

Story County Conservation Board
Monday, September 14, 2015
Story County Conservation Center, Ames, Iowa

83227488. Chair Ted Tedesco called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS

Ted Tedesco – present
Craig Meyers - present
Allen Weber – present
Jim Pease – present
Nancy Franz – absent
Wayne Clinton – arrived 5:37

STAFF

Mike Cox
Jolene Van Waus
Luke Feilmeier
Carol Williams

GUESTS

Chris Shires
Jerry Moore
Shannon Hoy
Riley Dunbar

83228400. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Chair Tedesco invited guests to introduce themselves.

4. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

Tedesco announced that updates on the C2C Plan and Indian Creek Unit would occur after approval of the minutes.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Weber, SECOND by Meyers, to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2015 board meeting. MCU.

6. STORY COUNTY C2C PLAN REVEIW

Chris Shires, Confluence, distributed updates to Chapter 4 of the Cornerstone to Capstone Plan, noting additions to the plan's goals and strategies. Board members discussed the need to prioritize possible park expansions, exploration of easements as well as land acquisition, and how to plan parks and greenways for population growth. The board also requested more detail on the expansion of facilities, storm water development and management, and trail connectivity. Drainage district work is mentioned in the plan, but roadside vegetation management is not included.

Shires said he would also work on incorporating changes in cover types, erosion, etc. from Story County Conservation's 1975 plan. Shires invited the board to forward any additional comments to him for inclusion in the plan.

7. INDIAN CREEK UNIT REPORT

Park Ranger Luke Feilmeier reported on activities at the Indian Creek Unit the past year.

At Hickory Grove, the 2014 goose hunt was successful, with 44 geese harvested. Feilmeier added that firing a canon and hazing geese on the island to prevent them from nesting are some of the other tactics being used to decrease the population. Feilmeier has been working with the Iowa DNR to identify areas for shoreline armoring to reduce erosion into Hickory Grove Lake. Steps to the beach were replaced, a new storage shed for life jackets and

boating equipment is being constructed, trails and bridges were built or repaired, and parking lots around the park were improved. Work continues with Central Iowa Water Association to update the park's sewer system.

Repairs from 2013 flooding were completed on the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail. Prescribed burning was done on over 71 acres at Hickory Grove Park and Jennett Heritage Area last fall. Staff planted 15 acres of prairie at Jennett, completed maintenance mowing, sprayed woody vegetation, and harvested prairie seed. Turf mowing at various parks took staff about 3 days each week to complete.

Feilmeier has been working with Nevada schools to arrange parking, etc. for their cross country meet at Hickory Grove. He met with an Eagle Scout who built benches for the park and with an ISU class to develop a plan for trees that will be affected by the emerald ash borer.

Feilmeier completed a 14-week training at the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy in April and experienced his first summer as a peace officer. He is also an airman in the Iowa Air National Guard in the civil engineering unit, which Feilmeier said has provided valuable training in his role at SCC.

Board members thanked Feilmeier for his report.

8. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS

MOTION by Meyers, SECOND by Weber, to approve claims and receipts. MCU.

9. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

Board members noted that receipts exceeded expenses this month.

10. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

Tedesco announced that Pease, Cox, and he will be attending the IACCB conference in Linn County. A public raptor release will occur at McFarland Park on September 20, the Partners Fall Festival is October 4, and the next board meeting is October 12.

11. COMMUNICATIONS

Director Cox reported that he had received glowing comments on the conditions of the parks. Meyers added that he gets positive comments from the public whenever he wears his Dakins Lake t-shirt.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS

ISU student Riley Dunbar stated she was observing a public meeting as a class assignment.

13. CONSIDER EMPLOYMENT OF ELIZABETH WAAGE, NATURALIST

Director Cox said Waage was selected from a field of 59 applicants. She has naturalist experience with Polk, Warren, and Dallas counties.

MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Meyers, to approve employment of Elizabeth Waage effective September 21, 2015. MCU.

14. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #2015-04 SUSPENDING THE REFUGE STATUS AT HICKORY GROVE PARK

MOTION by Weber, SECOND by Pease, to approve Resolution #2015-04, temporarily suspending the refuge status at Hickory Grove Park for a controlled goose hunt from October 3, 2015 – January 8, 2016. MCU.

15. CONSIDER REAFFIRMATION OF STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION STRATEGIC PLAN

Pease make several suggestions to the plan: updating statistics in the At A Glance section, adding more comments on fundraising efforts, and quantifying the use of volunteers.

MOTION by Weber, SECOND by Meyers, to reaffirm the Story County Conservation Strategic Plan with suggested updates. MCU.

16. GENERAL UPDATES

Director Cox reported on the following:

- A verbal agreement has been reached for an easement on the stream on the east side of the ISU Research Park. A plat is being prepared, and Cox expects a written agreement for review soon. Verbal agreements have been obtained for easements from the research park to the ISU Dairy Farm.
- The Story County has been working with Dakota Access regarding construction of the Bakken Pipeline in Story County. Cox expects discussion on an agreement for recommendation to the board of supervisors at the October meeting.
- The Central Iowa Water Association has brought forward a tentative proposal to partner with Country Living Court to install a lift station at Hickory Grove Park and a lagoon at the mobile home park. Cox said an agreement should be ready for the October board meeting with installation planned yet this fall.
- The Watershed Improvement project at Hickory Grove is going well. The pond is almost done and will meet the significant completion date. The landowner and funding sources are pleased with the project to date.
- A preliminary plan for extension of the Praeri Rail Trail was distributed for review. Cox added that the Zearing park board, town businesses, and individual citizens have shown their support for the trail to be routed through Zearing and to Dakins Lake.
- Cox announced a potential land acquisition in southern Story County. The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation is interested in buying the property to hold until the county has funds to acquire the property.

17. BOARD REPORTS

- Meyers reported that the Outdoor Alliance will be sending a mailing soliciting members. The Alliance is interested in helping with the Dakins Lake project, and Meyers suggested the extension of the Praeri Rail Trail into Zearing.
- Pease has been involved in discussions regarding the Iowa State Research Park.
- Tedesco thanked Weber and Meyers for organizing the employee appreciation day. A thank you letter will be sent to Jeff Taylor for hosting the event.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Meyers, SECOND by Weber, to adjourn the meeting. MCU.

Chair Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

Recording Secretary

Story County Conservation Board