natural resources position may be hired in place of the head ranger, reducing law enforcement staff to three—the special projects ranger and two resident rangers.
- Work on strategic planning continues, and Cox said the next step is to make the document available for public comment. The document will be posted on the county's website and mailed to a targeted audience for comments. Then, organizations will be invited to an open session to talk about the plan, followed by a joint meeting between the board and staff.

19. IOWA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARDS UPDATE

J. Hornstein, District 5's representative on the IACCB board, gave the following report.

- The spring workshop for board members across the state will be held on March 10 at Reiman Gardens in Ames. Hornstein recommended attendance at this meeting and reminded board members of the fall conference at Honey Creek Resort in September.
- The state's county conservation board system is evolving under the leadership of new Executive Director Tom Hazelton. Hazelton and Mark Ackelson (President of Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation), are co-chairs of the REAP Alliance.
- Hornstein referred to the two-page summary in the packet showing benefits that counties receive with their membership fees, including mycountyparks.com and the Outdoor Adventure Guide.

20. OTHER

Cox showed a framed photo of the High Trestle Trail Bridge given to Story County Conservation. All the agencies involved in the project were presented with this photo.

Board member J. Hornstein asked W. Clinton to comment on how the budgetary process works in setting staff salaries each fiscal year. Clinton explained that employee salaries are on a pay matrix with minimum, midpoint, and maximum levels in each pay grade. After totaling proposed operating expenses for the next fiscal year, the board of supervisors determines if funds for salary increases are available. In FY12, each employee was given a \$1,000 increase. Clinton said that a 2 percent increase across the board (including unions) will be recommended for FY13. Clinton remarked that a compensation study is currently being conducted by an outside contractor. As an autonomous board, Clinton verified that the conservation board can request a salary increase for the director, but there is no guarantee that the supervisors would approve this request.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to adjourn the meeting. MCU.
Chair Pease adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Recording Secretary

Story County Conservation Board