

**WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2020 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 13, 2020, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center beginning at 4:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Suzan Boden

STAFF PRESENT

Dan Heissel, Brian Stehr, Dawn Snyder, Theresa Kruid, and Dawn Bostwick

OTHERS PRESENT

None

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Bennett called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ITEM R1. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Neil, second by Aaron.

To approve the consent agenda.

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

Amended consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

ITEM C1. Approve Minutes of the January 9, 2020 Monthly Meeting.

ITEM C2. Approve the January 2020 Claims and Expenditures.

**ITEM C3. Receive and Place on File the January 2020 Financial/Budget Report and the
2nd Quarter FY20 Reserve Fund Report.**

ITEM C4. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations

- Sara & Rich Crawford for \$500 for interns
- Greg Giles for \$50 for programs
- Kingsley Garden Club for \$10 for gardens
- Seven Wild Hearts group for \$150 for animal care
- Girl Scout Troop 30281 for \$25 Petco gift card

ITEM R2. FY21 Operational Budget – Informational Update (Heissel)

Dan gave an update on the department budget review with the Board of Supervisors. There were no changes to the operating budget, including the motor vehicle line item of \$100,000. The CIP budget was reviewed on February 4th, and Dan requested three new positions of Naturalist, Resource Tech and GIS/Resource Tech as usual. The only position they would consider was the Naturalist, but it failed to pass with a 2:2 vote. Dan received a phone call from Supervisor Ung the following day and was told that they were going to fund the Naturalist position after all. It was added to the February 11th agenda and passed with a 2:1 vote. Because there are now only four Supervisors, the overall budget approval will require a super majority (unanimous) vote to pass if increased more than 2%. Supervisor Radig stated that he would not approve the budget with the Naturalist position included. Supervisor Pottebaum expressed strong support of the addition of the Naturalist.

Brief discussion was held regarding possible staff restructuring if the Naturalist position is approved.

ITEM R3. Solar Proposal Discussion & Action (Heissel)

Dan reported that Dolf Ivener and his partner have secured the required insurance policy for \$200 per year and have provided the amended form. The County Attorney is pleased and has approved the Power Purchase Agreement. Dan asked for approval of the Power Purchase Agreement and said that construction could start this spring.

MOTION by Aaron, second by Neil.

To approve and execute the Power Purchase Agreement with Two Hawks, LLC as written and approved by the Woodbury County Attorney's office.³⁻²⁰

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

ITEM R4. Capital Improvement Projects Update (Heissel)

1. Brown's Lake – Concession Stand & Beach Plans – Informational, Action (Heissel)

Dan reported that he had finally received the pre-bid worksheets and plans after a frank and terse discussion with the lead engineer. JEO had the completion date as August 30th, but Dan told them that was unacceptable. An alternate completion date of June 30th was added. The pre-bid meeting will be held on February 25th, and bids will be due on March 4th. Depending on the bids received, the project may have to be pushed back to fall. Dan will discuss with staff whether to keep the beach open for the summer during construction.

MOTION by Aaron, second by Chris.

To approve the contractor bid documents prepared by JEO and authorize the bid letting for the Brown's Lake concession stand and beach project.⁴⁻²⁰

³⁻²⁰ To approve and execute the Power Purchase Agreement with Two Hawks, LLC as written and approved by the Woodbury County Attorney's office.

⁴⁻²⁰ To approve the contractor bid documents prepared by JEO and authorize the bid letting for the Brown's Lake concession stand and beach project.

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

ITEM R5. Board member/staff reports

1. Administrative items (Dan)

Dan reported on the following items:

a. March Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. on March 19, 2020, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center.

b. Southwood – Informational, Action?

Dan reported that Erik Lindsay has been promoted to District Resource Manager at Southwood Conservation Area to replace Don Haahr as he retires on March 1st. The selection was a unanimous decision by the interview committee of Dan Heissel, Brian Stehr and Cindy Bennett.

A retirement reception honoring Don Haahr will be held on February 25th from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Smithland Fire Hall. Don will be presented with his duty weapon purchased for him by current officers and former Director, Rick Schneider, a Filson hunting vest from the WCCB, and a plaque from the Board of Supervisors honoring him for 43 years of service.

The Assistant Resource Manager position has been advertised and will be open through February 21st. Ten applications have been received so far, including one current employee and two former seasonal employees. Interviews will be conducted the first week of March.

Dan stated that Don had asked for an additional two weeks to vacate the residence, but he has family coming this weekend to help move and may not need the extra time. Dan and Brian toured the residence and noted improvements/updates that need to be completed, including repainting, replacing missing closet doors, and installing new carpet and laminate flooring. Dan feels it will cost around \$8,000 before it is done. The board agreed that these updates should be made at this time. Dan will also have the water heater and furnace checked. He noted that previously some broken pieces of siding were replaced, and at that time, the contractor advised checking the rest of it.

c. Part-Time Clerk – Informational

The Part-Time Clerk position has been advertised with applications due on February 14th. Ten applications had been received as of a week ago. Over 40 applications were received the first time the position was opened in 2018. Interviews will probably be held the last week of February.

d. HVAC Service Agreement – Informational, Discussion

Dan reported that he has been working with Building Services Director, Kenny Schmitz, to negotiate an HVAC service agreement with Suter. The first proposal was over \$12,000

but has now been reduced to \$9,750 for a three-year agreement. Dan told Suter that he wanted to receive reports on all services performed. He has also asked if the agreement will start after the one-year warranty period but hasn't yet gotten a response. This will be presented next month for approval.

