

**WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2022, BOARD MEETING**

The following is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Woodbury County, Iowa, Conservation Board held on Thursday, October 13, 2022, at the Snyder Bend Park shop building beginning at 4:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant (via phone), Neil Stockfleth, and Tom Limoges (via phone)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Cindy Bennett

STAFF PRESENT

Dan Heissel, Brian Stehr, Dawn Snyder, Theresa Kruid, Josh VanVoorst, Dylan Bales, and Dawn Bostwick

OTHERS PRESENT

None

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Stockfleth called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ITEM R1. Approve Consent Agenda

Neil provided a name spelling correction for the September 8, 2022, minutes.

MOTION by Aaron, second by Chris.

To approve the consent agenda.

VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Neil Stockfleth, & Tom Limoges

Nay: None

Absent: Cindy Bennett

The consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

- C1. Approve Minutes of the September 8, 2022, Regular Meeting
- C2. Approve the September 2022 Claims and Expenditures
- C3. Receive and Place on File the September 2022 Financial/Budget Report
- C4. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations:
 - Butterfly Collection – Anonymous
 - Walleye taxidermy mount – Anonymous
 - Mark & Susan Nielsen for \$25 memorial gift (Karen Jacky)
 - Water fountain – Gene Castle Family

ITEM R2. Fiber Comm – Fiber Lease Proposal

Dan stated that FiberComm asked to lease 1-2 pairs of WCCB’s unused fiber to connect a particular area in Riverside. The standard city rental rate would normally be \$50 per month, but Dan recommended allowing FiberComm to use the fiber at no charge. He stated that FiberComm performs all the locates for the fiber, provides public Wi-Fi at the nature center, and recently donated conduit and fiber for the cameras in the lower parking lot, all free of charge. He added that he has discussed it with Doug Boch at WCICC, who was in favor of offering the fiber at no cost as well.

MOTION by Aaron, second by Chris.

To grant FiberComm the use of two pairs of WCCB fiber at no charge.²²⁻²⁶

VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Neil Stockfleth, & Tom Limoges

Nay: None

Absent: Cindy Bennett

Dan will draw up an agreement and have the county attorney and WCICC review it.

ITEM R3. Motor Vehicle Bids

Brian presented bids for replacement of a 2012 Ford F-150 pickup. Bids were received from Barry Motor Company, Knoepfler Chevrolet and Woodhouse Ram. Dan explained that a half-ton pickup is preferred for law enforcement, and the crew cab is needed for the extra equipment.

MOTION by Tom, second by Aaron.

To approve and authorize the purchase of a 2023 Silverado crew cab 1500 work truck 4x4 from Knoepfler Chevrolet for \$34,714 after trade-in of a 2012 Ford F-150 regular cab pickup.²²⁻²⁷

VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Neil Stockfleth, & Tom Limoges

Nay: None

Absent: Cindy Bennett

ITEM R4. Midway Park Monitoring Well – University of Iowa

Dan reported that geologists from the Iowa Geological Survey need to replace a monitoring well and have asked to install the new well at Midway Park. Josh in the county attorney’s office has reviewed the agreement and recommended changes. The Board of Supervisors will also need to approve the agreement because the county is listed as the property owner.

MOTION by Chris, second by Aaron.

To approve and authorize the Iowa Geological Survey to install a monitoring well at Midway Park.²²⁻²⁸

²²⁻²⁶ To grant FiberComm the use of two pairs of WCCB fiber at no charge.

²²⁻²⁷ To approve and authorize the purchase of a 2023 Silverado crew cab 1500 work truck 4x4 from Knoepfler Chevrolet for \$34,714 after trade-in of a 2012 Ford F-150 regular cab pickup.

²²⁻²⁸ To approve and authorize the Iowa Geological Survey to install a monitoring well at Midway Park.

VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Neil Stockfleth, & Tom Limoges
Nay: None
Absent: Cindy Bennett

ITEM R5. Capital Improvement Projects Update

1. Brown's Lake Projects

Dan provided an update on the concession stand progress and remaining items to be completed, which include a cement footing along the sidewalk, countertop, mop sink, landscaping around the building, spreading the beach sand, a cement abutment off the sidewalk the dock will be attached to, a grate for the neighbor, and fall grass seeding. The DNR septic permit will not be completed until February.

