

Story County Conservation Board
Monday, August 13, 2012
Story County Conservation Center, McFarland Park

1. 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 (ex-officio) – arrived 7:30

STAFF

Mike Cox

Jolene Van Waus

Melissa Johannes

Jerry Keys

GUESTS

None

3. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Chair Pease welcomed staff members.

4. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND HANDOUTS

Pease noted supplemental packet materials, including a draft of the strategic plan. There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Hornstein noted that a reference to the fish fry at the IACCB fall conference (item #14) should be listed as occurring on Friday—not Thursday.

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein to approve the minutes of the June 29, 2012 meeting as corrected. MCU.

6. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND RECEIPTS

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Weber, to approve all claims and receipts as submitted. MCU.

7. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

Pease commented that everything seemed on track for the beginning of the fiscal year.

2. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

Pease highlighted upcoming programs and events including a prairie walk on August 23, O.W.L.S. on September 4, fishing tournament on September 8, and geocaching on September 8. Due to several board members absent on September 10, the board meeting was re-scheduled to Tuesday, September 11 at 7:00 p.m.

9. COMMUNICATIONS

Pease reported that he has received several emails and verbal comments from people pleased with what is going on with the Dakins Lake expansion project.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

11. APPROVE LICENSE AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF MAXWELL FOR

EMERGENCY ACCESS ON THE HEART OF IOWA NATURE TRAIL

Director Cox reported that the City of Maxwell approached him regarding alternative access points to the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail.

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein, to approve the license agreement with the City of Maxwell Agency.

12. APPROVE LETTER TO IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REGARDING 4(f) REQUIREMENTS OF COLLINS HIGHWAY 65 CULVERT INSTALLATION PROJECT

Cox distributed a map showing where the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail goes under Highway 65. The IDOT is planning to replace the bridge with a box culvert, so the trail will proceed through a culvert instead of under a bridge. If park land is utilized for a federal highway project, the federal code states that land cannot be taken without mitigating. The IDOT can get away from that mitigation if there are no long-term or ill effects from the project. Cox explained that the IDOT is requesting a letter stating that the trail will be operational after construction and that the effects will be short-term with no adverse effects. Cox added that an agreement will come before the board; the letter is a precursor of an understanding. He is comfortable sending the letter but wanted the board to be aware of the project and get approval to send the letter. Discussions will need to occur on plantings, lighting, and installation before the work planned for next year.

MOTION by Hornstein, SECOND by Weber, to approve sending a letter to the IDOT regarding 4(f) requirements of the Collins Highway 65 culvert installation project pending and eventual agreement with the IDOT. MCU.

13. APPROVE ADDENDUM NO. 1 WITH SHIVE-HATTERY FOR DAKINS LAKE EXPANSION PROJECT DESIGN

Cox explained that the first agreement with Shive-Hattery took the project through master planning and preliminary design—which is almost done. Cox stated that the addendum does not address the construction phase but includes the design and bid process up to the time of bid award. Cox said the scope of the work is well crafted and that he is happy with it. If approved, the addendum will go before the board of supervisors next Tuesday. The supervisors will certify TIF on December 1 and approve construction funds; bids will occur after that time.

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein, to approve addendum No. 1 of the professional services agreement with Shive-Hattery Inc. for Dakins Lake Expansion Project design. MCU.

14. APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 2012-06 SUPPORTING THE ACQUISITION OF LAND IN HOWARD TOWNSHIP

Pease reminded the board that the 80-acre parcel will be enrolled in the wetland reserve program. This is a permanent easement, and the owner is offering to sell the land at residual value. An agreement has been drafted, but the easement has not been finalized with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The IDNR will fund the purchase to the appraised value, with the balance coming from Story County Pheasants Forever. NRCS will remove or plug tiles, work with adjoining landowners, and provide seeding. Tile work is anticipated to start this fall. Story County Conservation's expense will be long-term management of the area.

Clinton suggested that the area be signed in recognition of the family and groups involved in the purchase. Other board members voiced their agreement.

MOTION by Weber, SECOND by Tedesco, to approve Resolution No. 2012-06 supporting acquisition of land in Howard Township.

15. APPROVE HARVEST OF STANDING PRAIRIE HAY PROGRAM

Cox showed proposed areas for harvest of prairie hay at Ketelsen Marsh and McFarland Park. National Resources Conservation Service

MOTION by Weber, SECOND by Hornstein, to approve a standing prairie hay harvest program. MCU.

16. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM REPORT

Environmental Education Coordinator Jerry Keys gave a recap on the program's activities over the past year and shared plans for the upcoming year.

- In-school programs have stayed fairly consistent, offering about 1,100 programs to 32,000 contacts. Summer nature camps had excellent participation and good weather this year, offering four weeks of camps for early elementary-aged children and outdoor experiences for youth—including a caving trip to Clinton County and a week-long backpack trip (with Plymouth County Conservation) to the Porcupine Mountains.
- Environmental education staff are changing their focus from classroom programs and field trips to presentations.
- Staff were sad to have naturalists Zaletel and Yoakum leave. Zaletel received the Aldo Leopold award for the outstanding EE professional from the Iowa Association of Naturalists this past spring, and the SCC staff received the Outstanding EE Program with Three Or More Naturalists award. The KinderNature website will be transitioned to the Iowa Conservation Education Council. New naturalists Lancial and Herring arrived with new perspectives and energy and have been welcomed to the staff.
- New school programs and new adult offerings are being developed. Story County Conservation *Partners* provided funding for OnCell (for audio messages in parks) and 20 new GPS units. Funded at the basic level this first year, Keys envisions changeable messages that can be promoted through SCC's website and Facebook page. OnCell will be collecting caller demographics and data. If SCC likes this initial level, it can be budgeted for next year.

17. STRATEGIC PLAN DISCUSSION

Pease reviewed suggested wording changes and asked board members to forward additional comments or corrections to him by the end of the week. Public input will be requested via questionnaire. Cox asked board members to review a draft of the on-line

survey poised for publication on SCC's website and send their comments to him by the end of the month.

18. GENERAL UPDATES

Director Cox reported on the following:

- Ecoli readings are high again at Hickory Grove Beach. Cox distributed a spreadsheet from the IDNR listing each week back to 2009. Water samples are taken at ankle, calf, and waist depths and combined into one composite sample. Results spiked on the July 30 sample and were high again the next Monday. Signs recommending no swimming were posted at the beach. Goose excrement, high temperatures, warm water, and lack of rainfall are all believed to be factors in the high readings. Testing of sediment may be done in other parts of the lake.
- A new staff report format appears in this month's board packet. The report will include updates from each department and statistics of interest. Statistics will be tracked by month and year.
- The Story County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution regarding Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). SCC is involved in the county-wide interagency review team, will evaluate all manure management plans and master matrix plans according to DNR standards, and give input to the board of supervisors. Pease reported he has heard that other counties are discussing this issue and asking for our resolution.
- Dakins Lake Expansion Project – Thirty-five percent design plans will be received next week with 50 percent due September 4. Cox explained a suggested change in the lake design and location of the dam which would take advantage of a natural lobe extending along the east property line. Cox will speak to the Dakins family about the possibility of placing an emergency spillway on their property.
- A young woman was abducted in a neighboring county and was found at Peterson Park. Cox complimented the Story County Sheriff's office for their immediate response, their handling of the situation, and the quick apprehension of three suspects. SCC staff assisted by watching entrances to the park, and park visitors voluntarily stayed in the area for questioning.
- All three board officers will be out of town/out of the country during the next month. Cox said if any issues arise, he will take them to the board of supervisors.

19. IOWA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARDS UPDATE

Hornstein reported that registrations are due for the fall conference. Raffles for gift cards will replace silent auction baskets as a fundraiser this year. The IACCB.com website has been eliminated; job postings will now appear on mycountyparks.com. Paid memberships have been received from 77 counties to date. Districts I and III need board replacements, and ballots are due August 16. Bylaws and articles of incorporation have been updated and will be voted on at the annual meeting.

20. OTHER

Tedesco announced that he, Mike Meetz, Mike Cox, Jim Pease, Greg Vitale, and Erv Klaas met to discuss the basics of starting a foundation. Klaas provided valuable input from his involvement with the 503C for Ada Hayden Heritage Park. Vitale is drafting bylaws from input from several other foundations. Tedesco added that the group is looking for people interested in organizing and serving on the foundation board.

Pease shared that former director Steve Lekwa had surgery two weeks ago and is progressing well at home.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Tedesco, SECOND by Hornstein, to adjourn the meeting. Chair Pease adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Recording Secretary

Story County Conservation Board