

Story County Conservation Board
Monday, May 9, 2011
Story County Conservation Center, McFarland Park

1. Chair T. Tedesco called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS

Ted Tedesco – present
Wayne Clinton – present (6:06)
Jim Pease – present
Erin Wilgenbusch – present
Joyce Hornstein – present

STAFF

Steve Lekwa
Jolene Van Waus
Carol Williams

GUESTS

Stephen Holmes
Nickie Williams
Taylor Ring
Stephen Bettis

County Attorney Steve Holmes addressed the board, saying one of his favorite duties as assistant county attorney was to attend conservation board meetings. Holmes stated that Steve Lekwa is one of the nicest people he has worked with and that Story County will be at a loss for all the things that Lekwa has done to improve natural resources. Lekwa thanked Holmes and Stephen Owen for standing by him through different circumstances over the years. Holmes also announced that he plans to work with Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller towards a resolution on the endowment issue.

3. DISCUSS GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR NEW DIRECTOR

J. Hornstein distributed her ideas on goals/planning for new director Mike Cox:

- Produce new and update old (look at progress) management plans for all of SCC parks and natural areas
- How does SCC meet needs/wants of public?
- Look at and update 5-year plan with input from staff, public, board
- Ascertain employee needs so that they can work toward their full potential; schedule employee training sessions to help with TEAM relationships
- Work on fundraising, foundations, endowments
- Board needs to update director evaluation to reflect the above

Pease commented that an expectation of updating the long-range plan seems reasonable in Cox's first year. Hornstein feels long-range plans need to go out farther than five years and that it is important to update/review these on an annual basis. Clinton commented that the board is supposed to work hand-in-hand with the director to do this and asked how we look at these plans, evaluate them, and work on them collectively? Lekwa reported that long-range planning done in the 1990s became burdensome to staff. Wilgenbusch said most businesses plan for the next 18-36 months.

Tedesco said that Cox will need a complete inventory of all land holdings. Lekwa stated that the land files are up-to-date with documents (deeds, leases, easements, and special agreements) for every parcel. Wilgenbusch asked about equipment and building inventories. Lekwa replied that these were also available and updated last year.

During the interview process, Cox said he would like to get to know employees and map out a future for each of them. Lekwa said the new county human resources director is talking about changing evaluations to a more continuous monitoring process. Wilgenbusch

commented that Cox may bring his own ideas to this area.

Tedesco asked if it would be appropriate to give Cox a copy of the director's evaluation form at this point as a tool on which to base expectations. The financial data coordinator will send a copy of the director's evaluation form to board members as a work copy. Tedesco said Cox could also give feedback to set up some goals and objectives.

Regarding fundraising, Pease said the Cox will need time to read the landscape, understand the system, and learn what funding is available. A foundation needs to be defined as well as the county's limitations on how money can be invested. Hornstein said she plans to follow up on the status of foundations statewide at the next IACCB board of director's meeting.

Clinton asked Lekwa about the orientation process when he became director. Lekwa replied that he transitioned into the job of acting director when his predecessor was out on medical leave, and he did not really have the opportunity to sit down and talk with the board about expectations.

Board members agreed that the suggestions provided by Hornstein are a good starting point and cover everything for the first few months. The board would like to schedule a retreat in the fall for Cox to report how things are going and do some joint planning.

Tedesco shared with the board that he received several notes from staff who were appreciative of being included in the interview process. Tedesco also thanked Lekwa for being so cooperative. Lekwa said he does not want to cast a long shadow, but he is willing to help Cox in the orientation period as needed.

Chair Tedesco called a 10-minute recess at 6:50 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 7:00 p.m.

4. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Chair Tedesco invited guests to introduce themselves. Present were Special Projects Ranger Carol Williams and several Ames High School students attending for a government class assignment.

5. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

Chair Tedesco noted additional packet materials.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by W. Clinton, SECOND by E. Wilgenbusch, to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2011 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.

8. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

Lekwa commented that we are coming down the home stretch on the fiscal year and that staff have been reminded time and again to have projects completed and billed by June 1. Some planned projects might not get done due to weather delays. Lekwa stated it is highly

unlikely to receive final approval for FEMA mitigation work and to get bids out for completion this FY. Lekwa added that some federal reimbursements have been received, but we are waiting to get small projects done for state reimbursements.

9. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

Chair Tedesco reminded everyone of Steve Lekwa's retirement open house on May 20. Tedesco will contact Mike Cox about moving the next board meeting to June 6. He will confirm the meeting date with board members.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

Lekwa reported that he received a note from Mike Cox as well as telephone requests for fence repairs.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tedesco invited guests to make any comments. Nickie Williams announced there were only eight days of school remaining.

12. APPROVE SECOND READING OF STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION MOVING EXPENSE POLICY

MOTION by W. Clinton, SECOND by E. Wilgenbusch, to approve second reading of the Story County Conservation Moving Expense Policy. MCU.

13. APPROVE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION AND THE HIGH TRESTLE TRAIL STEERING COMMITTEE

C. Williams stated that she has served on the steering committee for several years. Even though construction is done, she feels the committee needs to remain an effort of all the communities involved—even if Story County Conservation doesn't manage any part of the trail. Williams said it will probably take a year for a 28E agreement establishing the trail authority. There are no funding commitments at this time. Williams said she would continue to attend meetings and be part of this process.

J. Pease commented that it would be short-sighted of Story County Conservation not to continue to be part of this group. He said the trail provides real potential for tourism in central Iowa.

MOTION by J. Pease, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve the memorandum of understanding between Story County Conservation and the High Trestle Trail Steering Committee. Roll call vote: Ayes: Hornstein, Wilgenbusch, Pease, Clinton, Tedesco. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Lekwa stated that the High Trestle Trail grand opening was a tremendous success. Williams added that she heard nothing but good comments and that the events offered were truly a cooperative effort among all the communities. SCC had a booth in Slater staffed by several trails committee members, Carol Williams, and Nickie Williams. Williams added that infrared trail counters are located in several places along the trail.

14. ACCEPT FY10 ANNUAL REPORT

MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by E. Wilgenbusch, to table this item until the next scheduled board meeting in June. MCU.

15. OTHER

W. Clinton reported that Ronald Lyons talked to Clinton about going before the board of review. Lyons is concerned that water is coming onto his property from Skunk River Flats and wanted to talk about a mitigation project. Lekwa said he talked to Mr. Lyons previously and explained that there are no levy districts and that Story County is out of the picture.

J. Hornstein commented on handouts from the spring board member workshop.

J. Pease acknowledged Director Lekwa's last official meeting. Board members thanked Lekwa for his service!

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Recording Secretary

Story County Conservation Board