

Story County Conservation Board  
Monday, June 11, 2012  
Story County Conservation Center, McFarland Park

1. Chair J. Pease called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Pease welcomed the large number of guests.
  
2. **ROLL CALL**

MEMBERS	STAFF	GUESTS
Jim Pease – present	Mike Cox	see separate list
Ted Tedesco – present	Jolene Van Waus	
Joyce Hornstein – present		
Sandy Opstvedt – present		
Allen Weber – present		
Wayne Clinton – present		
  
3. **REVIEW AGENDA AND HANDOUTS**

Chair Pease reviewed the process of the meeting and informed guests that they would be given an opportunity to speak later in the meeting.
  
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2012 meeting. MCU.
  
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by T. Tedesco, to approve the minutes of the May 30, 2012 meeting. MCU.
  
6. **APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS**

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by A. Weber, to approve claims and receipts as submitted. MCU.
  
7. **FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES**

Director Cox reported that the FY12 budget is tracking well at year-end, and he does not expect any surprises.
  
8. **SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS**

Chair Pease noted two park dedications held in the last month and reminded the board about upcoming prairie walks, *Partners meeting*, and the July board meeting.
  
9. **COMMUNICATIONS**

Pease shared a letter from Ed Kasper re: the Dakins Lake expansion project. Kasper stated he would like to see a hike-in camping area in the plans for the park.

Pease introduced Assistant Professor Michelle Soupir, Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering at Iowa State University, who gave a presentation on the Hickory Grove Watershed Assessment project (on file in the administrative office). Soupir

introduced Extension Water Quality Specialist Aaron Andrews and graduate student Rohith Gali.

Dr. Soupier explained that Hickory Grove is a 98-acre man-made lake with an estimated 70,000 visitors per year. In 2008, because of high bacteria concentrations, Hickory Grove Lake was listed as impaired by the Iowa DNR. In 2010, the Iowa DNR's Lakes Restoration Group contacted ISU to conduct a diagnostic study of the lake's water quality. Objectives of the study were to: 1) develop a monitoring plan for water quality; 2) use a model to assess land use changes in the watershed and how those impacted water quality, and; 3) reach out to members of the community and work with them to see what land management practices they might be interested in implementing.

Soupier shared results of the study to date and explained that the third year of data will be collected through this summer. An assessment report will be written with plans to address improved water quality, and implementation funds will be sought next spring.

Soupier and Andrews took questions from the board and public and invited everyone to attend this summer's field event.

## 10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Pease invited guests to comment on the board's proposed resolution regarding hog confinement facilities. The following people spoke on this issue:

Evan Burger, Huxley, reported that he met with a group of concerned citizens at the park last Saturday. A lot of people are concerned with water and air quality issues, property values, and a host of problems with hog confinements. Burger collected a petition with 156 names—specifically against Kyle Mens—to build a hog confinement near Hickory Grove Park. Burger is glad to see this resolution on the table at tonight's meeting and suggested that the Mens' name be listed specifically. He added that a lot of people are angry about this and urged SCC to vote as a representative of the people today.

Kathy Mens, Maxwell, said she grew up (and now lives) on a century farm and watched Hickory Grove Park being developed. Her family camps at Hickory Grove, and she said it is not at all their family's intention to impair Hickory Grove. Several people looked at the proposed confinement site, and the Mens' were told it was not in the watershed.

Steve Newell, Ames, said he has sympathy for both sides. His great uncle made his living with hogs. Iowa has a large population of people over the age of 50, so when we talk about water quality and managing manure, we need to err on the side of looking out for water quality. It is a complex set of problems, and it is not against farmers. He encouraged a lot of careful study before decisions are made.

Jessica Mazour, Des Moines, went to ISU and used Hickory Grove Park frequently. She commented that maybe the intention is not to harm the park, but it is wrong! She supports the resolution and hopes it passes.

Larry Ginter, Rhodes, stated he is a member of Citizens for Community Improvement (CCI), which is deeply involved in fighting large confined animal feeding operations all over the state. He collected 70 signatures in Marshall and Jasper counties. He is concerned about water quality, smell, and flies—all of which will impact property owners and the value of their properties. He wants pressure put on the IDNR and the EPA because the public is sick of confinement operations coming into park areas.

Shane Carman, Nevada, lives just west of Hickory Grove Park. He is concerned about

economics, property values, and the environment. He commended the board for stepping forward and proposing this resolution.

