

**WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2024, BOARD MEETING**

The following is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Woodbury County, Iowa, Conservation Board held on Thursday, April 11, 2024, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center beginning at 4:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Aaron Gehling, Cindy Bennett, and Tom Limoges

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Chris Zellmer-Zant and Neil Stockfleth

STAFF PRESENT

Brian Stehr, Theresa Kruid, and Dawn Bostwick

OTHERS PRESENT

Mark Nelson, County Supervisor/Conservation Board Liaison

CALL TO ORDER

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

CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ITEM R1. Approve Consent Agenda

MOTION by Neil, second by Tom.

To approve the consent agenda.

VOTE:

Aye: Aaron Gehling, Cindy Bennett, and Tom Limoges

Nay: None

Absent: Chris Zellmer-Zant and Neil Stockfleth

The consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

- C1. Approve Minutes of the March 14, 2024, Regular Meeting
- C2. Approve the March 2024 Claims and Expenditures
- C3. Receive and Place on File the March 2024 Financial/Budget Report and 3rd Quarter FY24 Reserve Fund Report
- C4. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations:
 - 3 copies each of 3 children's books for the Tale Trail from Marla Kerr
 - The Honeybee, Begin with a Bee, & If you find a Leaf
 - \$24.01 from Dawn Snyder for Dr. Robert Powell Memorial (via WCCF)

- Gary Shaner Memorial gifts: (In addition to previous total)
 - John Pendleton \$30.00
 - Jon & Ane Cleghorn \$50.00
 - Gary & Judy Schindel \$50.00

ITEM R2. Fiber To Little Sioux Park

Brian reported that Schoon Corporation was contacted about plowing fiber into Little Sioux Park to connect to Long Lines internet service. Long Lines would charge \$120,000 to put the fiber in because they don't have other customers in the area. Schoon gave a quote of \$30,000 to plow it down the road and into the park which is a total of 2 ½ miles. They were asked to provide another quote with an alternate route along the trail and crossing the river on the park bridge, which is expected to be under \$20,000. Long Lines has agreed to let Little Sioux access their network but details have not been worked out yet. This will provide network access for park staff to use the county shared drives and timecard system, as well as internet access for park users. The current service through NextLink is spotty and slow. Aaron noted that it would be useful for weather alerts also, and Brian agreed that cell service isn't good by Riverside campground. Brian also noted that reliable service will be needed to implement electronic payments through QR codes in the future.

ITEM R3. Gooseneck Trailer Bids

Brian stated that the 2024 Load Trail trailer has been picked up, and he is very happy with it. He presented bids for the second trailer replacement. He explained that he had initially requested bids from Hitches, Trailers & More only but just recently discovered that Marx Trailer Sales has flatbed trailers also. When Brian called today for a quote, Dave was just headed out the door but was able to email a rough quote quickly before he left. Brian would like to upgrade to 14-ply tires and check on a wireless remote, but at this point they have the low bid. Dan and Brian both recommended getting a trailer with hydraulic lifts. Brian stated that all the trailers are about 6-11 weeks out, but there is no hurry because they will be purchased in next year's budget.

MOTION by Tom, second by Aaron.

To approve and authorize the purchase of an H & H 34' gooseneck trailer from Marx Trailer Sales at \$21,712.39 with an upgrade to 14-ply tires not to exceed \$1,500.²⁴⁻¹³

VOTE:

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

ITEM R4. Capital Improvement Projects Update

Little Sioux Park:

1. Sewer Projects

Brian reported that the tanks for the sewer treatment system were set today, and concrete will be poured around the tanks as ballasts. They will start plumbing and backfilling as they go. It looks like they should be done in a couple weeks.

²⁴⁻¹³ To approve and authorize the purchase of an H & H 34' gooseneck trailer from Marx Trailer Sales at \$21,712.39 with an upgrade to 14-ply tires not to exceed \$1,500.

The drain field is in as well. It is a pressurized leach field, and there are some inspection holes that can be opened to see what the water table level is. They put rounded caps on them but were instructed to replace them with flat caps at or below grade since they are in the ballfield.

Doyle Construction is pretty much done with the collection system and is going through a final punch list. The electrician started hooking up the lifts last Friday and should be done in a couple days. Doyle will then test the pumps to make sure they are working.

2. Bellamy Campground

No update.

3. Well

Brian stated that the test results came back from the hygienic lab, and everything looks within range to be licensed with the DNR, but it is high in iron and a little high in sulfur. It is within standards; however, they want to explore test wells and try to find better water. The engineer said it should probably be treated with some sort of filter bed for the customer satisfaction. The original well was 180' deep, but they will need to go lower into the Dakota aquifer with the new one. They are also going to test the current well drilled in 2004, which will help JEO get a new well permitted and start the process.

