

Story County Conservation Board
Tuesday, November 20, 2012
Story County Conservation Center, McFarland Park

39744768. Chair Jim Pease called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS

Jim Pease – present
Ted Tedesco – present
Joyce Hornstein – present
Sandy Opstvedt – absent
Allen Weber – absent
Wayne Clinton (ex-officio) - absent

STAFF

Mike Cox
Jolene Van Waus
Carol Williams

GUESTS

Mike Meetz – arrived 6:25

3. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The chair welcomed Special Projects Ranger Williams.

4. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

Hornstein asked to strike agenda item #17 because she is no longer serving on the IACCB board of directors. Pease thanked Hornstein for her service to IACCB.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 8, 2012 BOARD MEETING

Hornstein noted several changes to the minutes. Section #8 regarding local food systems planning should read “Hornstein didn’t think there would be usable land for growing vegetables and suggested working with ISU Horticulture.” In Section #15, “Prairie Rivers RC & D board fall meeting” should be changed to “IACCB fall conference,” reference to Johnston should be Johnson County, Brandup should be Bandrup, and the sentence referring to a referendum for money towards conservation should be deleted.

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein, to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2012 board meeting with corrections. MCU.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 5, 2012 BOARD MEETING

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein, to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2012 board meeting. MCU.

7. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS

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

8. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

Director Cox remarked that the FY13 budget is on track.

9. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

Pease noted office closures for Thanksgiving and Sunday hours at the conservation center until spring. The next board meeting is December 3 at 5:30 p.m.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

Pease pointed out a letter in the packet complimenting the environmental education staff.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

12. APPROVE SECOND READING OF REVISIONS TO STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION PERSONNEL POLICY – CELLULAR PHONE POLICY MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein, to approve the second reading of revisions to Story County Conservation Personnel Policy – Cellular Phone Policy. MCU.

13. APPROVE RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR FISH HABITAT GRANT APPLICATION

Special Projects Ranger Williams said staff is planning to submit a fish habitat grant proposal for approximately \$20,000 for fishing jetties and spawning beds at Dakins Lake. A resolution from the board stating they are willing to abide by the rules and stand behind matching dollars (10 percent) is part of the grant.

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein, to approve Resolution 2012-08 supporting a fish habitat grant application for Dakins Lake. MCU.

Cox announced that Manatt's donated all the concrete culverts that will be used in rock piles and as catfish hotels in various locations of Dakins Lake.

14. APPROVE DESIGN PLAN FROM SHIVE-HATTERY INC. FOR DAKINS LAKE EXPANSION AND RECOMMEND TO STORY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS In a recent development, Cox stated that the IDNR wants a flood easement upstream from the lake. Cox has contacted the landowner to go over the plans. Shive-Hattery engineers are working with the IDNR to determine if this easement is a suggestion or a requirement.

Director Cox distributed the 97.5 percent design plan, and he and Williams explained changes and previous questions posed by the board.

- Seeding acreage has been corrected, and wetland areas are now configured.
- Depth of the pond in the rain garden has been increased from 12 to 18 inches. The elevation on the culvert out of the wetland on the west side did not change.
- The weir structure is the outlet on the old dam, which will remain. The box culvert was added. The safety bench was removed for vegetation reasons.
- All electrical receptacles will be the same size—and the same as at Hickory Grove.
- Plans for the shelter are undecided at this time. Instead of a shelter and separate restroom in the day use area in previous plans, a combined shelter/restroom building is shown in the 97.5 percent plan. Improved aesthetics, shelter from the wind, and a prep area are options in this design. Cox and Williams viewed some formed concrete buildings similar to those outlined in the plan and will be looking at other companies that offer buildings with added stone panels. The Zearing community desires a shelter, and SCC does not want to postpone providing this facility. Pease commented that constructing the facility in-house would be cheaper, but the board agreed that staff is already taking on a significant amount of additional work and should focus on other tasks they can do well (seeding, planting trees, etc.).