Jim Murdock, representing Occupy Ames, asked if it would be appropriate to have a show of hands of people opposed to this project.

Jim Frevert, Nevada, spoke in favor of the proposed hog confinement by the Mens family. Frevert has lived in Story County since 1964 and worked at Hertz Farm Management. His family has used Hickory Grove, and Frevert has worked with groups on watershed problems and protection. He said the Mens family has no intention of harming the lake; this is not a factory farm, and no outside workers will be hired. The proposed building is on their land, and they plan to follow rules for manure management. He stated that Paul and Kyle Mens are conscientious operators and feels they would handle the facility well. He added that there is a lot of concern and fear, but he would like to see this young person given a chance to do it right.

Lloyd Rasmussen, Colo, just purchased a farm across the road with a 6-acre lake. He said the manure application site is about 15 feet from his property. Rasmussen added that he helped build Hickory Grove Park when he was 14 years old.

Kermit Miskell, Story City, commented that hog confinements do stink. He questioned what would happen to the lake and urged the board to vote their conscience.

Mark Brakke, Nevada, had collected another 75 signatures in opposition to the proposed hog confinement. He said he has nothing personal against the Mens family but wondered if another location had been considered when it is straight south of Hickory Grove with issues of tile, surface drainage, etc.

Angela Dunkin, Ames, stated she is worried about the proposed hog confinement. She wants her nieces and nephews to enjoy Hickory Grove in the future.

Terry Veysey, Ames, has lots of memories of camping and swimming at Hickory Grove Lake. She commented that there are some good operators of confinements, but accidents do happen. Hickory Grove is too good a piece of property to get messed up.

Cheryl Dunkin, Ames, said a spill in Hamilton County affected her sister's house near the river in Story City, so she has seen what can happen. So much on this planet is getting destroyed. Can we save this for our kids?

Sharon Gubon, Ames, said this is an economic issue for Story County and surrounding counties.

Dale Sloan, Nevada, stated he is a former scout master and used to take his troops out to Hickory Grove to camp. It is a beautiful park and has a little bit of everything. A factory farm nearby is not going to help.

Donald Schumann, Ames, said he has lived here since 1968. He feels fortunate that he had a couple of sons active in Boy Scouts and often went camping at Hickory Grove. Schumann is concerned about the quality of the air--not just for Hickory Grove--but for all parks in Iowa. He often travels along I-35 and notices the smell in Hamilton County. He thanked the board for taking action and considering this resolution to try to preserve air quality.

Cynthia Sneller, Ames, expressed her concern about noxious, toxic inhalants that come from this kind of operation and their correlation to diseases.

Dave Goodner, Des Moines, inquired that if the resolution was passed tonight, would it be delivered to the board of supervisors before their meeting tomorrow? Pease replied that it would.

Susan Benner, Ames, expressed her gratitude to the board for this resolution and added we really need people like the board who will stand up and promote water and air quality for our children and our state. She urged the SCC board to hold the DNR's feet to the fire and asked those in opposition to the proposed hog confinement to stand.

#### 11. APPROVE RESOLUTION REGARDING LOCATION OF CONFINED ANIMAL FACILITIES NEAR STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION AREAS

Chair Pease thanked the public for their comments. Pease said he and Director Cox took their concerns to the board of supervisors meeting on June 5, and Pease recognized the frustration of those present at tonight's meeting. Pease said that all the Story County Board of Supervisors can do is to receive the manure management plan. A change in the Iowa Legislature would need to take place to allow home rule. As a result, the Story County Conservation Board drafted a resolution, which Pease read aloud.

The following comments were made by board members:

T. Tedesco is glad that individual names of confinement operators were not included on the resolution. He feels the board needs to look at the broader picture. He questioned how SCC can best protect all its lakes, rivers, prairies, and grasslands and work with other entities in the state to enjoy nature and continue economic progress.

S. Opstvedt said that agriculture is vital to the state of Iowa and to the nation. We need to continue to support agriculture, but people have the right to enjoy natural resources without being encumbered from issues and running the risk of accidental spills. She recognizes the severity and consequences of these issues and supports the resolution 100 percent. She would like the board to have more discussion and communication re: local control of the park systems—the sooner, the better.

W. Clinton said that the Iowa State Association of Counties has been discussing this issue since Iowa law took away local control in the 1990s. He would like the legislature to allow board of supervisors to make decisions on what control they want in their counties. He thanked the public for attending the meeting and the board for considering the resolution.

