

**WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2018, BOARD MEETING**

The following is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Woodbury County, Iowa, Conservation Board held on Thursday, February 8, 2018, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center beginning at 4:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Aaron Gehling, Neil Stockfleth, and Suzan Boden

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Heissel, Stehr, Snyder, and Bostwick

OTHERS PRESENT

None

CALL TO ORDER

President Stockfleth called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ITEM R1. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Boden, second by Zellmer-Zant.

To approve the consent agenda.

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

Consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

ITEM C1. Approve minutes of the January 16, 2018 monthly meeting.

ITEM C2. Approve the January 2018 claims and expenditures.

ITEM C3. Receive and place on file the January 2018 financial/budget report.

ITEM C4. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations:

1. St Mark Lutheran Church Women - \$75 cash donation for Raptors.
2. Kathy Bottaro - \$25 cash donation for education programs.
3. Bill Zales – Taxidermy assistance.

ITEM R2. Budget 18/19 – Updates (Heissel)

Heissel reported that he hadn't received any additional feedback regarding the department's proposed FY19 budget, and it appears that it will be approved as it stands, including the additional \$100,000 for equipment replacement and the part-time clerk position.

ITEM R3. Budget Amendment Info 17/18 – Preliminary Figures (Heissel)

Heissel presented the breakdown for the budget amendment request due to the Board of Supervisors in May. He will bring an update to the next meeting.

ITEM R4. Bylaws – Further Discussion – No Action (Heissel)

Heissel stated that after reviewing the department Bylaws, he found several areas needing updated. The last update was done in 1994, and the document is not in digital format. He will have it typed up as is and then present a redlined version of the proposed changes for discussion at a future meeting.

ITEM R5. Water Testing Update (Stehr)

Stehr reported that he had checked with Siouxland District Health and found that they don't have a certified water distribution operator for a public water source. The Nature Center is required to have a certified operator on staff or hired by affidavit. Stehr will be meeting with Brad Pitts from the City of Sioux City tomorrow as they have several on staff. The DNR website also has a list of private contractors. Rick Schneider did the last testing and is certified through 2019. A question was raised about the need for Schneider to be bonded or insured if he was contracted to do the testing since he is no longer employed by the county.

ITEM R6. Land Acquisitions (Heissel)

1. Briese

Maps were presented outlining the approximate 190 acres to be auctioned on April 2nd in Correctionville. Heissel noted that the property includes 583,000 tons of gravel reserves under 10 acres and another 500,000 tons under the rest of the estate. Further testing will be done to determine remaining gravel. The County Engineer is interested in the gravel rights, but it wouldn't be mined for years. Heissel will have discussions with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and the County Engineer and provide an update at the next meeting.

2. Kimmel (Brown's Lake)

Heissel has tried reaching Kimmel's farm manager by phone, email and text to no avail, but has left messages expressing continued interest in the property.

3. Sorenson

Heissel, Stehr and Zellmer-Zant toured the Sorenson house a week ago. The realtor did not want the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation involved, so they did not come along. Heissel stated that the house isn't set up well for an educational center, and he could not recommend purchasing the house and 30 acres at \$600,000. The other 250 acres has been taken off the market at this point.

4. Flemming

Heissel announced that the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation closed on the Flemming property Wednesday. Next month Heissel will ask for a resolution to be passed granting him the authority to pursue REAP and habitat grants for this property.

ITEM R7. Capital Improvement Projects Update (Heissel)

1. Brown's Lake Shoreline

Heissel stated that although the Commission was meeting today, approval of the Fish Habitat Stamp grant was not on the agenda.

2. Little Sioux Park Beach Renovation

Heissel met with contractor Brandon Deeds. He noted that it will cost an additional \$1500 to dye the cement for the poured wall. The 40' of paving bricks will be changed to cement. The sand will be compacted and styrene foam added which should lower costs. Deeds will start work as soon as frost is gone.

