

Story County Conservation Board  
Monday, October 11, 2010  
Story County Conservation Center, McFarland Park

1. Chair W. Clinton called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS

Wayne Clinton – present  
Erin Wilgenbusch – absent  
Ted Tedesco – absent  
Joyce Hornstein – present  
Don Toms – present

STAFF

Steve Lekwa  
Amber Tiarks  
Rick Carter

GUESTS

None

3. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

There were no guests present.

4. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

Chair Clinton asked all board members to review the prepared packet; there were no additions.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by D. Toms, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2010 board retreat. MCU.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by D. Toms, to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2010 meeting. MCU.

7. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS

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

Director Lekwa pointed out memorials for the Touch-a-Life Trail extension in memory of Chris Jutting, an Eagle Scout who did his project at McFarland Park. Lekwa also referred to his staff report regarding the claim from Jensen Excavating for work on the Praeri Rail Trail on the east side of Roland.

8. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

Lekwa confirmed that summer staff, except two with IRVM, are done for the season. Hornstein noted camping revenue was still strong. The contract for the campground hosts is over, and Hickory Grove staff has taken over daily collections and maintenance of the shower house. A front-page article in the Nevada Journal focused on the early trick-or-treat event at the campground and the close of the host's season.

9. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

Clinton reviewed the upcoming events.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

Lekwa reported on an email from Supervisor Rick Sanders regarding a possible prairie planting in McCallsburg. The mayor wants the planting to reduce mowing but several citizens do not.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

12. APPROVE REVISED DIRECTORS JOB DESCRIPTION

Hornstein suggestion deferring the action item since not all board members were present. Lekwa reported he did not get responses from the board members when the revised description was emailed. Hornstein said the revised description is too general – that the first and second pages don't mention conservation at all. She suggested the second sentence should have planning, development, and management as they relate to conservation. Lekwa responded that one of the goals was to simplify the descriptions to get closer to the format Dave Hansen wanted, and that the description will still be able to be revised by the board at any time. Clinton suggested the minutes reflect Hornstein's question regarding the first section and note that the board can review it at a later time. Lekwa suggested the description be submitted to Hanson with the strikes and bolds in place, and he can determine if something should be added back in.

MOTION by J Hornstein, SECOND by D. Toms, to approve the revised directors job description. MCU.

13. CONSIDER REVISED BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE FOR WINTER

Hornstein suggested earlier meeting times through the winter to avoid severe weather. Clinton noted a 5:30 p.m. start time is considered a dinner meeting, and boards who do that serve a light meal. Discussion was deferred to the November meeting for other board members to weigh in. The board will approve the 2011 meeting schedule in December.

14. FIELD OPERATIONS

Unit Ranger Rick Carter reported that the summer began with repairs to the campground shower house and the beach house. One of the biggest issues is the homeowner-grade toilets in the beach house. He told the board that decisions will have to be made on what to do with the beach house due to its age, shifting concrete foundation, and deteriorating walls. Carter plans to add a dock next year to keep boats in the water instead of having to beach them after each rental. The menu at the beach house was changed for reduced food and money handling, which met with approval from the state health inspector.

Work at the primitive campground will continue into the fall. Staff moved the road 40 feet and will extend it to include a loop. Lakeshore campsites will be added and all sites will have camp pads for parked cars to avoid ruts from people parking on grass. Staff will focus on making sure all rules and rates are posted uniformly.

Field staff began FEMA repairs by hauling 24 loads of gravel to the parking lot at Peterson Park. There are still some access roads and bridges to repair from flood damage. Lekwa states the money will carry over until next spring. It is unclear what money will be approved since SCC is recommending mitigation at some of the same sites damaged in

2008. The mitigation person was not able to go make site visits with the rest of the team.

Work was completed on the ranger residence including replacement of counter tops, toilets, and carpet. A fresh coat of paint was applied by volunteers.

Lekwa and Carter met with Manatts Inc. regarding concrete on the Touch-A-Life Trail. Carter will do a presentation for the Ames Town and County Kiwanis in early spring to discuss fundraising and labor. The commemorative stone for the shelter is ready to be installed.

Hornstein inquired how badly a trail needs to be damaged before SCC closes it. Lekwa said they may have to blade areas to push the sand off to the side, but we try to keep trails open. Hornstein also asked what the status was for new signage for trails. Carter responded that the marketing committee decided the directional signs for the parks needed to be updated first, and \$3,000 was spent on that alone. Staff will then assess internal park signs, followed by infrastructure and trail signage. The Saylorville Dam Snowmobile Club applied for funding to put mile-marker signs on the HOINT.

15. HEART OF IOWA NATURE TRAIL PROGRESS

Director Lekwa reported that three weeks of nice weather have allowed Con-Struct to haul rock surfacing. The finished surface is in place through Cambridge. The base rock is down, and paving is still to come for certain areas. It is unclear whether Con-Struct will be able to apply stabilizing seeding before winter. There will still be dirt work to do once grading is finished.

16. DISCUSSION OF SUCCESSION TIMELINE

Clinton talked to Dave Hansen regarding the director succession timeline. Hansen cautioned against starting too early and said 30-60 days after advertising the job is the standard with a 30-day transition period. Because people in the conservation field in Iowa have an idea that director is retiring, he thought making a March or April application deadline would give time to bring people in for consideration. Clinton said Dave Hansen will no longer be contracted with the county after December 31. The Board of Supervisors is considering how to fill the position.

17. DISCUSSION OF FOCUS GROUPS

Clinton deferred discussion until Wilgenbusch is able to give a report.

18. SYNOPSIS OF IACCB CONFERENCE AND BUSINESS MEETING

Lekwa reported Harrison and Pottawattamie counties did a good job hosting, and the scheduled tours were very good. He was impressed with the improvements done on their nature center and prescribed fire program. The IACCB budget proposal for 2012 was approved by an 80 percent margin, which means Story County will incur a substantial increase in dues.

Clinton brought back brochures from both counties and also had good things to say about the keynote speaker and the bank stabilization project for the Nishnabotna. The fall 2011 conference will be held in Independence in Buchanan County.

Hornstein presented Don Toms a plaque in recognition of his leadership, dedication, and service to IACCB.

OTHER

Clinton passed around a map outlining possible changes to the Clean Water Act.

MOTION by D. Toms, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to adjourn the meeting. MCU.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Clinton adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

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Recording Secretary

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Story County Conservation Board