

Story County Conservation Board  
June 11, 2018  
Story County Conservation Center, Ames, Iowa

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS

Jim Pease - present

Craig Meyers - present

Christine Laumer - present

Ted Tedesco - present

Nancy Franz - present

Rick Sanders - present

STAFF

Mike Cox

Jolene Van Waus

Erica Place

GUESTS

Dr. Bill Norris

3. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

The outreach program update was moved ahead of the action items.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Pease introduced Dr. Bill Norris, who will speak later in the meeting about the sensitive areas inventory.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Franz, SECOND by Tedesco, to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2018 board meeting. MCU.

6. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS

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

7. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

Director Cox and Financial Data Manager Van Waus reported that most projects budgeted in FY18 have been completed; however, purchase of a skidsteer will be delayed until FY19. Other maintenance and utility expenses will be paid during the next week.

8. CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

Pease reminded board members of the joint meeting with the Story County Board of Supervisors and the Planning and Zoning Commission on June 18 at 5:00 and the regular board meeting on July 9.

9. ACTION ITEMS

A. Consider Employment of Seasonal Staff

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Meyers, to approve employment of Tanner Christiansen, conservation aide, effective June 13, 2018. MCU.

B. Consider Resolution Approving FY19 Salaries

MOTION by Franz, SECOND by Laumer, to approve Resolution 2018-04 approving FY19 salaries for Story County Conservation employees. MCU.

C. Consider Proposed Step and Longevity Adjustments

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Laumer, to approve proposed FY19 step and longevity adjustments for Story County Conservation employees. MCU.

D. Consider Amended Collective Bargaining Agreement

MOTION by Meyers, SECOND by Franz, to approve amended Collective Bargaining Agreement between Story County, Iowa Conservation Board and Public, Professional, and Maintenance Employees Local 2003 (Conservation Unit) for 2018-2021. MCU.

E. Consider Resolution Endorsing a Grant Application to Iowa State Recreational Trails Program

MOTION by Franz, SECOND by Tedesco, to adopt Resolution 2018-05 endorsing a grant application to the Iowa State Recreational Trails Program for hard surfacing on the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail from Slater to Huxley. MCU.

F. Consider Prairie Lakes IX Wetlands Project Agreement

Cox announced that this grant will provide funding to complete the purchase and restoration of the Jordan Wildlife Area. With numerous private donations and grant funding, Sanders noted that Story County taxpayers were responsible for only \$10,000 of this \$880,000 project.

MOTION by Meyers, SECOND by Tedesco, to approve Prairie Lakes IX Wetlands Project Agreement 18CRDWBKSMITH-001 between Story County Conservation Board and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for a grant for \$100,000. MCU.

G. Consider Change Order for Tedesco Environmental Learning Corridor-Bid Package 2 with Boulder Contracting, LLC

Cox explained that this change order includes replacement of limestone with 20% filter pave (a recycled glass material) on all the secondary trails.

MOTION by Franz, SECOND by Laumer, to consider change order #1 for Tedesco Environmental Learning Corridor - Bid Package 2, Trail Paving and Park Amenities, between Boulder Contracting, LLC and Story County Conservation Board for \$95,615 and recommend approval by the Story County Board of Supervisors. MCU.

H. Consider Extension of Contract for Services with Botanical and Ecological Consulting

Cox remarked that \$60,000 is budgeted for a second year of the sensitive areas inventory. He asked that board to consider using Energy Transfer funds towards the project.

MOTION by Franz, SECOND by Tedesco, to consider an extension of a contract for services between Botanical and Ecological Consulting and Story County Conservation, effective June 1, 2018-June 30, 2019, for \$57,875 utilizing \$30,000 from Energy Transfer Funds, and recommend approval by the Story County Board of Supervisors. MCU.

## 10. UPDATES

### A. Sensitive Areas Inventory

Dr. Bill Norris reported on phase 2 of the Sensitive Areas Inventory. Through the end of this month, he and Dr. Tom Rosburg will complete their inventory of 5,000 high priority natural areas in Story County. They interact with landowners, compile plant lists on each site visited, and make notes about erosion problems and interesting bird species. Dr. Rosburg will evaluate and condense the data.

To date, Norris and Rosburg have surveyed 140 different parcels representing 55 landowners. Each landowner is contacted before a site visit, and several landowners have asked to walk along. A second mailing to landowners in medium quality areas (phase 3) has been sent, and permissions to survey those properties are being received.

In response to questions from the board, Norris said he is seeing problems with reed canary grass and a proliferation of garlic mustard and honeysuckle. However, Reactor Woods is in really good shape, Doolittle Prairie is a glorious property, and he is seeing good bottomland forest.

The board thanked Dr. Norris for his report.

### B. Outreach Program Update

Outreach Coordinator Erica Place gave an update on volunteers and the outreach program over the last year.

Volunteer hour totals were just shy of 3,500 in FY19, and all SCC supporters were invited to the 2018 recognition dinner. Place is trying to reach new demographics by targeting new volunteers, types of volunteers, and offering volunteer opportunities in the evenings and on weekends. Potential training, including CPR, first aid, and technical topics is being considered.

Social media – Facebook is still growing, and Place has added some live videos. She shared analytics on two recent events advertised on Facebook and said she plans to experiment with future events. She is seeing growth in Instagram and Twitter and has asked seasonal staff to share photos with #SCCsummer.

It has been a full year since the newsletter was redesigned. Feedback on this change has been positive, and Place is always looking for additional ways/locations to distribute the newsletter. The county's website was recently updated, and the new platform will allow more departmental control. Place is anxious to update information and pictures, sync social media accounts, and provide some new functions—including online forms and photo contest submittals.

Place is working to increase SCC's presence at community events, interact with ISU clubs, update marketing contact lists, and select outlets for paid advertising. She partnered with IPTV to air a segment on a Doolittle Prairie walk and worked with SCC environmental education staff to provide a tub of outreach items to take to speaking events and booths, providing consistency in SCC's brand and message.

The board noted an increase in staff involvement with volunteers and thanked Place for her great work.

C. General Updates

Director Cox reported on the following:

- Cox and Pease have contacted several individuals to help with design of the Dakins Lake cabin scheduled for construction in FY19.
- A state recreation trails grant for paving a section of the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail (if SCC's application is successful) would reduce energy transfer funds needed towards the project.
- A rerouted trail--spanning a different creek--will eliminate expensive repairs to the damaged Bear Creek Bridge.
- Bids for Phase 2 for the Hickory Grove Lake renovation project were much higher than anticipated. The DNR did not award the project and instead is moving ahead on Phase 3 planning--which will include drawdown of the lake and dredging. A drainage pipe will not be installed, and SCC staff will draw the lake down 10 feet before bids are solicited. The possibility of relaxing fishing rules will be discussed at the July board meeting.
- Staff are working with a landowner to repair/replace a section of fence along the HOINT. The old fenceline has been cleared (at a cost of \$1,800), and a contractor will provide an estimate to install new fencing.
- An additional easement is needed on a small portion of the Praeri Rail Trail that runs through Zearing.

D. Liaison Assignments, Committee Meeting Updates, and Announcements from the Board

- Tedesco has located additional stone that could be used for a spawning bed at Hickory Grove Lake. He also inquired about a date for the annual employee recognition.
- Franz reported that the June 1 Trailgate Party was a success with a good turnout. Board members thanked Franz for her work on this event.
- Pease commented on the importance of the June 18 meeting with the board of supervisors and planning zoning commission to review the watershed assessment report.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Pease adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m.



Recording Secretary



Story County Conservation Board