

Story County Conservation Board  
May 13, 2013  
Story County Conservation Center, McFarland Park

77018944. Chair J. Pease called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS

Jim Pease – present  
Joyce Hornstein – present  
Allen Weber – present  
Ted Tedesco – present  
Craig Meyers - present  
Wayne Clinton - present (ex-officio)

STAFF

Mike Cox  
Jolene Van Waus  
Amy Yoakum

GUESTS

Greg Vitale  
Cara Brandenburg  
Trev Brandenburg  
Jace Brandenburg

3. ADMINISTER OATH OF OFFICE

Chair Jim Pease administered the oath of office to board member Craig Meyers. Craig was welcomed to the board for a five-year term.

4. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Guests were welcomed and invited to introduce themselves.

5. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

Chair Pease noted the supplemental packet containing additional claims and the April staff report. Amy Yoakum's report was moved forward in the meeting prior to action items.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Weber, SECOND by Tedesco, to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2013 meeting. MCU.

7. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS

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

8. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

Cox answered questions from the board regarding specific line items in the budgets.

9. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

The chair reviewed upcoming programs, noting that the next board meeting is June 10. Meyers reported that he will be absent.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

Pease noted a letter in the board packet from Story County Pheasants Forever thanking SCC for being involved with acquisition of the Bear Creek Wildlife Area (Strum property). MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Weber, that SCC send a letter to Story County PF acknowledging and thanking them for their involvement in this acquisition. MCU.

Pease reported that he, Director Cox, Supervisor Sanders, and Assistant County Attorney Reynolds met with the Mens family at their farm near Colo regarding plans to build a hog confinement. Pease said it was a good meeting and that he had expected the family to be here tonight to share information with the board. Clinton added that board of supervisors office referred the family to the Environmental Health Department, but no manure management plan has been filed with the Iowa DNR to date. Pease explained that SCC has no statutory role but feels a responsibility to comment.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Trev and Jace Brandenburg, members of Gilbert Boy Scout Troop 157, stated they were in attendance to earn a citizen badge requirement.

12. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF FIRST READING OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION BY-LAWS

Director Cox read an excerpt from the Story County Procurement Policy and suggested that this language be added to Story County Conservation Board's Purchasing section of the by-laws.

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein, to insert the language from the county procurement policy re: sole sources into article 7.21 of the Story County Conservation By-Laws. MCU.

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Weber, to approve a first reading of Story County Conservation By-Laws as amended. MCU.

13. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION FY12 ANNUAL REPORT

Board members noted the many things done during the past fiscal year and said staff should feel proud of what was accomplished. An incorrect caption on a photo of the Hertz Woods dedication was pointed out and will be corrected.

MOTION by Weber, SECOND by Tedesco, to approve the FY12 annual report. MCU.

14. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CLOSING DAKINS LAKE PARK DURING CONSTRUCTION

Board members discussed the director's recommendation to close the park for safety reasons during construction. Cox stated the closure will be for about one year and that this will be communicated to the public and the Zearing City Council.

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein, that Dakins Lake Park be closed during construction. MCU.

15. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH STORY COUNTY OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

Greg Vitale stated that the alliance (a public/private partnership) is being formed to secure additional funding and resources for Story County Conservation. Board members are still being recruited. Vitale explained that the proposed memorandum of understanding was based on the Ada Hayden friends group and the City of Ames. The Story County Attorney's office reviewed the document and had no changes.

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Meyers, to approve a memorandum of understanding between Story County Conservation and the Story County Outdoor Alliance. MCU.

Director Cox acknowledged Vitale and the rest of the Alliance board members for their work on this project. Cox said that Vitale came forward with the energy to spearhead the Alliance and get other people involved to make it happen. Board members stated they are glad to see this moving along and thanked Vitale for all his hard work.

16. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF GRAZING AGREEMENT BETWEEN FINCH LIVESTOCK EXCHANGE AND STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein, to approve a grazing agreement with Finch Livestock Exchange. MCU.

17. CONSIDER APPROVAL FOR STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION TO PARTICIPATE IN CENTRAL IOWA TRAIL GRANT OPPORTUNITY

Director Cox explained that approval is requested only for the cost of writing the grant, which would fund information hubs. Match money, if the grant is awarded, would be requested at a later date. The cost of writing the grant through Heartland RC&D would be divided among the entities (cities and counties) involved.

