

Story County Conservation Board
Monday, October 12, 2015
Story County Conservation Center, Ames, Iowa

80434016. 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 - present
Wayne Clinton – present

STAFF

Mike Cox
Jolene Van Waus
Jerry Keys

GUESTS

Mike Meetz
Nate Easter

80435888. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Guests were invited to introduce themselves.

4. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

Tedesco announced that discussion on the proposed agreement with the ISU Research Park and the environmental education report would occur after public comments.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Meyers, to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2015 board meeting. MCU.

6. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS

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

7. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

Director Cox shared details regarding the purchase of an automatic water sampler to be used on East Indian Creek to gather data for the water quality improvement project.

8. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

Tedesco reminded board members that the next regularly scheduled meeting is on November 9.

9. COMMUNICATIONS

Cox passed on a thank you from Jeff Taylor for SCC's help in installing an osprey nesting platform. Tedesco shared photos of the event.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

M. Meetz announced that the deadline for Olav Smedal Award nominations is the end of October. Forms are available on the SCC website or from Meetz.

11. CONSIDER TRANSFER OF PATRICK IVES AND MEGAN DOHRMAN FROM IRVM TO CONSERVATION SEASONAL EMPLOYMENT
MOTION by Meyers, SECOND by Weber, to transfer IRVM employees Ives and Dohrman to Conservation seasonal employment effective October 4, 2015. MCU.
12. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF 2015-16 WELLNESS INITIATIVES FOR STAFF
MOTION by Franz, SECOND by Pease, to approve 2015-16 wellness initiatives for Conservation employees. MCU.
13. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF LEASE AGREEMENT WITH VANCO, INC.
MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Meyers, to approve renewal of a lease agreement with Vanco, Inc. MCU.
14. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF LEASE AGREEMENT WITH MICHAEL AND LINDA MEETZ
MOTION by Meyers, SECOND by Weber, to approve renewal of a lease agreement with Michael and Linda Meetz. MCU.
15. CONSIDER RESOLUTION 2015-05 OF SUPPORT FOR FUNDING THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND OUTDOOR RECREATION TRUST FUND
MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Franz, to approve a resolution supporting funding for the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund signed by all board members. MCU.
16. CONSIDER RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR ACQUISITION OF JORDAN ACRES FARM BY THE IOWA NATURAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION
Cox said that habitat stamp grant funds will be requested for this acquisition, and the IDNR has committed NAWCA funds. The Outdoor Alliance of Story County, INHF, and Pheasants Forever have offered their support in raising funds towards the purchase cost. The family has requested that the property be named Jordan Acres.

MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Meyers, to approve a resolution of support for the acquisition of the Baldus Family's Jordan Acres Farm by the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation. MCU.
17. CONSIDER AGREEMENT WITH IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH PARK FOR PHASE 3 OF THE RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT PARK AND RECOMMEND APPROVAL TO THE STORY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Cox and Nate Easter, ISU Research Park, reviewed updates to the agreement, explained changes, and answered questions about the project. Cox praised Easter and Steve Carter for carrying SCC's concerns forward while working on the project. Cox added that he is comfortable with the proposed agreement. Easter stated it has been an arduous project but feels it is moving in the right direction. He reported that the public is very excited about the proposed park, trails, and restaurant in this phase of the research park.

MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Franz, to recommend approval of the agreement with Iowa State University Research Park for Phase 3 of the Research Park development to the Story County Board of Supervisors. MCU.

18. **CONSIDER AGREEMENT WITH CENTRAL IOWA WATER ASSOCIATION FOR HICKORY GROVE SEWER CONNECTION**

Cox announced that Central Iowa Water Association has coordinated the addition of the Country Living Mobile Home Park to the proposed sewer connection to Twin Anchors Campground. A lift station would be located at the west end of Breezy Bay campground, with a sewer line leading to the mobile home court, where another lift station would pump the sewage to Twin Anchors Campground. This plan would eliminate the need for a lagoon at Hickory Grove Park. Central Iowa Water will engineer and permit the system and could start the project this fall. Funds for the project are in the FY16 budget for this first phase of the sewer project at the park. Cox added that the mobile home court owner has not signed an agreement yet. Cox explained that sewer rates are based on water usage. Tedesco remarked that this project will also be an improvement to water quality—all part of the Hickory Grove Watershed project.

MOTION by Franz, SECOND by Weber, to approve the agreement with Central Iowa Water Association for a sewer connection to Hickory Grove Park, contingent on a signed agreement with Country Living Court. MCU.