3. Southwood Upper Road-Observation Deck Cost Estimate

Heissel found the original quote from Dave Guggenmos dated June 21, 2017, which included a 16' x 12' cedar deck with 24' handicap ramp and two benches at \$7,100 and a 10' x 10' x 12' tower at \$11,200 for a total cost of \$18,300. The board voiced their support of moving forward with the project. Heissel will contact Guggenmos for an updated quote and bring more information back to the board. Snyder noted that Guggenmos has been contracted for a deck at Gobbler Point which is being paid for by a Gilchrist Foundation grant and needs to be completed by June.

ITEM R8. Board member/staff reports

1. Nature Center activities (Snyder)

Snyder reported on the following Nature Center activities:

- Nature Center program and visitor counts for January were distributed.
- Because programming needs have grown over the years, Snyder requested extending one of the five Nature Center summer interns to a six-month position at an additional cost of \$10,100. Nature Center revenues and expenses from FY17 were presented showing \$15,167.88 in remaining funds that could be used to cover the difference. Additional donations towards an intern fund would also be sought. Summer day camp fees have not been increased for several years, so an increase in those fees is also being considered.

MOTION by Boden, second by Bennett.

To convert one three-month summer naturalist intern position to a six-month position.⁴⁻¹⁸

VOTE: Aye: Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Aaron Gehling, Neil Stockfleth, & Suzan Boden

Nay: None

Absent: None

⁴⁻¹⁸ To convert one three-month summer naturalist intern position to a six-month position.

- A list of potential Friend of Conservation and Conservation Educator award recipients was reviewed. The board agreed to let staff members make the choice.
- The potential for a DNR archery range was discussed. The department is very interested provided the range would be in a separate location for safety and liability reasons.
- The Woodbury County Conservation Foundation annual meeting flyer was distributed.
- The newsletter is at the printer and will be out soon.
- Fund the Trust Day at the Capitol is February 12th. Snyder and Heissel will be attending. Board members were asked to contact legislators.
- Camping kickoff weekend will be May 4th through 6th.
- Nature Calls sponsorship flyers were handed out as sponsors had indicated they would like them earlier this year. Snyder will email the list of contacts to board members.

2. Park activities (Stehr)

Stehr reported on the following park activities:

- Park staff has been busy with normal maintenance, snow removal and clearing of overgrown areas with the grinder.
- The grinder has had a seal leak twice this winter, and Stehr will be contacting Diamond.
- Dave Hoffman with the DNR swan restoration program has insisted that no lead sinkers be allowed in the swan pen area since swans are foragers. The male swan to be located at Little Sioux is already recovering from lead poisoning. Notices will be posted on the fence in that area, and officers will utilize educational enforcement as needed. No update to the rules and regulations will be done at this point.
- Five staff members attended training sessions at the annual Winterfest Conference.
- Staff will be taking commercial ag pesticide refresher training next week.
- A Hiniker sander and URV brackets have been ordered. The sand obtained through Secondary Roads was very wet, so additional steps are being taken to work through that.
- A Wal-Mart grant request is being submitted to offset the cost of bullet-proof vests.

3. Administrative items (Heissel)

Heissel reported on the following items:

a. Succession/Strategic Planning Session

Heissel provided notes from last year's board/staff planning session. Many items have already been started or completed. The board decided to focus on completing items currently on the list, along with the ongoing land acquisitions, and schedule another planning session in the fall of 2018 or spring of 2019.

b. Set March Meeting Date

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, March 8th, at 4:30 p.m. at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center.

c. Miscellaneous Items

Heissel presented a draft of Guidelines for Acquisitions compiled from other sources and counties. He will continue to work on it and add it to a future meeting agenda for review.

ITEM R7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

The above minutes were recorded by Dawn Bostwick.

Recording Secretary, Dawn Bostwick

Board Secretary, Cindy Bennett

Board President, Neil Stockfleth