

Meeting Minutes
Board of Directors
Loess Hills Alliance
1:00 PM –March 1, 2023
Sloan Public Library–Sloan, Iowa

Members signing the attendance log:

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|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| John Straight-Director | Mark Shoemaker-Director | Bo Fox-Director |
| Renea Anderson-Director | Patty McCall-Director | Kody Wohlers |
| Rich Pope-Director | Dawn Snyder-Director | Brett Bengard-Director |
| Bob Benton-Director | Nick Beeck-Director | Gary Horton-Director |
| John Meis-Director | Cara Morgan | Daniel Bittinger-Director |
| Lance Brisbois-Director | Terry Lewis-Alternate | |
| Kolby DeWitt (Senator Joni Ernst's office) | | |
| Wesley Fopma (Representative Randy Feenstra's office) | | |
| Brittany Rockwell (Senator Joni Ernst's office) | | |
| Jonathan Bladt (Senator Charles Grassley's office) | | |

Chairman, Rich Pope called the regular meeting of the Loess Hills Alliance to order at 1:04 pm, with quorum declared. Introductions and signatures on travel documentation followed.

MINUTES: A Motion was made by John Straight, seconded by Bob Benton to approve the September 7, 2022 Minutes. Motion carried. A Motion was made by Dawn Snyder, seconded by Renea Anderson to approve the December 7, 2022 Minutes. Motion carried.

AGENDA: A Motion was made by Renea Anderson, seconded by John Straight to approve the March 1, 2023 Agenda. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Loess Hills Alliance Expense reports from July 2021 through June 2022, July 2022 through February 2023, Profit & Loss report from October 2022 through December 2022, and the Income report from October 2022 through December 2022 were presented to the Full Board Members. Moving forward, each Committee will produce their own monthly financial reports. Financial reports from Golden Hills RC & D will be presented on a quarterly basis. Any Committee funding that needs allocated will need to present an invoice and the Minutes, which includes the Motion for allocation, to the Executive Committee for approval before payment. The Loess Hills Alliance June 30, 2022 and 2021 Audited Financial Statements were presented to the Full Board Members.

A Motion was made by Patty McCall, seconded by Terry Lewis to accept the March 1st, 2023 Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee – Rich Pope reported that the Executive Committee met this morning at 11:00 am and did have a quorum. Approval was made by the Executive Committee Members to allocate \$1,500.00 funding towards Cooperative Burn Week 2023 and \$1,000.00 funding towards the Loess Hills Prairie Seminar. The Loess Hills Prairie Seminar will be held on June 2nd – 4th at the Onawa Community Center and the Sylvan Runkel State Preserve, Castana. The Loess Hills Development and Conservation Authority will hold a meeting on March 17th at the Pizza Ranch in Atlantic. More information discussed at the Executive Committee meeting will be discussed at the Full Board meeting.

Protection Committee – No Protection Committee report at this time. Graham McGaffin has accepted the State Director position at The Nature Conservancy and is stepping off the LHA Board and down from his position as Chair of the LHA Protection Committee. At today's Stewardship Committee meeting, approval was made to hold a joint meeting with Protection Committee and Stewardship Committee at the May LHA meetings to consider merging the Protection and Stewardship Committees pending final approval with the Executive Committee Members. The goals for both Committees are similar and both allocate funding for beneficial projects for the Loess Hills.

Stewardship Committee – Lance Bribois reported that the Stewardship Committee met this morning. A total of \$9,000.00 was available for the 2023 RFP. Six RFP Grant applications were received totally \$30,000.00. The Stewardship Committee allocated \$2,500.00 funding to Iowa DNR-Nishnabotna Wildlife Unit towards the "Sunrise Tract Prairie Restoration" project, \$2,500.00 to Pottawattamie County Conservation towards the "No-Fence Coat Grazing Pilot Program" project, \$2,500.00 to Woodbury County Conservation Board towards the "Salsness Property Prairie Land Stewardship & Woody Vegetation Management" project, and \$1,500.00 to Pheasants Forever Inc. and Quail Forever towards the "Increasing Adoption of Conservation on Private Lands in the Loess Hills Region" project.

