

**WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 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, September 13, 2018, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center beginning at 4:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant and Cindy Bennett

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Neil Stockfleth and Suzan Boden

STAFF PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Marty Pottebaum, County Supervisor

CALL TO ORDER

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

CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

Thank-you note from Rick Schneider for gift in memory of his father.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ITEM R1. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Cindy, second by Aaron.

To approve the consent agenda.

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

Consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

ITEM C1. Approve minutes of the August 9, 2018 monthly meeting.

ITEM C2. Approve the August 2018 and August FY18 accrued claims and expenditures.

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

ITEM C4. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Fleet Farm - \$1,500 gift card for programming | 11. Boys & Girls Clubs of Siouxland for Trail grant partnership |
| 2. BNSF Railway Foundation for \$5,000 grant for sidewalks/trails | 12. Rod Lantz for aquarium |
| 3. Alpha Delta Kappa for \$34 donation for programs | 13. Michael Nguyen & Melissa Brown for \$200 donation for programs |
| 4. Denise Oakley for \$20 donation for programs | 14. First Congregational United Church of Christ for \$156 donation for programs |
| 5. Jeanne McCallum for \$25 donation for programs | 15. Bill Zales for taxidermy assistance |
| 6. Jenny Williams for \$50 donation for programs | 16. Susan Nielsen for John Glesne Memorial \$50 |
| 7. Shelley Sweeney for \$20 donation for programs | 17. Smithfield Food for \$250 donation for programs |
| 8. Diana Gardner for \$5 donation for programs | 18. Bob Sweeney for hot dogs/buns for campfire |
| 9. Loess Hills Audubon for newsletter ad | |
| 10. Scott Moats and TNC staff for Bison tour | |

Memorials in Memory of Roger Gruber: Total \$1,985

- James & Shirley Soukup
- Robert & Karen Jungers
- Michael Prosser
- Gary & Patricia Thompson
- Mark & Robin Gambaiana
- Sieck and Find, LLC Diane M. Andersen
- Diane M. Andersen
- Carole Sieck
- Rick & Angie Schneider
- CMBA Architects, P.C.
- Christopher & Julie Lohr
- Roger & Joy Caudron
- Thomas & Patricia Fellows
- Joseph & Margaret Lemek
- Craig & Jenny Jorgensen
- Trisha & Lee Wheelock
- Mark & Anna Vestweber
- W & C Pedersen
- William & Donna Bradbury
- Kenneth & Virginia Freyermuth
- Roger & Cynthia Johnson
- Mike & Kelly Moffitt
- Colleen Sernett-Shadle & Steve Shadle
- Randall & Deborah Burnight
- Betty Wheelock
- Bruce & Karen Matthey
- Mark & Susan Nielsen

ITEM R2. Review and approve Fiber optic bids for materials and installation (Dan) -Action

Dan reported that the fiber optics bid deadline was 12:00 noon on September 11th, with the bid opening at 1:00 p.m. Dan, Brian, Glenn Sedivy and one contractor were present for the opening. Materials bids were received from Echo Electric and Electronic Innovations at \$14,722.59 and \$16,472.62 respectively.

MOTION by Aaron, second by Cindy.

To approve and accept the bid from Echo Electric to provide materials for the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center fiber optic project at a cost of \$14,722.59.³⁶⁻¹⁸

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

Dan noted that Echo has agreed to store the materials until needed rather than having them delivered to Brown's Lake for storage.

Installation bids were received from Perrin Drilling (\$81,066), Tri-State Underground (\$86,875 Fall/\$78,425 Spring), Bauer Underground (\$88,755), and Nebcon (\$108,000 Fall/\$105,000 Spring). Dan recommended contracting with Perrin Drilling for installation in the fall. The project will be completed in October and November barring any severe weather complications.

MOTION by Cindy, second by Aaron.

To approve and accept the bid from Perrin Drilling to complete the installation of fiber optics for the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center at a cost of \$81,066.³⁷⁻¹⁸

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

ITEM R3. FY 20 Budget Information - Preliminary

Dan presented a preliminary FY 20 budget sheet updated to include final actual spending for FY18. He noted that the utility line items would be budgeted at actual costs from last year. Increases were made in gas & oil of \$2,000 and arms & ammunition of \$1500. Final numbers will be presented for approval next month.

