

Story County Conservation Board  
Monday, March 14, 2011  
Story County Board of Supervisors Conference Room, Administration Building

1. Chair T. Tedesco called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS

Ted Tedesco – present

Wayne Clinton – present

Jim Pease – present

Erin Wilgenbusch – present

Joyce Hornstein – present

STAFF

Steve Lekwa

Amber Tiarks

Joe Kooiker

GUESTS

Rick Dietz

Jeff White

Mike & Linda Meetz

Joe & Michael Leisz

3. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Chair Tedesco welcomed all the guests and asked Mike and Linda Meetz, Jeff White, Rick Dietz, and Joe Leisz to introduce themselves.

4. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

Tedesco noted that the meeting will adjourn after item 18, and the board will ask employees to be excused. In accordance with state law, the meeting will not be a closed session.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by W. Clinton, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2011 meeting. MCU.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by E. Wilgenbusch, SECOND by W. Clinton, to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2011 conference call meeting. MCU.

7. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS

MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by J. Pease, to approve all claims and receipts as submitted. MCU.

Hornstein asked for explanation of the Bobcat claim. Lekwa noted that this year's budget allowed for the purchase of a new Bobcat. The total cost was \$41,000 with the trade-in and the needed attachment.

8. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

Director Lekwa added that amendments have been submitted but there are still some questions on hiring issues. Tedesco inquired whether funds were available for meal and hotel expenses for out-of-town interview candidates. Clinton responded that, in the past, candidates for county department head positions have assumed their own costs.

9. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

Tedesco reminded the board of the upcoming volunteer meeting and brainstorming session.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no additional communications.

## 11. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Joe Leisz attended the meeting to implore the board to keep the remote camping sites at the Safly Tract open. As a member of mountaineering and climbing clubs at Iowa State, Leisz said the site near the river is one of few in central Iowa that is good for testing backpack gear and getting a taste of backpacking. He suggested scouts and other groups may be willing to adopt the area to keep it clean and monitored if that helped to keep it open.

Lekwa explained that there were other sites where supervised youth can go for hike-in camping and that the suggested closure did not pertain to the supervised youth camping at McFarland Park.

Jeff White asked the board to keep the sites open because he has camped in the area with his children and feels all kids should learn those important skills. The site is also good for people wanting to canoe in to camp, something more and more people are doing. He noted that people still camp and party at Bear Creek and that closing a site to camping doesn't close it to partiers, only to law-abiding citizens. He feels that regulation is the most important aspect and that there should be a way to control the parties yet allow campers in. White would like to see like to see alternative hike-in camping sites within the county.

Board member Pease asked White if he had ideas on other potential primitive sites. White said East Peterson Park has suitable locations that could have drive-in access for rangers, be fairly close to the river to paddle down and camp, have privacy and cover, and yet still require people to walk in. White said he has been picking up cans at Bear Creek for several years, and he hasn't seen the amount lessening since it's no longer a regulated camp site.

Rick Dietz echoed White's feelings that he doesn't want the public to lose this camping area. Dietz suggested tighter regulations for reserving a site, like issuing a back-country permit, because if campers were held accountable for the sites there might not be as many problems.

Leisz said the fee for the back-county permit could help finance patrols of the area and that other states like California have similar permits.

Mike Meetz said he was in favor of keeping at least some primitive sites available to the public and likes the idea of a reservation system with a fee to offset the cost of increased patrols. Meetz also commented that he enjoyed Lekwa's guest editorials about flooding.

## 12. APPROVE ESTIMATES FOR CONSERVATION CENTER WINDOW REPAIRS MOTION by J. Pease, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve the estimate from Ames Home Improvement for conservation center window repairs. MCU

Lekwa reviewed the staff recommendation on packet page M-16. He said staff was impressed with the structural integrity of the recommended unit, the appearance is very similar to the existing windows (except it is rot-proof), and it has the best warranty.

## 13. APPROVE REVISED OFFER TO BUY SEGMENT OF THE HEART OF IOWA NATURE TRAIL MOTION by E. Wilgenbusch, SECOND by W. Clinton, to approve the amended agreement to purchase the segment of the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail. MCU.

