

Story County Conservation Board
Monday, January 9, 2012
Story County Conservation Center, McFarland Park

1. Chair T. Tedesco called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS

Ted Tedesco – present

Wayne Clinton – present

Jim Pease – present

Joyce Hornstein – present

STAFF

Mike Cox

Jolene Van Waus

GUESTS

Tom Hertz

3. ELECTION OF 2012 STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD OFFICERS MOTION by W. Clinton, SECOND by J. Hornstein, nominating Jim Pease as Chair. Clinton moved, seconded by Hornstein, that nominations cease and a unanimous ballot be cast. MCU.

MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by J. Pease, nominating Ted Tedesco as Vice-Chair. Hornstein moved, seconded by Clinton, that nominations cease and a unanimous ballot be cast. MCU.

MOTION by J. Pease, SECOND by W. Clinton, nominating Joyce Hornstein as Secretary. Pease moved, seconded by Clinton, that nominations cease and a unanimous ballot be cast. MCU.

Newly elected Chair Jim Pease conducted the remainder of the meeting.

4. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Tom Hertz was welcomed to the meeting.

5. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

No changes were noted.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 5, 2011 MEETING

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve the minutes of the December, 2011 board meeting. MCU.

Referring to the Communications section of the December meeting, W. Clinton said he spoke with the county's human resource director, who recommended sending an immediate response to applicants who are not chosen to interview for job openings.

7. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS

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

Director Cox clarified questions from Pease regarding work by the Conservation Corps at Robison Wildlife Acres. Pease requested that the board be provided a breakdown of vehicle fuel usage and costs to help with future budget justification.

8. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

There were no additional comments or remarks.

9. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

Chair Pease reminded board members that the next meeting is February 13 at 5:30 p.m.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tom Hertz provided a history of the Hertz Family Woods and Nature Preserve, sharing that his mother, Marjory, recognized it as a unique piece of property, and his parents purchased the area for \$100/acre in 1950. The Hertz family and volunteers have spent many years cleaning up the area, developing a trail, installing intakes, protecting back slopes, laying gravel, and planting prairie grass. Marjory Hertz and Steve Lekwa were credited for keeping weeds under control. There are acres of wildflowers and about 20 different varieties of trees. Hertz showed several photos and pointed out features of the area on an aerial map.

Hertz stated that the family's objective is to preserve the area as a memorial to Carl, Marjory, and Doug Hertz by dedicating it to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, who will then deed it to Story County. They would like the public to enjoy the area but have it remain primitive--without picnic tables. The Hertz family wants the area to require minimal maintenance when it is turned over to the county.

Director Cox explained that the board does not need to take any action at tonight's meeting. Cox will be meeting with the Hertz family and the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF) to prepare an agreement and identify any remaining tasks and costs. A resolution seeking approval to acquire the parcel will be presented at the February 13 SCC board meeting. The INHF will approve acquisition at its February 23 meeting. A dedication ceremony is planned for Memorial Day weekend, when family members will be in Iowa.

The board was impressed with all the work the Hertz family had put into the area. Chair Pease thanked Mr. Hertz for coming to the meeting and asked that the board's thanks be conveyed to the whole family for all their efforts. Cox added that he toured the area last summer and that it is a beautiful site that will provide the public many opportunities for passive enjoyment.

12. GENERAL UPDATES

Director Mike Cox reported on the following:

- The new wetland at Cooper's Prairie Marsh was constructed in December. At the walk-through inspection, the area was already holding a lot of water. Everyone involved (the contractor, NRCS, Ducks Unlimited, and SCC) was pleased with the project. Seeding will be finished in the spring.
- The Dakins Lake Development project is moving forward quickly in the engineering services phase. Requests for proposals are out, and a meeting is scheduled with engineering firms this week to answer questions about the proposal process. A design review team (including SCC Board Member Jim Pease, Director Mike Cox, Special Projects Ranger Carol Williams, Story County Engineer Darren Moon, Iowa DNR Fisheries Biologist Andy Otting, and Zearing Mayor Jim Chance) has been secured.

Cox has been in contact with the Dakins family, and they are willing to work with SCC on plans for a 13-acre lake plan (as opposed to an 8-acre lake). This would make a significant difference in the biology and sustainability of the lake and help the economy in the Zearing area. Cox has conferred with the board of supervisors and LeAnn Harter regarding funding and zoning questions and with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and township trustees about selling a portion of land to the Zearing Cemetery.

- SCC has been approached by an individual who has 80 acres of land recently enrolled in the wetland reserve program. The owner would be willing to have SCC acquire the property. Cox added there might be a significant contribution from Pheasants Forever and Whitetails Unlimited. Cox will continue to explore options.
- Cox reported that the staff visioning exercise with Jean Eells on December 28 went well. He and Eells will work on combining suggestions from both the board and staff sessions and prepare a document for public input. Cox shared that staff has been active in natural resource meetings and is moving forward on management plans. He is pleased with the staff energy and enthusiasm being shown!
- Cox did more research on the two wind turbines proposed in the FY13 budget, and he reported that the numbers didn't pencil out as favorably as presented. He recommended removing these requests from the budget proposal. Board members agreed that, although the educational value of this type of project is important, it is not feasible without outside funding. The board thanked Cox for his analysis.

13. IOWA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARDS UPDATE

Hornstein reported that IACCB is encouraging board members and staff to attend the fall conference at Honey Creek Resort to show support for the southern Iowa host counties. The spring board member workshop will be held March 10 at Reiman Gardens. The board of directors is meeting January 20, so Hornstein will have more to report in February.

14. OTHER

T. Tedesco thanked board members and staff for their cooperation during the last year and through the director search process, adding that he enjoyed serving as chair the past year. Board members thanked Tedesco for his great leadership.

W. Clinton that the board of supervisors will appoint two new members to the Conservation Board tomorrow to fill Erin Wilgenbusch's unexpired term and Clinton's expired term. Clinton added that he is willing to serve as an ex-officio member if acceptable to this board. MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by J. Hornstein, that staff be directed to make necessary changes in the Story County Conservation by-laws to support this proposal. MCU.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by W. Clinton, to adjourn the meeting. MCU.
Chair Pease adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.