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein, to approve Story County Conservation's participation in a Central Iowa Trail grant proposal with a maximum expenditure of \$1,000 by SCC. MCU.

18. NATURAL RESOURCES UPDATE

Amy Yoakum, natural resource specialist, gave highlights of work accomplished since she started her position almost one year ago.

- Grant projects included:
  - Living Roadway Trust Fund grant (\$4,680) for tree/brush removal at the I-35 Prairie Area. Conservation Corps Iowa (CCI) was hired for four days to clear brush, enlarging the prairie area by .75 acre. Several public safety issues were encountered at the site, including discarded meth labs, hypodermic needles, human waste, and large amounts of garbage.
  - A Wildlife Diversity Grant (\$3,500) provided funding for a restoration project at Robison Wildlife Acres. CCI spent six days clearing brush and trees and conducting a prescribed management burn. Funds have been budgeted in FY14 to hire CCI to continue this project after SCC reached its limit of three grant awards for this area.
  - Another Wildlife Diversity Grant (\$5,180) will restore remnant prairie at Dakins Lake. CCI will arrive on June 3, concentrating their efforts on an area that supports regal fritillary butterfly larva. Dr. Tom Rosburg has been hired to study density and frequency measurements for several species of violets.
  - A Five Star Restoration Project Grant application was submitted to the National Fish and Wildlife Federation to address gully erosion and provide watershed education and training at Hickory Grove Park. Grants will be awarded in late June or early July.
- A prairie haying program was instituted last year, with McFarland Park and Ketelsen Marsh being the first areas utilized. Yoakum would like to continue the program at McFarland Park and Skunk River Flats this year and wants to make the opportunity available around the county.

- A land stewardship intern program was started, with an ISU forestry student helping one day/week during the spring semester. He researched and recorded soil types at Dakins Lake for inclusion in that area's management plans for his class credits.
- Goats are returning this spring to Robison Wildlife Acres to graze on invasive species. Between grazing and drought last year, re-growth has been impacted. ISU student volunteers are checking on the goats.
- Yoakum attended the ISU Career Fair and Ag Career Day to recruit interns and summer staff, spoke to an ISU career class, gave a presentation about the goats at Winterfest, attended an invasive species workshop in Wisconsin, and assisted the IDNR with fish sampling.
- Work with volunteers and service learning groups included orientation and/or supervision to remove honeysuckle, collect prairie seed, and pull garlic mustard. The Gilbert Hiking and Recreation Club and Conservation Corps Iowa were nominated by SCC for Story County Youth Volunteer Awards.
- Other tasks over the past year include planting prairie, conducting species inventory, job shadowing students, developing a new management research request form, hand collecting prairie seed, and creating/updating management plans. Yoakum is coordinating staff in their goal to complete three management plans (Jennett Heritage Area, Robison Wildlife Acres, and Hertz Family Woods and Nature Preserve) by January.
- Yoakum announced that she has received all required certifications for her position.

The board thanked Yoakum for her presentation and complimented her efforts regarding alternative management concepts, grants, and public programs.

## 19. GENERAL UPDATES

Director Cox gave these updates:

- Dakins Lake Project – One of the permits is still pending approval. Cox gave a presentation to the board of supervisors regarding the project on May 7. Once the permits are received, the board of supervisors will consider approval of the project and authorize bid letting.
- Local Foods Plan – Story County Planning and Development has analyzed all county property (including soils and physical parameters) for possible production sites as part of the local foods plan. Cox is reviewing this report with Planning and Zoning.
- Conservation center furnaces and air conditioners – When performing spring maintenance work on the conservation center units, it was discovered that two of the three air conditioners are inoperable due to worn out parts plus damage to wiring caused by mice.  
Initial repairs costing \$1,600 would be needed before additional repairs could be assessed. C&K Heating proposed replacing both air conditioners and two furnaces for approximately \$14,000. Cox reminded the board that the latest estimate for switching to a geothermal system would cost around \$230,000 with an estimated payback period of 24 years. He added that Midland Cooperative performed an energy audit of the building last week and reported that the building was fairly tight and suggested only minor improvements to improve energy efficiencies. The board directed Cox to proceed with competitive bids for replacement of two furnaces and two air conditioners for the conservation center.
- Cox distributed an email he received about the federal farm bill.

20. OTHER  
None.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Tedesco; SECOND by Weber, to adjourn the meeting. MCU.  
Chair Pease adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

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Recording Secretary

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Conservation Board  
Story County