(Tom arrived in person at 4:25 p.m.)

2. Nature Center Shelter Update

During staff discussions, Theresa suggested moving the location of the shelter to up above by the parking lot which would already be handicap accessible and eliminate the need for over 200' of additional sidewalk. Electricity would also be nearby for the lights. Water could be added later. Dirt will be hauled in by Johnstons, and staff will place and pack it this fall so it can sit over the winter. The pad will be poured in early May, and the contractor will install the shelter by the end of May. Tom noted that the new location would also allow it to be monitored with the security cameras.

Dan stated that additional dirt will be brought in to extend the small parking area at the top of the driveway. He explained that the area is too short and angled to be very usable, and the bumpers get pushed when moving snow. Concrete will be added later.

MOTION by Chris, second by Tom.

To approve the new location of the nature center outdoor learning shelter as described.²²⁻²⁹

VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Neil Stockfleth,
& Tom Limoges
Nay: None
Absent: Cindy Bennett

ITEM R6. Board member/staff reports

1. Administrative items

Dan reported on the following items:

a. November Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. on November 17, 2022, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center.

²²⁻²⁹ To approve the new location of the nature center outdoor learning shelter as described.

b. Education Director Job Description Approval and Approval for Advertising of Position

Dan presented the Education Director job description. He stated that potential changes to the job description and division of duties had been discussed, and although they aren't able to be done at this time, changes can always be made in the future.

Dawn stated that fundraising duties have become a huge part of the position and that the time investment for Nature Calls is year-round, not allowing much time for educational programs. Theresa noted that because of those changes in duties, communication and connection with the school principals and teachers has been lost. Tom suggested asking board or foundation members to be involved in discussions with school principals.

MOTION by Chris, second by Tom.

To approve the Education Director job description and authorize staff to proceed with advertising the position.²²⁻³⁰

VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Neil Stockfleth,
& Tom Limoges
Nay: None
Absent: Cindy Bennett

c. Izaak Walton League Septic Issue

Brian reported that the law states that upon closing, the buyer will have 90 days to either update the septic system if it doesn't pass inspection (which is very unlikely) or to demolish the building. A decision will need to be made before the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation can close on the property. The county sanitarian has stated that the DNR will allow the system to be private, rather than public, but it will need to be an alternative system since the water level is so close to the surface.

Dan is working with the INHF to possibly negotiate a lease to allow more time to get an estimate of construction costs for building restoration and make an informed decision. The lease contract would need to have a clause stating that at the end of the lease period, the purchase will be completed to prevent another party being able to step in and purchase it. Options and ideas will be discussed at the strategic planning meeting in January.

MOTION by Tom, second by Aaron.

To approve and authorize the director to negotiate a lease-to-own agreement of up to one year on the Izaak Walton property, giving the board more time to develop a plan for the property.²²⁻³¹

VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Neil Stockfleth, & Tom Limoges
Nay: None
Absent: Cindy Bennett

²²⁻³⁰ To approve the Education Director job description and authorize staff to proceed with advertising the position.

²²⁻³¹ To approve and authorize the director to negotiate a lease-to-own agreement of up to one year on the Izaak Walton property, giving the board more time to develop a plan for the property.

d. Ballot Vote Cast (One per County) for Western Region of ICCS

Dan presented the ballot for the western region representative to the ICCS Board of Directors. Luanne Brown from Adams CCB is the only official candidate.

MOTION by Chris, second by Tom.

To approve and authorize the director to cast the WCCB vote to elect Luanne Brown to the office of western region representative to the ICCS Board of Directors.²²⁻³²

VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Neil Stockfleth,
& Tom Limoges
Nay: None
Absent: Cindy Bennett

e. Old Business

None

f. Other Business

Dan stated that there have been issues with the nature center garden retaining wall separating and leaning. He suggested installing a keystone wall which is pinned together and doesn't move. Dawn obtained a quote from Don Sewalson of \$38,665 to remove the existing block, build a new keystone block wall, and do geo grid, footings, and dirt work. The lower tier closest to the woods would be completely removed. This will need to be addressed in the future.