It was recently noticed that the large air exchange unit hasn't been working and that system warning emails were not being sent. Both issues have been resolved, and they have also started sending warning emails by text message.

e. Friend of Conservation and Conservation Educator Awards – Action (Dawn S)

Dawn Snyder provided a list of proposed award candidates. Mary Siepker, retired Lawton-Bronson elementary teacher, was chosen for the Conservation Educator Award, and Larry Clausen, former Woodbury County Supervisor, was chosen for the Friend of Conservation Award. Awards will be presented at the volunteer award dinner on March 26, 2020.

f. Website Update Information – Action (Dan/Dawn)

Dawn Snyder presented a proposal from Apt Web Development of Columbus, Nebraska, for redesigning and hosting the WCCB website. Plans include an interactive park locator map, fillable forms integrated with PayPal, an improved calendar of events, imbedded Facebook feeds and YouTube videos, search engine optimization, and a responsive mobile-friendly design. It will also retain the current links for cabin/shelter reservations and shooting range permit purchases. The website currently has 160 pages of content and hasn't been updated for five years. A test site will be set up that can be viewed throughout the development process. Projected completion timeframe is three to four months depending on how quickly new content is provided. Discussion was held regarding the project costs and annual costs for site hosting, daily backup and patching services, and site plugin renewals.

MOTION by Neil, second by Chris.

To approve and accept the proposal from Apt Web Development for website redesign as presented with an estimated cost of \$10,950, and contract for secure site hosting, daily backups and monthly patching service with an estimated annual cost of \$589.⁵⁻²⁰

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

g. Other

Dan presented annual reports for FY18 and FY19 as discussed at a previous meeting. He noted that the financial statements are now being calculated on a cash basis with the addition of period 13 expenses, as they are presented to the board each month.

⁵⁻²⁰ To approve and accept the proposal from Apt Web Development for website redesign as presented with an estimated cost of \$10,950, and contract for secure site hosting, daily backups and monthly patching service with an estimated annual cost of \$589.

2. Nature Center Activities (Snyder)

Dawn reported on the following Nature Center activities:

- The program and visitor reports for December and January were presented.
- Theresa has been tracking the number of programs/people that have been turned away due to staff and schedule constraints. This information was provided to the Supervisors and helped in demonstrating the need for an additional Naturalist position.
- The Foundation annual meeting and program was held on February 1st with Stacey Snyder presenting on Antarctica. Three new board members were elected: John Helms, Rich Pope and Bob Meis.
- Mike Greiner provided an antler program in late January with 30 people in attendance.
- Theresa led a public owl program on February 8th with 120 people attending.
- Naturalist staff met with Jay Gorsch with School of the Wild from University of Iowa to explore a new field trip approach for Woodbury County schools. He leads a very successful program with the Iowa City school district that includes all 6th grade students participating in outdoor field trips. They want to expand into other areas of Iowa and potentially consider Woodbury County as a pilot site targeting 4th or 5th grade students from one of the rural Woodbury County school districts. The five-day field trip would take place at the Nature Center and/or county parks. The school teachers would lead with the help of WCCB staff and ISU accreditation.
- Intern interviews will be conducted soon.
- A new kestrel with a right-wing injury was adopted by the Nature Center last week. A naming contest will be held.
- Nature Calls sponsorship information will be put out next month. A decision needs to be made about renting a third gallery again this year at an additional \$800 rental fee. Each gallery also requires a \$4,000 food minimum.

3. Park Activities (Stehr)

Brian reported on the following park activities:

- Flooding is expected again at Snyder Bend in April. Information was provided about the Hesco flood barrier boxes. They are \$4,190 per pallet which contains 10 boxes covering 150'. With sand bags behind the cabins, 600' of coverage would be needed in the front, costing \$16-17,000 just for the boxes. They would need to be filled with gravel, sand or crushed concrete. Dan requested estimate for Aqua Dam tubes but hasn't received it yet. The proposed dike won't be completed yet this spring. Water levels over 30' will reach the cabin foundations. The septic system will have problems before the cabins flood. Moving the cabins might be a long-term solution. It was suggested to check with Woodbury County Emergency Management about possible funding for purchasing the barriers. Brian was asked to propose a flood plan at next month's meeting.
- Interviews have started for seasonal staff, and four job offers have been extended.
- Field staff has been doing tree work as time allows.
- Prairie plantings will be done by Little Sioux entrance.
- Staff is working on burn plans. A cooperative burn meeting will be held on March 11th.
- A small leak was discovered in the Snyder Bend residence drain line. The leaking pipe has been replaced, and the damaged drywall will be fixed.
- Brian is working on garbage contracts for Southwood, Little Sioux, Fowler Forest and the Nature Center. Poly plastic containers with steel frames might be tested this year, because rust has been a problem with the metal containers. They have a five-year warranty versus a two-year warranty for metal containers.

- Erik and Don have been working on the transition process at Southwood and have been cleaning out the shop and files.
- Southwood staff has been working on a new fire rig, because the old tank was cracked. The new tank is for a 5 ½' box.
- Tanner has completed all tests required for pesticide applicators certification and will be added to the department license. He has also been practicing for his CDL and will be driving on February 18th.
- Six officers will attend the CCPOA spring workshop in Sioux County on February 27th.
- Officers will complete rifle qualification course with the Sheriff's office on March 6th.
- The two new Ford trucks were delivered on Monday. Lights and equipment are being installed.
- Dan authorized Josh to purchase materials to finish the Brown's Lake residence basement.
- Derek is at ILEA and is doing firearm training this week.
- Don purchased his rifle and has completed paperwork for the suppressor. It will be held until it goes through the ATF. His payments have been going to a conservation line item for the replacement rifle.

ITEM R6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

The above minutes were recorded by Dawn Bostwick.

Recording Secretary, Dawn Bostwick

Board Secretary, Suzan Boden

Board Chair, Cindy Bennett