

Story County Conservation Board
Monday, January 10, 2011
Story County Conservation Center, McFarland Park

1. Chair W. Clinton called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS

Wayne Clinton – present
Erin Wilgenbusch – absent
Ted Tedesco – present
Joyce Hornstein – present
Dr. James Pease – present

STAFF

Steve Lekwa
Amber Tiarks
Carol Williams

GUESTS

John Pohlman
Mike Meetz
Linda Meetz

3. ADMINISTER OATH OF OFFICE TO NEW BOARD MEMBER

Chair Clinton administered the oath of office to new board member Dr. James Pease.

4. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

John Pohlman, Carol Williams, and Mike and Linda Meetz introduced themselves.

5. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

The board briefly reviewed materials provided.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2010 meeting. MCU.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by T. Tedesco, to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2010 conference call meeting. MCU.

As follow-up, Lekwa reported that the deed for the additional Cooper's Prairie Marsh land was recorded.

8. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS

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

9. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

Director Lekwa gave an extended report for the benefit of the new board member. Several items were noted: The FEMA line item will likely require a budget amendment as Story County Conservation (SCC) is responsible for 15 percent of the repair cost as local share. FEMA pays 75 percent, and upon completion of the project, the state contributes 10 percent. SCC has five small projects with an estimated cost of \$114,000. The Uniforms and Equipment line reflects purchase of specific equipment to send Ranger Wiemold to Iowa Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA.) Likewise, the Education and Training line item shows a negative number due to ILEA expenses. Under Building Maintenance, Lekwa plans to repair rotting window sills in the conservation center multi-purpose room out of this year's budget, if possible.

10. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

Chair Clinton reviewed the upcoming events. Lekwa added a meeting of the Hickory Grove Watershed Assessment Committee at the conservation center on February 1.

11. COMMUNICATIONS

Lekwa had additional communication that all major Heart of Iowa Nature Trail (HOINT) construction is done, and the contractor has released the trail back to SCC. The trail is now open for public use.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Director Lekwa presented Special Projects Ranger Carol Williams with the State Trail Worker Award for Iowa from the American Trails Symposium. Gary Burger, vice president of Iowa State Snowmobiling Association, nominated Williams for her work on the HOINT but was unable to present the award due to the weather. Lekwa said that, at times, the work was grueling but Williams has been tenacious and focused. Lekwa also recognized Financial Data Coordinator Jolene Van Waus for the complexity of the financial organization the project entailed.

13. ELECTION OF 2011 STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD OFFICERS
MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by J. Pease, nominating Ted Tedesco as Chair and Wayne Clinton as Vice Chair. MCU.

Chair Tedesco conducted the remainder of the meeting.

MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by W. Clinton, nominating Jim Pease as secretary. MCU.

14. HEART OF IOWA NATURE TRAIL PROGRESS

There were no further additions.

15. TIMELINE FOR DIRECTOR VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The board discussed, in depth, the need for finalizing the director's job description and vacancy announcement, and they plan to organize the timeline at the February meeting.

Lekwa reminded the board that May 21, 2011 is the last day of a full pay period and that he cannot be employed after May 31 due to IPERS stipulations. Pease stated that, considering the level of the position, a replacement may not be able to start by June 1.

Hornstein will forward an interviewing guide from the Iowa Civil Rights Commission that the Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards (IACCB) received for the Chief Executive Officer replacement.

The board requested a conference call meeting on Friday, January 14, 2011 at 8:00 a.m. to finalize the job description and vacancy announcement so the director position can be advertised as soon as possible.

The board discussed additional requirements they would ask of interview finalists, such as a short presentation to the public and a meet-and-greet with public and staff. Meetz

requested to be on the interviewing team. Tedesco responded that the intent of the board is that once the number of applicants is narrowed down by the board members, they would seek input from others.

16. DIRECTION OF FOCUS GROUPS

There have been no new developments regarding the focus groups. The plan for the coming year is to meet with various user groups, find out how they feel about what SCC is doing, how they are using facilities, what staff could do to communicate better, etc. Meetz has already submitted notes he took after speaking with various volunteers. Groups like *Partners*, Story County Trails Committee, and Izaak Walton League have regular meetings, and a facilitator could attend and get the discussion going. Special Projects Ranger Williams offered to work with Wilgenbusch to compile a report from the comments received.

17. OTHER

Tedesco inquired about the status of a foundation. Lekwa said the county attorney feels the Iowa Attorney General's office is stonewalling the issue because of the huge implications for non-profits across the state. One remedy is for SCC to start their own foundation and roll the existing money over to that, but Lekwa reiterated SCC can't do anything until the county attorney is on board.

Discussion of the new gun permit law and its ramifications for natural areas was held.

Meetz echoed the previous comments for Carol's accolades. He also discussed the current political environment regarding "too much public land" and encouraged the board to be as progressive as they have been in the past and use resources like state habitat stamp funds when available. Pohlman agreed, saying that people need places to get outdoors. He hopes the board will keep that in mind as they do strategic planning and focus groups.

Chair Tedesco noted he will be absent for the February meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by W. Clinton, SECOND by J. Pease, to adjourn. MCU.

Chair Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Recording Secretary

Story County Conservation Board