Lekwa said the correction is in the price of what was approved during the March 3, 2011 conference call. The negotiated price was \$6,000 per acre and not the total price as originally indicated. The property is 1.73 acres for a total cost of \$10,380 for the ¼ mile of the HOINT, west of Huxley. The money expended will come from the trust fund.

14. APPROVE SECOND READINGS OF REVISIONS TO SCCB BYLAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS, HANDBOOK FOR CHILD SAFETY, PERSONNEL POLICY, AND OPERATIONS MANUAL

MOTION by J. Pease, SECOND by E. Wilgenbusch, to approve the second reading of the revisions to SCCB By-laws, Rules and Regulations, Handbook for Child Safety, Personnel Policy, and Operations Manual – with the exclusion of closing the primitive camping at Safly Tract. MCU.

15. APPROVE FIRST READING OF RULES AND REGULATIONS CHANGE REGARDING PRIMITIVE CAMPING AT SAFLY TRACT.

MOTION by J. Pease, SECOND by E. Wilgenbusch, to approve the first reading of Rules and Regulations change regarding the staff recommendation to close primitive camping at the Safly Tract. MCU.

Pease said the only way he could support closing the Safly Tract to camping would be to search actively to find an alternate site so there is a primitive site available for adult groups on county property.

Hornstein inquired about what staff must do if there is a party at the campsite. Lekwa said rangers must respond if a party is detected and they can call for backup if it's available. Tedesco asked if citations were issued. Lekwa said yes, but if juveniles are on site they scatter, and one ranger can't contain them.

Wilgenbusch questioned the county's liability if we can't maintain control over an area. She said the safety of the public, the staff, and of neighboring landowners should be our priority, but just closing it isn't going to stop illicit activities.

Lekwa said the other concern was the absence of sanitary facilities. He reported that he met with public health officials, and they found no way to create a wilderness latrine in a floodplain situation.

MOTION by J. Pease, SECOND by W. Clinton, that the staff or the director work with interested members of the public, clubs and otherwise, to identify suitable primitive camping areas on county land. MCU.

16. CONSIDER IRVM SEASONAL STAFF SALARY INCREASE

Roadside Biologist Joe Kooiker drew attention to the 2009 memo from County Engineer Darren Moon outlining a wage scale for interns at the Engineer's Office. IRVM interns are required to have many of the same skills including CDL, GPS and GIS experience, and spraying, and planting record-keeping pertaining to Weed Law 317.

Kooiker would like to provide a .25/hour incentive for herbicide application and \$1.00/hour for a CDL to enable summer employees to drive the hydroseeder.

Clinton said he is in favor keeping the policy consistent and that he was unaware of the discrepancy when the salaries were proposed at budget work sessions. He also noted that even though there are similarities between duties, there is some difference in division of labor. He said there will not be a budget amendment for salaries.

Wayne Clinton left the room at 6:27 p.m.

Kooiker confirmed there is a cap on the incentive for returning employees and that seasonal staff will study and test for pesticide applicator's licenses on county time so they are properly trained.

MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by E. Wilgenbusch, to approve IRVM seasonal staff salary increase. MCU.

17. REVIEW TIMELINE FOR DIRECTOR VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Pease noted the director search is moving a lot quicker than other agencies with which he's been associated.

Tedesco said that it is conceivable the board could have someone in mind by the first part of May but it will take quite a bit of time over the next month.

18. OTHER

Lekwa has scheduled his retirement reception for Friday, May 20. The board felt a time of 4:00-6:30 p.m. should work for anyone traveling, with a program at 5:30 p.m. It was also suggested the board and their spouses schedule a dinner with Steve and his spouse at another time.

Due to time constraints, the board asked the staff plan the open house. As attendance is optional, it will not be paid time for staff to attend the reception.

Clinton returned to the meeting at 6:37 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by W. Clinton, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to adjourn the meeting. MCU.

Chair Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

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Recording Secretary

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