

Story County Conservation Board
Monday, May 14, 2012
Story County Conservation Center, McFarland Park

155008064. Chair J. Pease called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS

Jim Pease – present
Ted Tedesco – present
Joyce Hornstein – present
Sandy Opstvedt – absent
Allen Weber – present
Wayne Clinton – present

STAFF

Mike Cox
Jolene Van Waus

GUESTS

Stephen Owen
Don Berning
Eric Phipps
Matt Ward
Jeff Jacobson
Mike Wilson

3. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Chair Pease welcomed guests to the meeting and invited them to introduce themselves.

3. REVIEW AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

The agenda was reviewed.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve the minutes of the April 9, 2012 meeting. MCU.

5. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS

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

6. FINANIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

Director Cox reported that the FY12 budget is projected to be 95 percent expended at year end with savings in salaries and benefits.

7. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

The chair noted several meetings regarding the Dakins Lake expansion. Board members are welcome to attend the May 30 staff meeting; it will be posted as an official board meeting. Board members were also reminded about the dedication of Hertz Family Woods and Nature Preserve on May 27 and the re-dedication of the Lekwa Access on June 3.

8. COMMUNICATIONS

T. Tedesco commented that the April 28 fishing tournament and May 6 Partners festivals were successful events. He also noted that Cox gave an excellent presentation to the Ames Kiwanis Club last week.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Pease invited guests present to discuss a dog trial at Peterson Park to speak at this time.

10. APPROVAL OF PHEASANTS FOREVER DOG TRIAL AT PETERSON PARK

Jeff Jacobson, Bird Hunters United, addressed the board about holding a dog trial at Peterson Park on September 22, 2012. He explained that this will be a fundraising event for Story County Pheasants Forever which will provide friendly competition and fun while raising

awareness about hunting, bird dog trials, Story County facilities, and getting people outdoors. The \$8 fee will cover bird planter and judge expenses. Dogs and guns will be made available so that everyone can participate. Jacobson added there will be plenty of volunteer help and that observers are welcome.

Don Berning, Story County Pheasants Forever, asked the board to approve a special events permit for the dog trial at East and West Peterson parks. Berning stressed that this would not only be a fundraising event but an opportunity to raise awareness of Story County Conservation's parks and expand the base of people who enjoy outdoor activities. Story County PF would like to offer this as an annual event.

Director Cox said he is in favor of the event and added that Peterson Park is the best place to hold the dog trial. The park may be closed, and adjoining landowners within the 200-yard shooting limit will need to be contacted. Parking, event layout, and use of ATV's are all issues that will need to be resolved.

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by A. Weber, to approve a dog trial at Peterson Park with any special conditions to be set by the SCC director. MCU.

Berning also asked the board for permission for Story County Pheasants Forever to host a youth pheasant hunt at West Peterson Park. This season is set two weeks before the regular pheasant opener and is available to youth 12-16 years old who have received their hunter education certificate. Berning added that participants would be limited to 16 youth. Pheasants would be placed on site for each participant to have a chance at harvesting a bird—one hunter at a time.

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by A. Weber, to grant tentative approval of a youth pheasant hunt dependent on planning with Story County Conservation staff. MCU.

11. APPROVE CONCEPT FOR DAKINS LAKE EXPANSION

Director Cox explained that after design review committee meetings and public meetings, Shive-Hattery Inc. presented three concepts for the project.

Option #3 (approximately \$230,000) is the least expensive option and would keep the existing lake on county property. The depth of the lake would not meet standards for a viable fishery nor desired recreational activities. The absence of a sediment pond on the west side of the lake would continue problems with siltation experienced in the current lake.

Option #2 (approximately \$389,000) increases the lake to over 9.5 acres with an average depth of 10.9 ft. This option would create a marginally sustainable fishery--which is important to the public. This design does contain a sediment pond.

Option #5 (approximately \$605,000) - Just shy of 15 surface acres of water with an average depth of 12.8 feet, this design provides maximum benefit for the fishery, water quality, and lake longevity. The surface elevation is the same as the existing lake, so there will be a small water connection—a nice feature for paddlers.

The board reviewed diagrams and discussed water quality, recreational opportunities, and costs.

Cox reported that the review team recommended Option #5. Once the concept is decided,

the engineer will be directed to move forward with the design. At the June board meeting, the design will include facilities, trails, etc.

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to approve concept #5 as the lake plan for Dakins Lake expansion. MCU.