Cox also distributed a cost spreadsheet for the \$2.7 million project. There was discussion on what should be included in the base bid, as alternate items, and as owner-provided items. The board of supervisors will be asked to authorize bid letting at their December 4 meeting. Bids will go out to contractors on January 7, drawings made available to bidders on January 10, with bid proposals due February 5. The conservation board will plan to

recommend awarding of the contract on February 11, with the board of supervisors to consider awarding the contract on February 12, 2013. These are tentative dates.

Cox noted a memo sent to Supervisor Rick Sanders re: the economic value of parks. Cox added that the timing of grants (including fish habitat grant) is perfect. Outside funding and volunteer help will also be pursued after the project is approved.

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein, to approve the design plan from Shive-Hattery Inc. for Dakins Lake expansion and recommend that the Story County Board of Supervisors move forward with bid letting for the project. MCU.

The board expressed their appreciation for the hard work by Director Cox, Special Projects Ranger Williams, and the rest of the Conservation staff.

15. REVIEW FY14 CONSERVATION AND IRVM BUDGET PROPOSALS

Cox reviewed directions for preparing FY14 budget proposals, which include no new staff unless a cost benefit analysis is provided, no increase in overall operating requests, no new service initiatives, and to keep overtime costs down.

Cox remarked that the budget presented is lean but shows an increase in overall operating expenses. This is due to obligations the board has entered into that require additional funding, which are reflected for natural resources and the Dakins Lake expansion project. Almost 500 additional acres have been acquired by the county to manage in the last few years. A new, full-time position, as well as a seasonal position, is proposed at Dakins for hours that cannot be absorbed by existing staff. Cox plans to create a hybrid ranger/technician position that will have rule enforcement capabilities.

Cox commented on several items in the budget proposals:

- Tasers will provide an intermediate level of force more applicable in park settings. Tasers de-escalate situations without loss of life, and Cox feels they are important for officer safety and accomplish SCC's law enforcement goals.
- Bullet-proof vests are scheduled for replacement. Grants will be explored to cover this expense.
- Long guns were requested by rangers but are not included in this budget. Both equipment requests will require law enforcement policy changes. Cox added that active shooter training will be provided to all departments.
- Used "Toughbooks" laptops from the Sheriff's Department are being received (at no cost) for use in SCC ranger vehicles. Supporting software, bar code scanners, GPS units, and mounting hardware are needed to complete arrest records and reports under new protocols. This will allow SCC to integrate with the sheriff's system, save time, and improve ranger safety.
- Beach ropes at Peterson Park are being added for swimmers' safety.
- Additional fuel is budgeted for extra travel to Dakins Lake.
- A contract with Conservation Corps Iowa will help with invasive species control and some work at Dakins Lake.
- \$10,000 is budgeted for preliminary planning for a comprehensive trails plan for the county. Supervisor Sanders is very interested in moving forward with some long-range capital planning with a trail component. Story County Planning and Development may also be involved in this effort.
- The IRVM budget shows additional seasonal labor and materials for extra seeding due to increased roadside re-grades and ditch clean-outs, matching funds for a batwing

mower to be purchased through a Living Roadway Trust Fund grant, and replacement of a 1977 Massey Ferguson tractor.

Pease asked board members to review the proposals and follow up with additional questions as needed in preparation of approval at the December 3 meeting.

16. GENERAL UPDATES

Director Cox reported on the following:

- The board of supervisors approved acquisition of the Strum parcel. The owner would like to close by December 31.
- Plans for the Hickory Grove Watershed need discussion soon. ISU has completed their assessment and is nearing completion of the implementation plan. A Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB) grant will be submitted in December. Cox will recommend that the Soil and Water Conservation District serve as the agent for this grant.
- Over 50 responses were received on the strategic plan from the on-line survey made available to the public. After results are tabulated, the next step will be a joint meeting with the board and staff. A tentative date of January 7 was mentioned.
- The director said he is contemplating taking some time off in December.

17 OTHER

Mike Meetz said that the Gilbert Cub Scouts are looking for projects and contacted him about building bluebird boxes.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein, to adjourn the meeting. Chair Pease adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Recording Secretary

Conservation Board

Story County