Economic Development Committee – Chairman, Renea Anderson reported that the state has separated from funding Western Iowa Tourism Region, so will be currently funded through the Counties. Approval was made to purchase a two page spread ad from a new guidebook called "Western Iowa Tourism Guidebook" and is in the process of being printed. Renea Anderson and Rich Pope attended the Travel Federation of Iowa Legislative Showcase in Des Moines. It was a very interesting show and LHA had good feedback. Examples of Loess Hills's soils were presented and conversations were held concerning Loess Hills's tourism, erosion issues, and prescribed burns. Several of the new legislatures attended the Showcase Event. The state has reorganized the travel regions into 5 different regions: Capital Country, Driftless, Loess Hills and Beyond, Story and Scenic, and Lakes and Land. With this reorganizing, conversations were held concerning how to move forward with marketing the Loess Hills, which is incorrectly identified in the "Loess Hills and Beyond" region mentioned.

Kody Wohlers reported that The 8th Annual Cooperative Burn Week will be held on April 24th – 28th, 2023, based out of the Loess Hills State Forest, Pisgah with the focus on the central Loess Hills, Harrison and Monona Counties. Over 100 registered attendees, including 8 states and Canada represented, will learn basic fire training, network and leadership skills, knowledge sharing, and create new experiences. Prescribed burns control woody vegetation, cedar encroachment, and rejuvenates the native land and eco system. Suggestions were made to have a media day to advertise the Burn and invite the State Legislators, local fire departments, and local law enforcement to view the work that is being done in the Loess Hills. Loess Hills Alliance thanks Kody Wohlers for all his help in protecting the Loess Hills.

A Motion was made by John Straight, seconded by Dawn Snyder to accept the Committee Reports. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS: No “Old Business” at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

Legislature Report: Brittany Rockwell, Senator Joni Ernst’s office, Jonathan Bladt, Senator Charles Grassley’s office, Kolby DeWitt (Senator Joni Ernst’s office), and Wesley Fopma (Representative Randy Feenstra’s office) were visitors at today’s Full Board meeting. Legislators have reached the end of Week 7 of the legislative session. February 27th was the first day of the First Funnel Week. Legislators have been busy traveling around Iowa to the local Legislative Coffees and reporting on the Farm Bill and the final WOTUS Rule, Waters of the U.S. The old WOTUS Rule would have expanded EPA jurisdiction to approximately over 97 percent of Iowa. The Loess Hills Alliance thanks the State Legislators that are here today and for their reports. The Loess Hills Alliance thanks Craig Patterson for the continued LHA Legislative Updates.

2023 Nominating Committee, Executive Committee Elections: Officer Elections 2022: The 2023 LHA Officer Nominating Committee is Rich Pope, Linda Herman, and Jeff Seago. The slate of nominees for the Executive Committee are:

Rich Pope, Chairman
Dawn Snyder, Vice-Chairman
Nick Beeck, Secretary
Renea Anderson, Treasurer
Bob Benton, At-Large
Patty McCall, At-Large
John Straight, At-Large

A Motion was made by Bob Benton, seconded by Terry Lewis to cease the nominations and accept the 2023 Loess Hills Alliance Executive Committee slate of officers. Motion carried.

LHA 2023 Executive Committee & Full Board Meeting Dates and Times: The Loess Hills Alliance meetings will stay the same, as the 1st Wednesday of the month and times at 10:00 am, 11:00 am, and 1:00 pm. Dates for the 2023 Loess Hills Alliance meetings are as follows.

Full Board Meetings.

March 1st
June 7th
September 6th
December 6th

Executive Committee Meetings.

February 1st

March 1st

May 3rd

June 7th

August 2nd

September 6th

November 1st

December 6th

A Motion was made by Patty McCall, seconded by John Straight to approve the 2023 Loess Hills Alliance meeting dates and times. Motion carried.

Announcements:

Next Meeting: June 7th, 2023 at 1:00 PM

Adjournment: A Motion was made by Terry Lewis, seconded by Renea Anderson to adjourn the meeting at 1:52 PM. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeannette Riesberg,
LHA Office Secretary