³⁶⁻¹⁸ To approve and accept the bid from Echo Electric to provide materials for the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center fiber optic project at a cost of \$14,722.59.

³⁷⁻¹⁸ To approve and accept the bid from Perrin Drilling to complete the installation of fiber optics for the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center at a cost of \$81,066.

ITEM R4. Land Opportunity – Riverside Bluffs

Dan stated that Aaron alerted him to land for sale on the south side of Riverside Bluffs. Dan checked into it and found it to be the Richard Skorey estate of approximately 300 acres including a house and listed at over \$300,000. The board's primary interest would only be to prevent development on this land, which shouldn't be an issue there anyway. Dan didn't recommend pursuing it any further.

ITEM R5. Deposit Check Policy – DPNC - Discussion

Dan initiated a discussion about discontinuing the deposit requirement for room rentals at the Nature Center. Currently deposit checks are held until after the rental is complete and then returned to the renter. The contract states that the renter is responsible for all damages, but Dan will ask the County Attorney to review the contract for enforceability. Deposits are no longer collected for cabin and shelter rentals. Dan also mentioned that the Nature Center contract states that no refunds are given, but that the unofficial operating policy has been to provide a refund for cancellations. He would like to change the contract to allow a refund, less a \$25 administrative fee, if cancelled at least two weeks in advance, but provide no refund if cancelled within two weeks of the event. Dan will gather more information and bring a recommendation to be approved at a later meeting.

Additional discussion was held regarding credit card payments, with Aaron suggesting a state-wide plan for county conservation boards which would provide volume discounts and kickbacks to the association.

ITEM R6. Capital Improvement Projects Update (Dan)

1. Fiber Optics Update

Dan reported that he has been working on permitting and is waiting on the railroad permit which isn't expected until mid-October. The plan is for construction to begin at the Nature Center and work toward Riverside, in the hope that the railroad permit will be in place by then. Dan has been assured that the project will be completed this fall. The contractor can bore through frozen ground, unless there is blowing or accumulating snow.

2. Brown's Lake Update

Dan stated that a preconstruction meeting for the Brown's Lake shoreline improvement project was held on Monday, but then a Federal injunction was issued on Tuesday which suspended work. They were allowed to take down trees without disturbing the bank, however, and they have enough cleared that the lake can be seen from the parking lot now. The permit has since been received, so the contractor can now start sloping the bank. The project should be done by the end of November.

3. HVAC & Roof Update

Dan reported that he called a meeting for the HVAC project because he hadn't been kept in the loop and needed specific timeframes due to the necessity of blocking the use of the Nature Center classrooms during construction. He had been told that bids would be let in September with work taking place in November. However, in reviewing the project steps of holding a public hearing, having the contract reviewed by the attorney, letting bids with a 3-week deadline, and getting approval from the Board of Supervisors, it was evident that the work would not start until January 2nd. The current plan is to have the contracts to the County Attorney's office by September 21 and get Supervisor approval on September 25. Bids will

be due by October 16 and opened on October 23. Dan was informed by the engineer that the project will take four months to complete. The bid will specify that all occupied spaces must be done by the end of March due to scheduled field trips beginning in April, with completion of the rest of the project by May 3rd.

Dan also learned that a large portion of the upstairs storage room would need to be used to house the HVAC unit, as it is too large to install in the downstairs mechanical room. Other options are being investigated as the upstairs storage room is vital for organization of Nature Center programming.

The roof project is expected to begin in March. A decision was made to use shingles rather than steel, because steel prices are so high that the entire roof could be replaced with the cost savings.

4. Southwood Building Plans Update

Dan reported that the contractor has found someone to design plans for use on the Southwood building, as well as the next two to three buildings at other parks.

