

Story County Conservation Board
Monday, February 9, 2015
Story County Conservation Center, Ames, Iowa

1. Chair Ted Tedesco called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. **ROLL CALL**

MEMBERS	STAFF	GUESTS
Ted Tedesco – present	Mike Cox	Mike Meetz
Craig Meyers - present	Jolene Van Waus	Jessica Reynolds (arrived 5:35)
Allen Weber - absent	Ryan Wiemold	Steve Holmes (arrived 5:45)
Jim Pease - present		
Nancy Franz - present		
Wayne Clinton – present		
3. **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Mike Meetz, interested Nevada citizen, introduced himself.
4. **REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS**

Chair Tedesco announced that the Skunk River Unit update will follow financial reports and updates.
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOTION by Franz, SECOND by Pease, to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2015 board meeting. MCU.
6. **APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS**

MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Meyers, to approve claims and receipts. MCU.
7. **FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES**

Pease inquired about funds for a digital phone line to the multipurpose room. Cox reported that staff were able to run a new phone line while repairing the handicapped accessible door in the lobby, and the phone has now been installed.
8. **SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS**

Franz noted that a mask making workshop (which was not listed in the Prairie Horizons newsletter) is being offered at the conservation center on February 14.
9. **COMMUNICATIONS**

Tedesco commented on the news article on mountain lions in Iowa and asked if the board should make a statement re: a closed hunting season. Pease offered to draft a statement.

County attorneys Holmes and Reynolds were present to answer questions about the proposed Bakken pipeline. They explained eminent domain and exceptions to the law. Tedesco said the Iowa Utility Board will not consider the application until early 2016.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mike Meetz announced that the 2014 Olav Smedal Conservation Award, sponsored by the Ames Chapter Izaak Walton League of America and the Story County Conservation Board, went to Mike Todd, an environmental science teacher at Ames High School. The committee is seeking nominations for future awards.

11. CONSIDER EASEMENT AGREEMENT AND UTILITY PERMIT AT KETELSEN GREENWING MARSH

Cox explained that the natural gas pipeline will travel north to south, be directional bored (unless there are extenuating circumstances), and will not go under the marsh area. Story County will be compensated for the agreement and for any damages to the site. The agreement was reviewed by Story County Attorney Reynolds.

MOTION by Franz, SECOND by Meyers, to approve an easement agreement and utility permit with Interstate Power and Light and Alliant Energy at Ketelsen Greenwing Marsh. MCU.

12. SKUNK RIVER UNIT UPDATE

Park Ranger Ryan Wiemold gave a Power Point presentation on projects and field work accomplished by the Skunk River Unit in 2014. Highlights included:

January-March – Staff helped with the Hickory Grove Park revetment project, worked with the ISUAGC Club to build a foot bridge at Bear Creek, built and installed a portable kiosk, and placed fish structure (with volunteers) at Dakins Lake. Summer staff were hired, bluebird and wood duck boxes were monitored, and vegetation on the island at Hickory Grove was thinned to help reduce goose populations.

April-June – An emerald ash borer workshop and a fishing tournament were held in April, and parks were spruced up. Danny Simcox started as the new Conservation Technician II, and summer staff received orientation and began working in May. Dirt work and seeding were done at Dakins Lake, and three FEMA projects from 2013 flooding were completed. Debris from storm damage and post-winter clearing was completed on park trails. Over 300 feet of concrete was added to the Touch-A-Life Trail to connect the newest segment on the south side of the lake to the existing trail started in 1976. Ames Town and Country Kiwanis has been involved in this project from the beginning and has been an awesome volunteer group. Wiemold estimated that by doing this project in-house, over \$50,000 was saved. A pergola swing will be added this summer.

July-September – In July, staff cleaned up flood damage on trails, mowed prairies, and prepared the parks for the holiday weekend. An ISU design studio class designed and built two docks at West Peterson Park. Twelve students and their instructor spent about eight weeks on the project, contributing 700 volunteer hours. New signs incorporating various park rules were installed at Peterson Park. Staff worked on brush control in the parks. In September a Pheasants Forever Veterans Hunt was held at Ketelsen Marsh, the shoreline at West Peterson Park was armored with donated concrete chunks, and a United Way volunteer group helped build 40 picnic tables for Dakins Lake.

October-December – More seeding was done, silt fence was pulled, plantings were mowed, and fabric, mulch, and playground equipment and stones were installed at Dakins Lake. Prescribed burns were conducted, docks were removed at West Peterson Park, budget research for FY16 started, and rangers attended law enforcement training at Camp Dodge. Seeding was done at Roland Wildlife Area, and trees were cut at McFarland Park. A Boy Scout troop was supervised in building more picnic tables, and staff completed several woodworking projects for the environmental education staff.

In January 2015, annual evaluations were completed, staff split firewood, started a timber stand improvement project at McFarland Park, completed maintenance on equipment and vehicles, and worked with Nevada High School students to build fish structure. Other projects for 2015 include planting 190 trees and shrubs at Dakins Lake, developing the Roland Wildlife Area, and helping with plans for the ISU Research Park project. Two ISU classes are working on projects for SCC. One is developing an emerald ash borer plan for the campground at Hickory Grove Park; the other is working on a plan to control oriental bittersweet at Christiansen Forest Preserve.

The board thanked Wiemold for his report and told him to keep up the good work!

13. GENERAL UPDATES

Director Cox reported on the following items:

- Referring to correspondence from Contract Land Staff LLC in the supplemental packet re: the Bakken Pipeline, Cox asked for the board's input before responding. After some discussion, Cox will check with other counties to see what they are doing and report his findings to the board. Cox added that he filed the board's questions with the Iowa Utilities Board, which has included him in email notices re: any other filings in the state.
- The Dakins Lake Expansion project is moving along. A new deadline for the project has been set; the contractor has stated that he can meet this deadline.
- Prairie Rivers has submitted a Water Quality Initiative grant for East Indian Creek/Squaw Creek. Cox reported that several partner agencies and two cooperatives were involved in the grant preparation. Grant awards should be announced in April.
- Work continues on the ISU Research Park agreement, and Cox is developing a plan to recommend phases and funding options for the \$4 million project. Cox explained that early estimates did not include trail construction of a 2.5-mile R38 connector (\$600,000) plus one half of the trail expenses. The IDOT is very interested in stream and woodland mitigation, but their available funding is much less than anticipated. Cox will be presenting a plan for partnerships to date and potential grants.

14. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Franz has been assigned to the Story County Trails Committee and met with Special Projects Ranger Williams for orientation. Tedesco attended the January trails meeting in her absence. Franz is also working with staff to develop a communications plan. The director and Tedesco will be attending a country strategic planning meeting later this week.

15. OTHER

Ted reported that he and Meyers are working on the director's annual evaluation. They will meet with him and then give their comments to the board.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Meyers, that the meeting be adjourned.
Chair Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Recording Secretary

Story County Conservation Board