19. **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM REPORT**

Environmental Education Coordinator Jerry Keys gave an annual update to the board. The EE program gained a new naturalist (Beth Waage) in August, and some summer and school programs were changed around during the transition. Keys reported that, overall, there were fewer outdoor experiences but more in-class programs last year—resulting in 3,000 more contacts. A new online registration process began just in time for summer camps, and the public loved it. O.W.L.S. participation is down, and Keys is evaluating that program. The long-running Halloween Hike was replaced with a program using GPS units to find locate hidden pumpkins in the park.

Staff are working with the Nevada multi-age group to implement pollinator gardens at schools and will be submitting a REAP grant to buy materials next year. Keys submitted a grant proposal to the Story County Community Foundation to fund a natural playscape (\$35,000) at McFarland Park. The Outdoor Alliance of Story County is partnering with SCC to offer bus scholarships for students to participate in service learning projects. Keys reported that ten schools have applied for funding this year.

With the assistance from field staff, rangers, and the outreach coordinator, new kiosks are now located at McFarland Park. Park visitors are able to view flyers for upcoming events and take brochures.

Keys is excited to be working with an Ames High School learning community to update On Cell stops. The class is going to write and record content, design a layout for an app, and take pictures and videos. Current stops will be updated this year before new sites are added.

Keys is also working with an eagle scout candidate to revamp the conservation center bird feeding area and a girl scout group to create habitat for pollinators.

Keys stated that Outreach Coordinator Eaves is doing a good job posting news and events on Facebook. She is also evaluating Instagram and reviewing Conservation's page on the county website. Keys asked board members to go to the website, review it, and send

comments to him or to Eaves. Keys added that Waage would like to start doing tweets. The board thanked Keys for his report and praised the environmental education staff for doing an outstanding job.

20. GENERAL UPDATES

Cox showed pictures of work completed on the Hickory Grove Watershed Improvement project. Fence for exclusion of the cattle is not installed yet but will be soon. A substantial completion inspection with the contractor will be held later this week. The first reimbursement request has been submitted to the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

Cox distributed a 10-year capital improvement list for possible adoption at the November board meeting. Cox asked board members to review the list and give him feedback.

Cox has submitted (with five other region counties) a pre-proposal for the pollinator program to the USF&WS that will include funds for land acquisition, pollinator seed, habitat improvements, and education. No application or funding opportunities have been presented yet, but some counties are being proactive. Franz suggested informing legislators as well; Cox will follow up on this.

Cox met with John Pohlman and Al Weber to formulate plans for the legislators reception—tentatively December 3, 4, or 11. The theme will be water quality, perhaps with a speaker and a panel discussion on local efforts.

FY17 budget proposals are due to the county auditor on December 4. A second meeting may need to be scheduled in November to meet this deadline. An additional meeting date to consider a proposed agreement with Dakota Access was also discussed. Tedesco added that he expects high attendance at this meeting, and he would like to hold a special meeting at the county's administration building. The board said they would prefer to have a ruling from the public hearings in November before they consider the easement—tentatively in January.

21. BOARD REPORTS

- Franz (and friends from three other states) attended the Wild Women of the Woods program and commented on the great job the SCC environmental education staff did to make this a wonderful event. The trails committee had two work days in the last month. Many students volunteered--many "first timers" at McFarland Park. Approximately 330 people attended the Partners Fall Festival.
- Meyers reported that the Outdoor Alliance completed their membership mailing, targeting the Nevada area. The group is excited about helping with a potential land acquisition.
- Tedesco attended a C2C task force meeting last week. Public meetings to review the entire plan will be held in January with approval by the board of supervisors scheduled for February. Tedesco suggested hosting a meeting in January to receive more comments on the Conservation section of the plan.
- Weber reiterated plans in progress for the legislators reception in December.

- Pease reported on the Iowa Association of County Conservations Boards' fall conference. He shared highlights of tours, park facilities, and the keynote speaker. Pease remarked that it was an interesting conference and that it would be good for Story County to host again to show what SCC is doing.
- Clinton announced that the Story County Board of Supervisors has adopted a social media policy for county employees. Cox said this policy—as well as others the county has adopted—will be considered when Conservation conducts its annual policy review at the beginning of the year.

22. OTHER

Cox reported that there is a question of whether the Army Corps of Engineers can dispose of property in the Skunk River Greenbelt without offering it to the original owners. The county auditor, recorder, and attorney are researching those parcels for review.

With the help the Ames City Clerk's office, Tedesco is attempting to locate the owner of property near the ISU Research Park to request an easement for a trailhead.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Pease, SECOND by Weber, that the meeting be adjourned. MCU.
Chair Tedesco adjourned the meeting 7:50 p.m.

Recording Secretary

Story County Conservation Board