He added that the nature center water feature will also need to be repaired. Guests missed having it running this summer, and it was noted that there were fewer migrating birds and no frogs without it. Plans will be drawn up so a quote can be obtained.

Brian showed drone pictures of the Brown's Lake water level. MidAmerican quit pumping 21 days ago. Josh added that the water level is six feet down in elevation and is now one foot below the previous lowest level. Dan will invite Ben to a board meeting to discuss further.

Josh reported that staff planted 45 acres of food plots. He stated that staff took advantage of a rare opportunity at Owego to pull everything and were able to complete 100 acres of cattail mitigation. He expressed pride in the staff and how much they accomplished.

2. Nature Center Activities

Dawn reported on the following Nature Center activities:

- Although the Nature Calls receipts were not as high as originally reported, it was still the highest grossing event to date. A discount was requested from the Sioux City Convention Center due to the set-up not being done, but the final invoice has not been received yet. Next year's date has been penciled in, but no contract has been signed.

²²⁻³² To approve and authorize the director to cast the WCCB vote to elect Luanne Brown to the office of western region representative to the ICCS Board of Directors.

- The Siouxland Big Give was held October 4th. Theresa and Kari managed the nature center's participation. Donations slightly exceeded the \$3,000 goal and are earmarked for the outdoor learning shelter.
- Mike Barkley will be installing the dog-friendly water fountain next week.
- Kari and Theresa have been busy doing field trips and onsite school programs.
- The insect zoo from the University of Iowa was available for the public during Fall Fest with over 340 people in attendance. It was paid for with nature calls money from last year.
- Dawn will be attending the IAN fall workshop in Muscatine in early November.
- The foundation meeting will be held in November. A decision will need to be made as to which staff member will take Dawn's place on the foundation board after her retirement.
- A thank you was received from Camp High Hopes for a donated cabin gift certificate.

3. Park Activities

Brian reported on the following park activities:

- Little Sioux staff have been removing cedar trees on the Briese property.
- A CCI crew was hosted by Southwood to remove cedar trees from Oak Ridge Unit 1.
- A second CCI crew worked on clearing trees at the nature center.
- The new flagpole was added at Brown's Lake.
- Brian has been working with the sheriff's department to get the new body cameras ready. Training will be held in early November.
- Laptops will be issued by the beginning of November.

4. Board Information

None

5. Other Business

Dan distributed copies of the FY21 annual report. Neil questioned whether final copies of the FY20 report had been provided yet, and Dan agreed to get those copies out to the board as well.

Tom expressed appreciation on behalf of Pheasants Forever for use of the Little Sioux shelter for their youth day.

ITEM R7. Director's Annual Evaluation – Closed Session

The board went into closed session for the Director's annual performance evaluation at 6:10 p.m. by motion from Aaron and second by Tom. Chairperson Stockfleth held the roll call vote: Aaron Gehling-Aye, Chris Zellmer-Zant-Aye, Cindy Bennett-Absent, Neil Stockfleth-Aye, and Tom Limoges-Aye.

The board discussed Director Heissel's performance for the past year and goals for the future. The session was recorded.

At 6:46 p.m., Aaron moved to come out of closed session, which was seconded by Tom and carried unanimously by roll call vote: Aaron Gehling-Aye, Chris Zellmer-Zant-Aye, Cindy Bennett-Absent, Neil Stockfleth-Aye, and Tom Limoges-Aye.

MOTION by Tom, second by Aaron.

To approve Director Heissel’s performance appraisal as discussed with a recommendation for a \$2,500 step increase, effective with the first day of the pay period closest to November 1, 2022.²²⁻³³

VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Neil Stockfleth, & Tom Limoges
Nay: None
Absent: Cindy Bennett

ITEM R8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

The above minutes were recorded by Dawn Bostwick.

Recording Secretary, Dawn Bostwick

Board Secretary, Cindy Bennett

Board Chair, Neil Stockfleth

²²⁻³³ To approve Director Heissel’s performance appraisal as discussed with a recommendation for a \$2,500 step increase, effective with the first day of the pay period closest to November 1, 2022.