

**WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 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, September 10, 2020, at Snyder Bend Park beginning at 4:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Aaron Gehling, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth, and Suzan Boden

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Chris Zellmer-Zant

STAFF PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Marty Pottebaum, County Supervisor

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Bennett called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ITEM R1. Approve Consent Agenda

MOTION by Suzan, second by Aaron.

To approve the consent agenda.

VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth
& Suzan Boden

Nay: None

Absent: Chris Zellmer-Zant

The consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

ITEM C1. Approve Minutes of the July 16, 2020, and August 4, 2020 Monthly Meetings.

ITEM C2. Approve the July 2020 and August 2020 Claims and Expenditures.

ITEM C3. Receive and Place on File the June Final Accrued FY20, July 2020, and August 2020 Financial/Budget Report and the 4th Quarter FY20 Reserve Fund Report.

ITEM C4. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations

- Morningside Garden Club for \$50 memorial for 3 club members: Margie Clausen, Carol Bahney, & Cora Rabe
- Vibeke Jensen & Larry Benne for educational materials

ITEM R2. Salsness Property Discussion – Action

Dan reported that he had been contacted by a realtor about the Salsness property which is surrounded by the Oak Ridge Conservation Area. This property has been the number one priority in WCCB long-range planning for years. The piece is 240 acres, but 10 acres would be retained by the seller. The realtor projected \$4,000 per acre, but Dan believes the appraised value will be in the \$3,200 to \$3,400 range. The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation is willing to act on behalf of the board to purchase the property.

Dan stated that Chris had expressed concerns about the amount of money owed to INHF and wanted the rest of the board to be aware of what is owed. He stated that they currently hold the Zook property at \$246,000 and the Briese property at \$330,000. Dan expects the Zook property to be funded by the Habitat Stamp grant in January. He also stated that the INHF is not concerned about the Briese property being funded this year because it was purchased through the state revolving loan process at 1% interest. Dan is confident that the Salsness property will score well with REAP.

MOTION by Neil, second by Suzan.

To authorize the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation to act on behalf of the Woodbury County Conservation Board with an offer of \$3,250/acre for the 230-acre Salsness property, dependent on appraisal, and to then acquire the property from the INHF using grant dollars and CIP funds.²⁴⁻²⁰

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

ITEM R3. Truck and Tractor Bids – Action

Brian presented bids to replace a tractor at Brown's Lake and a truck at the Nature Center. Tractor bids were received from two dealers with two options from each (85 PTO HP and 95 PTO HP).

MOTION by Aaron, second by Neil.

To approve and authorize the purchase of a McCormick X5.50 MFWD tractor from S & S Equipment at a cost of \$48,832 after trade-in of a 1998 John Deere 5210 tractor.²⁵⁻²⁰

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

Requests were sent to six dealers to replace the 2011 Ford F-250 truck currently used as the snow plow at the Nature Center, but only one bid was received. The 2016 Ford F-250 currently assigned to Brian Stehr will be used for the snow plow and replaced with a half-ton crew cab pickup to obtain better mileage.

MOTION by Aaron, second by Neil.

²⁴⁻²⁰ To authorize the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation to act on behalf of the Woodbury County Conservation Board with an offer of \$3,250/acre for the 230-acre Salsness property, dependent on appraisal, and to then acquire the property from the INHF using grant dollars and CIP funds.

²⁵⁻²⁰ To approve and authorize the purchase of a McCormick X5.50 MFWD tractor from S & S Equipment at a cost of \$48,832 after trade-in of a 1998 John Deere 5210 tractor.

To approve and authorize the purchase of a 2021 F-150 XL crew cab 4x4 pickup from Barry Motor Co. at a cost of \$30,693 after trade-in of a 2011 F-250 pickup.²⁶⁻²⁰

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

ITEM R4. COVID-19 – MHRD Grant – HVAC – Bipolar Ionization System – Action

Dan reported that CW Suter recently informed him of a bipolar ionization system that could be added to the Nature Center HVAC system to make the classrooms, exhibit area and offices safer from coronavirus. MHRD came out with a new grant cycle for COVID-related expenses with a \$25,000 maximum request. Dawn put together a grant request including the ionization system at \$13,300, plus additional PPE for 12 months, touchless faucets and toilets for the Nature Center restroom, and virtual learning software for the iPads. Awards will be announced on October 2nd.

ITEM R5. Capital Improvement Projects Update

1. Brown’s Lake – Phase II – Change Order for Decking – Action

Dan reported that he and Brian went to Black Hawk Lake to look at their decking material for the fishing pier. Dan did a change order to upgrade the decking and shorten the overall deck by 8’ since there won’t be a building as in the DNR plans. Net increase of the change order is \$9,000. During the visit, they also learned of a decking installation problem that can now be avoided.

MOTION by Neil, second by Suzan.

To approve a change order in the amount of \$9,000 on the Brown’s Lake Phase II project to reduce the deck size and enhance the decking material.²⁷⁻²⁰

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

2. Brown’s Lake Concession Project Discussion – Approve Letting Bids – Action

Dan discussed concerns about available funding for this project due to COVID-related losses of camping, cabin and shelter revenues. He will work on refining the projections and make a recommendation next month. The project may have to be done in phases.

Dan noted that he plans to work with the Auditor’s office to move the Nature Center operating and CIP dollars currently accounted for in the Conservation Reserve Fund to a separate fund from the parks and CIP projects making it easier to report available balances.