ITEM R7. Board member/staff reports

1. Administrative items (Dan)

Dan reported on the following items:

a. Set October meeting date and location

The next meeting was tentatively set for 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 11, 2018, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center followed by the annual appreciation picnic for department heads at 6:00 p.m. Dan stated that his annual review will need to be done that night as well.

b. Bonding – County Attorney Info

Dan received an email from Joshua Widman regarding the bonding question raised by Neil. Joshua doesn't believe bonding is needed for conservation department staff. Most conservation staff and boards are not bonded. Errors and omissions insurance is in place to cover board members if an error is made. Bonding would cost \$175 per \$50,000 of coverage per employee. Action was tabled until Neil is present since he had raised the concern.

c. Bylaws – County Attorney Info

Nothing can be done on the Bylaws until the bonding issue is decided.

d. Other

Dan reported on a recent meeting with Angela Drent of the Department of Health. They received a grant to purchase several Clearview wheelchair/motorized scooter charging stations and would like to donate one for use in our parks. The stations have a 24-volt charger and can provide a full charge in 30 minutes. They need to be in a covered shelter of some kind. An additional unit may be available later.

2. Park activities (Brian)

Brian reported on the following park activities:

- Park beaches are now closed and being winterized.
- Summer maintenance and security staff are done for the season.
- Bigelow and Snyder Bend staff have been grinding stumps, splitting firewood and helping with the shoreline project.
- Bigelow, Snyder Bend and Southwood staff worked together to complete mowing the dikes at Owego.
- Southwood staff finished seeding fall food plots and worked with the Back Country Horsemen group to install donated rock around the hitching rails at the equestrian campsites.
- The crew installing fiber optics at Southwood hit a sewer line during installation. The repairs have been made and paid for by the contractor.
- Little Sioux staff continued to clear dead and dying trees at the park entrance and hauled several loads of crushed concrete to fill mud holes at the boat ramp.
- The aerator has arrived and will be installed for the swans. The local Audubon chapter has agreed to donate funds to help with the purchase and installation of the aerator.
- One of the female swans, whose wings feathers weren't long enough to be clipped previously, can still fly and has been getting out of the pen. It keeps returning, but staff hasn't been able to catch her yet for clipping. The other two females have injuries that prevent flying, and the male's wings have already been clipped.
- Additional rock has been added to the Little Sioux beach.
- Pest refresher classes are coming up for field staff.
- All eight officers will be attending CCPOA fall training at Camp Dodge in Des Moines on October 8th-10th.
- The sheriff's office is putting a program together for rifle training.

3. Nature Center activities (Dawn)

Dawn reported on the following Nature Center activities:

- Iowa State University 4-H Extension is seeking host sites for AmeriCorps Environmental Educator positions. Host sites are required to make a cash match of \$3,400 is for half-time employees of 900 hours. Applications are due September 28th. The current Assistant Naturalist, Brianna Martens, will be done on October 19th, and the AmeriCorps position could possibly start in October or November. Dawn recommended using some of the Nature Calls proceeds to fund the cash match.

MOTION by Aaron, second by Cindy.

To approve the application submission for the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center to serve as a host site for a 900-hour AmeriCorps Environmental Educator position and authorize a cash match of \$3,400.³⁸⁻¹⁸

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

³⁸⁻¹⁸ To approve the application submission for the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center to serve as a host site for a 900-hour AmeriCorps Environmental Educator position and authorize a cash match of \$3,400.

- The new projector, smartboard and sound system has been installed. A few glitches are being worked through, but Dawn noted that the Audubon group was astounded with the new system.
- An Open House is being considered for the sidewalk project.
- The Foundation is participating as the fiscal agent for the Trees for Siouxland/Plant Some Shade project again this year. A press conference was held last Friday. Tree orders have been coming in. Trees must be picked up on Thursday, October 18th, between 4:30 and 6:00 p.m.
- The Nature Center is among 80 nonprofit agencies participating in the Siouxland Big Give online fundraising event on October 9th. Funds raised will be used for Playscape enhancements and outdoor exhibits. Dawn encouraged board members to share the Nature Center posts on Facebook. Aaron suggested purchasing a \$30 boost through Facebook to increase visibility.
- Dawn shared the Nature Calls auction brochure. She gave the convention center a headcount of 650 yesterday. Brats were donated by Staber Meats.

4. Other

Dan, Chris, Brian, Bob and Don will be attending the IACCB annual conference next week.

ITEM R8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

The above minutes were recorded by Dawn Bostwick.

Recording Secretary, Dawn Bostwick

Board Secretary, Cindy Bennett

Board Vice President, Chris Zellmer-Zant