4. Beach Survey

Brian reported that elevation readings were taken yesterday on the Little Sioux beach, and it is about 4 ½' low, equating to almost 70' of beach that has gone away. Dan had previously talked to Ben Kusler about developing shelves in the beach to allow for low water use, but while doing measurements in the boat with a depth finder, the previously discovered drop off could not be found. Brian is going to walk it with staff to be sure, but it appears to be 5' deep 30' from shore. Either it silted in or the boat motor created a problem with the depth finder. If the depth finder is correct though, it might be possible to open without doing anything to the beach. The beach doesn't normally open until Memorial weekend, so it can be discussed again before then.

ITEM R5. Board Member/Staff Reports

1. Administrative Items

Brian reported on the following items:

a. Set May Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. on May 9, 2024, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center.

b. Old Business

Mark Nelson gave an update regarding the WCCB support of a one-mile setback from conservation areas for solar arrays that was passed by the board last winter. The Planning and Zoning committee has been working on their rules and have two public meetings coming up. They decided to keep in the industrial zoning, so the one-mile setback portion was taken out for the industrial area. It originally was intended to be the setback if it was countywide.

2. Nature Center Activities

Theresa reported on the following Nature Center activities:

- The programs and visitors report for March was presented. School programs were a little low, but public programs were higher.
- Mariah did a good job coming up with spring break public programs which hit some homeschool groups. She is going to develop a homeschool program.
- The volunteer work day will be held on Saturday, April 27th. They will work on cleaning up the garden beds, pond, playscape, and trails.
- The volunteer appreciation dinner will be held on Tuesday, April 30th. Awards will be presented to Prudy Deck and Gary LeMoine. Betty West will also be presented with her plaque from the Board of Supervisors that wasn't quite ready before her last day.
- Seasonal staff has been hired and are in the process of completing the necessary background checks and physical exams. A May 20th start date is planned.
- Theresa, Kari, and Mariah attended the NAI and IAN combined workshop in Council Bluffs. Next year the NAI conference will be held in Montana.
- Nature Calls sponsor packets were distributed to board members. The committee decided not to change the sponsor levels this year. They also decided to go back to the convention center, and the deposit has been made. Oakview Group took over the management last week, and Theresa met with them on Tuesday. There will be a little issue on setup day, but it can be worked around. They have offered to schedule a food tasting ahead of time. The auction committee will be meeting on April 22nd.
- School field trips started this week and will continue steadily through May.
- Summer camp registration started yesterday for foundation members. About 30 registrations were received in the first two days, which is low. Theresa commented that people don't seem to see the advantage of being a foundation member to register early like they used to. Four-day camps have been added this year in addition to the two-day camps. Four-day camps haven't been offered since before covid.
- Tyler has been working with Gary LeMoine on creating a log bench for the new Bur Oak trail that connects to Stone Park.
- Bees have been added to the hive again.
- Cindy stated that she has been asked if the nature center would be opening on Sundays again. It used to be open on Sunday afternoons from 1:00 to 4:00 prior to covid. Dan, Brian, & Theresa have already discussed it some. If Sundays are added, they would like to open at 12:00 instead of 1:00 to make it a half-day shift for staff. They also discussed having Sunday hours follow the campground schedule of May 1st through October 31st. In the winter, staff may be required to spend 3-4 hours clearing snow to be open for just a half day.
- Staff met with Brown Knows Design about possible exhibit upgrades today.

3. Park Activities

Brian reported on the following park activities:

- The parks will be opening on May 1st with the kick-off weekend being held May 3rd-5th. As usual, campers will receive a few promotional items, as well as a certificate for a free night of camping to be used later in the season.
- Aaron asked if there would be a trunk-or-treat event at the parks again. Little Sioux still has one each year that is managed by volunteers. The other parks haven't scheduled anything yet.
- Staff has been getting ready for upcoming burns.
- Staff was involved in a successful prescribed fire of almost 2,000 acres in Heendah Hills. It was a multi-agency burn, with private landowners involved as well.

- The cooperative burn week is coming up and will have a northern focus including Woodbury, Plymouth, and some of Monona county. It is a training event with seminars available as well. Erik is one of the chairpersons and is putting a lot of work into it.
- A burn was completed at Owego on the town site and a couple smaller areas.
- The trailer was picked up on Tuesday and looks great.
- The two F150s orders were on hold due to lack of parts. They are no longer on hold as of last month and are expected to be built soon.
- Little Sioux staff has been putting rock on the camping pads, and they are looking good. Additional rock had to be ordered to finish that up.

4. Board Information

None.

5. Other Business

None.

ITEM R6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:19 p.m.

The above minutes were recorded by Dawn Bostwick.

Recording Secretary, Dawn Bostwick

Board Secretary, Aaron Gehling

Board Chair, Cindy Bennett