

Story County Conservation Board
Monday, July 12, 2010
Story County Conservation Center, McFarland Park

1. Chair W. Clinton called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.
2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS	STAFF	GUESTS
Wayne Clinton – present	Steve Lekwa	
Erin Wilgenbusch – absent	Amber Tiarks	
Ted Tedesco – present		
Don Toms – present		
Joyce Hornstein – present		
3. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS
No guests were present.
4. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS
Chair Clinton noted the supplemental packet and handout on focus groups. Hornstein requested discussion of the director's position and replacement process to "Other."
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
MOTION by D. Toms, SECOND by T. Tedesco, to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2010 board retreat. MCU.
6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
MOTION by J. Hornstein, SECOND by T. Tedesco, to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2010 board meeting. MCU.
7. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS
MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by D. Toms, to approve all claims and receipts as submitted. MCU.

Lekwa reported that the campgrounds and beach house have had very good weekends.

8. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES
Director Lekwa commented that camping receipts exceeded projections by more than \$6,000, environmental education fees by \$5,000, and donations by nearly \$30,000 -- which includes Leui interest. The year was closed out with \$45,000 in unexpended operating expenses returned to the general fund. The savings was from utilities and maintenance of equipment, or statements for expenses not returned in time to be paid last fiscal year. Lekwa said the large expenses for the coming fiscal year are for a skidsteer and replacement of the director's car, both of which will happen once the budget is fully appropriated.

Hornstein clarified whether the board needs to discuss directing camping fees to the conservation reserve account in the new fiscal year. Lekwa stated that it has already been approved and won't need renewal until spring. Clinton advised Lekwa to remind the board of supervisors about the perpetual agreement for the conservation reserve account during the course of budgeting.

9. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

Clinton verified that there are no conflicts for the August 9 board meeting. Lekwa advised that the agenda will need to be compiled early because he will be on vacation.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

Aside from dealing with drainage issues recently, the Director has nothing to report.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

12. PERSONNEL UPDATES

Lekwa pointed out packet page 22, proposing to increase the administrative assistant position from half-time to full-time. Over the past 12 years, the position absorbed many things that original job description wasn't designed to accomplish. Lekwa is also proposing moving all the accounting for campground and beach concessions to the administrative office. In the past, those deposits were handled by the ranger. Field staff is now finding that the bookwork is taking two people at least a half of a day, and a whole day after a holiday weekend. Lekwa feels the administrative staff can accomplish this faster, and it will allow field staff to be out in the field. Lekwa feels the additional salary can be absorbed during the fiscal year, even though it was not budgeted. Clinton said the board of supervisors did talk about the merits and rationale for why this is a good decision and that there were no qualms from them or from Dave Hansen.

Hornstein inquired why the second paragraph stated there was the "absence of the campground attendant position." Lekwa explained that SCC used to have a seasonal campground attendant in addition to volunteer campground hosts. The contract position of Campground Host is a combination of those two positions but does not handle deposits.

Lekwa went on to discuss the transfer from the sheriff's office of an additional conservation technician position. The technician will work out of the Hickory Grove office and is currently in the process of orientation.

Finally, Lekwa reported on the open park ranger position. Unit Ranger Rick Carter and Lekwa selected four candidates for interviews from the 42 applicants. He said several were strong candidates. Three of the interviewees had previous county conservation experience, and one had law enforcement certification. Lekwa feels that with only five months of law enforcement coverage per year, it is necessary for the candidate to have strong leadership skills in natural resource management for the rest of the year. Tedesco inquired about the salary and whether it was comparable with the IDNR. Lekwa said the resident ranger salary would be similar to the starting salary of a state conservation officer, but the ranger position is less.

Lekwa reported that conservation staff replaced the water heater at the Hickory Grove residence, a countertop is on order, and they will be doing some interior painting while the house is empty.

Hornstein inquired about the status of ranger coverage for this summer and whether overtime costs were a factor. Lekwa said Carter and Williams are handling the bulk of duties and that he also did some beach patrols during the holiday weekend. Conservation

Technician Ryan Wiemold had on-the-job training and got to see a range of operations, including the sheriff's office. Lekwa said overtime was not an issue as Carter is exempt and Wiemold adjusted his hours earlier in the week. In addition, the rain shortened weekend work schedules.

13. HEART OF IOWA NATURE TRAIL CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Lekwa showed some pictures of the site. Herberger Construction reshaped approach roads so the water drains instead of puddles, and they are able to move within a day or two of a rain event. Herberger found that the rebar was improperly set, and they will have to redo some of that before they pour concrete.

14. CONTINUE DISCUSSION OF FOCUS GROUPS

Clinton called attention to the focus group materials prepared by Wilgenbusch and said the board should look over them for the next meeting. Wilgenbusch will not be able to facilitate all of the focus groups; Tedesco suggested Donna Gilligan from Sauer Danfoss. Clinton would like to keep this item on the August meeting agenda.

15. OTHER

Hornstein said SCC needs to plan for the future and that the focus of the original retreat was to be on a replacement strategy for the director's retirement. She suggested making this an agenda item and creating a timeline as to when the job description should be reviewed, whether changes need to be made, what needs to be done as far as advertising, etc. Of note is that the IACCB director is retiring next year, and the position will be advertised beginning December 1 to be filled by June 1. Lekwa said the planned focus groups were to be a preliminary part of what the board and community are looking for in the transition period and in his replacement. Lekwa will email his current job description to board members for discussion at the August meeting. Lekwa noted that the current job description is lengthy and that David Hansen would like to see things more streamlined. Tedesco asked whether Hansen could facilitate a work session with the board. Clinton said it is worth discussing but to keep in mind that Hansen's contract is on an hourly basis. If the conservation board asks him to work directly with them, it would be a billable service to Conservation as it was for Environmental Health. Clinton and Lekwa could begin a preliminary discussion with Hansen. Hansen is currently creating an order as to how to get through the review of job descriptions for the various departments, but replacing a position merits expedited review of that job description review. Hornstein suggested getting descriptions from other county directors. Lekwa has tentatively set mid-May 2011 as a resignation date but is amenable to postponing it if need be.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by T. Tedesco, SECOND by J. Hornstein, to adjourn the meeting. MCU.
Chair Clinton adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Recording Secretary

Story County Conservation Board