J. Hornstein has lived on a farm, worked at Iowa State University, and is familiar with health issues on farms. A lot of information is being collected by the state's universities; however, she feels the legislature does not always use that information to their best purpose.

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by A. Weber, to approve the resolution as written.  
MCU.

At 8:35, Chair Pease called for a short break. The meeting re-convened at 8:45 p.m.

#### 12. APPROVE MASTER PLAN FOR DAKINS LAKE EXPANSION

Director Cox reported that the master plan has been completed by the engineers. Feedback

from the public, staff, and review team was incorporated into the plan. Of the approximately 40 written responses from the public, the top ten comments/requests were:

- 1) Accessible walking paths/trail around the lake
- 2) Mix of primitive and RV campsites in separate areas/spacious
- 3) Thriving fishing environment
- 4) Shower house/restroom facility
- 5) Picnic shelter w/electricity
- 6) Handicap accessible dock/open shoreline with easy access to fish
- 7) Boat ramp
- 8) Native prairie /interpretation (educational signage was discussed frequently last night – people want to know more about the evolution of lake design/engineering and history)
- 9) Playground/grass play area
- 10) Cabins

A fish cleaning station and day use/picnic areas tied for #11.

Cox showed changes made from the original plan, including re-location of the playground near the campground and accessible for day use, placement of accessible fishing jetties, amenities that need sewer and water placed together, location of a boat ramp near the entrance of the park, and tent camping/youth group camping sites switched.

MOTION by T. Tedesco , SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve the master plan for the Dakins Lake expansion project. MCU.

13. APPROVE SECOND READING OF REVISIONS TO STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION RULES AND REGULATIONS - REMOTE CAMPING LOCATION AT ROBISON WILDLIFE ACRES

MOTION by J. Hornstein, second by A. Weber , to approve second reading of revisions to Story County Rules and Regulations, Chapter 5.8. MCU.

14. APPROVE PROPOSED FY13 COST-OF-LIVING SALARY INCREASES FOR CONSERVATION STAFF  
MOTION by T. Tedesco , SECOND by A. Weber, to approve proposed FY13 cost-of-living increases. MCU.

15. APPROVE RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FOUNDATION, ENDOWMENT, OR OTHER CHARITABLE GIVING MECHANISM WHICH WILL SUPPORT CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN STORY COUNTY

Pease reminded the board of Assistant County Attorney Steve Owen's comments at the May board meeting. Pease added that he knows of several people interested in a foundation.

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve the resolution supporting the establishment of a foundation, endowment, or other charitable giving mechanism which will support conservation efforts in Story County. MCU.

16. GENERAL UPDATES

Director Cox reported on the following:

- Photos of the just-completed jetty project at Hickory Grove were shown by Cox, as well as photos of the repaired control structure at the sediment pond. Cox added that the sediment pond is the last FEMA project from the 2010 flood event. The amount of silt is incredible, and SCC will really need to consider dredging.
- The new Vegetation Management Specialist position (being funded from drainage district revenue) is being advertised with a closing date of June 21. Cox hopes to have someone hired soon.
- Outreach Coordinator Tiffany Cornelius celebrated her goal of 600 likes on Facebook, and Cox commended her for doing a fantastic job!
- Cox has received an appraisal on a WRP parcel near Roland. The appraisal is lower than anticipated, which will leave a bigger gap between the proposed purchase cost and possible state funding. Pheasants Forever may contribute funds, and Cox has a meeting scheduled with them as well as contacting the state to see how to proceed for acquisition of state funds.
- Clearing and grubbing on the Griffith mile fence project is expected to be completed this month by a contractor. Staff will build the fence later this year.

17. IOWA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARDS UPDATE

Board member J. Hornstein reported that:

- The next board of directors meeting is scheduled for June 15, so she will have more information to share after this meeting.
- Registration materials for the IACCB fall conference (Sept. 13-15) have been distributed.
- Hornstein's term on the board is expiring, so District I will need a new representative.

Hornstein also reported that a City of Huxley trails grant proposal is pending. Cox said SCC is willing to apply for state trails grant funding. The grant application deadline is before the board's next scheduled meeting on July 9, which will necessitate a special meeting.

18. OTHER

W. Clinton reported that Barbara Steinback has been hired as the county's new Information Technology director and will begin June 21. Matt Emerson, the county's current web

designer, will be leaving to work for the Ames City Assessors office.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by S. Opstvedt, to adjourn the meeting. MCU.

Chair Pease adjourned the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

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Recording Secretary

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Conservation Board

Story County