²⁶⁻²⁰ To approve and authorize the purchase of a 2021 F-150 XL crew cab 4x4 pickup from Barry Motor Co. at a cost of \$30,693 after trade-in of a 2011 F-250 pickup.

²⁷⁻²⁰ To approve a change order in the amount of \$9,000 on the Brown’s Lake Phase II project to reduce the deck size and enhance the decking material.

ITEM R6. Board member/staff reports

1. Administrative items

Dan reported on the following items:

a. October Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. on October 8, 2020, at the Brown's Lake-Bigelow Park shelter.

b. Fowler Forest Well – Action

Brian stated that the lifting didn't work on the Fowler Forest well. It would pump for 10-15 minutes and then be out of water. It is a metal-casing well drilled in the early 60's. Replacement is estimated at \$15,000.

MOTION by Aaron, second by Suzan.

To authorize and approve replacement of the well at Fowler Forest at an estimated cost of \$15,000.²⁸⁻²⁰

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

c. Alfalfa Contract Cancellation Acceptance, Options for Alfalfa – Action

Brian reported that Sam Weber, the current tenant for the alfalfa contract, has asked to be released from his contract as it wasn't as good as expected. Brian agreed that it is rough ground and didn't live up to expectations. He suggested getting a tenant to bale it and pay by the ton and then putting in a grain crop to get it back in the condition it should be.

MOTION by Neil, second by Suzan.

To release Sam Weber from the alfalfa contract and cancel the contract entirely with no payment.²⁹⁻²⁰

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

d. Body Camera Policy – Approval – Action

Brian stated that the County Attorney's office reviewed the WCCB body camera policy and requested an addition regarding consulting with the County Attorney before allowing recordings to be released to the public or media. Once approved, the officers will go through training and understand the policy before starting to use the cameras.

²⁸⁻²⁰ To authorize and approve replacement of the well at Fowler Forest at an estimated cost of \$15,000.

²⁹⁻²⁰ To release Sam Weber from the alfalfa contract and cancel the contract entirely with no payment.

MOTION by Aaron, second by Neil.

To approve the Woodbury County Conservation Board Body Camera Policy as written.³⁰⁻²⁰

VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth
& Suzan Boden

Nay: None

Absent: Chris Zellmer-Zant

2. Park Activities (Stehr)

Brian reported on the following park activities:

- Bigelow Park staff has been busy at Owego with cattail control and pumping. There were issues with the well head initially. Drone photos have been taken to see which cells are being filled and document cattail mitigation to see what method works best.
- Little Sioux Park had some damage from the Derecho storm, and staff spent a few days on cleanup.
- The dry weather and low river levels revealed that the Little Sioux boat ramp had been undercut on the last several feet. Brandon Deeds was hired to core a hole and fill the void with concrete.
- Southwood staff rebuilt the kiosk that was lost in the storms. They also added a place for a picnic table. They have also been using the forestry grinder to remove cedars.
- A CCI crew was hired for the week of August 24th to work on clearing the north fence line on the Briese property and cutting at Shagbark. Another CCI crew scheduled for the second week of August was canceled because several members had tested positive for COVID-19.
- The CCPOA fall workshop in Des Moines has been canceled for this year. Justin Smith of Lyon County has set up qualifications at the Stub Gray shooting range on October 6th. Brian will also be looking into local and online opportunities to meet qualifications.
- The new Kubota zero-turn mower was delivered to Bigelow Park and has been used only once due to dry weather.
- The Kubota UTV should be delivered to the Nature Center next week.

Aaron mentioned a hole on the Brown's Lake boat ramp, but it was noted that it would fall under the DNR's responsibility. Lake water levels were also discussed briefly.

3. Nature Center Activities (Snyder)

Dawn reported on the following Nature Center activities:

- The summer went pretty well with virtual and in-person programing.
- Visitor numbers have been increasing, but not over 30 people at a time inside the Nature Center.
- Schools are starting some virtual and a few in-person programs. Some spring field trips have been scheduled.
- The deadline for the naturalist position was yesterday, and 80 applications have been received. Dan, Brian, Dawn and Theresa will conduct interviews at the end of the month.
- Another opportunity to receive funding will take place on October 6th with the Siouxland Big Give. Donations will be earmarked for animal care.
- October 22nd is the Nature Center's 25th anniversary. No in-person celebration will be done due to COVID.

³⁰⁻²⁰ To approve the Woodbury County Conservation Board Body Camera Policy as written.

- A self-guided trivia scavenger hunt will be available on the trails, and an activity will be available inside for non-hikers.
- An anniversary highlights video is being put together.
- Siouxland Public Media/KWIT will have a live remote from the Nature Center as part of their annual fund drive and will give back a portion of each pledge to the DPNC.
- SOAR will provide 1-2 raptors to release on a Facebook Live event.
- Replacement window treatments have been ordered for the four windows in the reception office through Gotcha Covered at a cost of \$1,200 including installation.

4. Board

Dan stated that he had received notice of a 68-acre property for sale north of Correctionville. It is not near any current WCCB property and expansion would be tough, so he didn't recommend pursuing it.

ITEM R7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

The above minutes were recorded by Dawn Bostwick.

Recording Secretary, Dawn Bostwick

Board Secretary, Suzan Boden

Board Chair, Cindy Bennett