12. APPROVE SECOND READING OF REVISIONS TO STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION RULES AND REGULATIONS - REMOTE CAMPING LOCATION AT ROBISON WILDLIFE ACRES

Director Cox clarified that a new section was added to the revisions presented last month to address rules specific to camping at Robison Wildlife Acres. The board determined that those rules needed an additional reading.

MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by T. Tedesco, to approve second reading of revisions to Story County Rules and Regulations, Chapter IV. 4.26 Camping, for a remote camping location at Robison Wildlife Acres. MCU.

MOTION by A. Weber, second by J. Hornstein, to approve first reading of revisions to Story County Rules and Regulations, Chapter V, 5.8 Robison Wildlife Acres, for camping rules at Robison Wildlife Acres. MCU.

Chair Pease added that, depending on the timing of the site development for public use, the board is willing to hold a special meeting for a second reading of the camping rules.

13. DISCUSS FOUNDATION AND ENDOWMENTS

Chair Pease announced that one of the goals of this board is to have some way to bring in money that the board cannot accomplish as a government agency. SCC is aware of other county conservation boards that have foundations/groups that are able to complete projects separate from their board.

Assistant County Attorney Steve Owen said there are a couple of general concepts to keep in mind: 1) The board can partner with another group to manage money; and 2) There is a fundamental problem in Iowa Code, Chapter 12 and 12c, which limits how public funds can be invested.

Owen perceives a group of private citizens organized on their own--which maintains absolute and complete autonomy separate from county government—as an acceptable partnership. This group could work with SCC and staff to meet needs; however, there needs to be a clean split between boards, and Owen recommended that SCC board members not serve on another board of this type. According to code and the attorney general, the name of the group should be completely separate, different, and not use Story County in its title. In a 2000 opinion, any donations that come to a county immediately become public funds and must be handled by the county. Owen warned the board that a lot of things are done incorrectly around the state, and the attorney general's office is asking that people be careful and not continue these practices. Owen stressed that public funds must always be kept separate from private funds. He offered his assistance to the board in the future.

14. GENERAL UPDATES

Director Cox reported on the following:

- Staff hiring is almost complete. Emily Herring came on board in April to replace retiring Naturalist Linda Zaletel. Naturalist Amy Yoakum was hired as the new natural resources

specialist; Jessica Lancial was hired as her replacement and will start May 15. Both Herring and Lancial have naturalist experience and are familiar with Story County. The resident ranger position was accepted by Ryan Wiemold, who will return to Story County on May 24. The McFarland Park residence has been vacated and inspected, and the carpets will be cleaned prior to the Wiemold family's move. Wiemold will be sworn in as a law enforcement officer at the June board meeting. If an earlier appointment is needed, W. Clinton stated a judge could swear in Wiemold. Finally, interviews for the office assistant position have been held, and reference checks are being conducted before the position is offered.

- Living Roadway Trust Fund grant proposals are being considered for: 1) Nomex uniform requests, 2) a GPS guidance system for the spray rig, and 3) work at the I-35 Prairie Area. SCC has an agreement with the Iowa DOT to manage this area, and Amy Yoakum, natural resource specialist, is moving ahead on this project.

- REAP grants are due August 1.

- SCC will partner with Prairie Rivers RC&D on a grant working with 4th and 5th graders on history and resource work along the Lincoln Highway. SCC will offer advice on this project and may enlist service projects in the future.

- Plans are progressing to convert 2.5 acres on the west side of Dakins Lake to allow the sale of 2.5 acres to the Lincoln Township cemetery. The land was purchased with LAWCON funds and must be converted to allow the sale. Cox added that an appraisal is needed first.

15. IOWA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARDS UPDATE

J. Hornstein had no report.

16. OTHER

Pease reported that he picked up a significant amount of garbage at Larson Marsh recently. Cox said debris was also dumped at Peterson Park over the weekend. Cox commented that Gerald Schnepf of Keep Iowa Beautiful is interested in setting up cameras at dump sites around the state.

Tedesco suggested that the board proceed with forming a foundation and identifying people who would be interested in helping at the next meeting.

Hornstein inquired about the status of the visioning plan. Cox reported that he is almost done with the document and wants the board to review it one more time before soliciting public comment. He is planning on providing a survey on the website, which he said is about 75 percent completed.

Pease reminded the board that they set a goal of July 1, 2012 to conduct an annual review with the director. Tedesco and Pease volunteered to serve as the board's review committee.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by A. Weber, to adjourn the meeting. MCU.

Chair Pease adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Recording Secretary

Conservation Board

Story County

