

**WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY, DECEMBER 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, December 13, 2018, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center 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 and Dawn Bostwick

OTHERS PRESENT

Marty Pottebaum, County Supervisor

CALL TO ORDER

President Stockfleth called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ITEM R1. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Suzan, second by Cindy.

To approve the consent agenda.

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

Consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

ITEM C1. Approve minutes of the November 8, 2018 monthly meeting.

ITEM C2. Approve the November 2018 claims and expenditures.

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

ITEM C4. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations

1. Scheels for \$1,000 donation for interns.
2. Ginger and Gene Martin for \$750 donation for Raptors
3. Juliann and Larry Delperdang for \$400 donation for animal care.
4. Gary Heineman for birdseed
5. Numerous gifts for Bradford Kollars memorial – still receiving and will report them at next meeting.

ITEM R2. FY 20 Budget – Informational Update (Dan)

Dan reported that the salary step increases for FY20 were submitted today for the budget payroll projections. A 3% annual adjustment is projected but has not yet been approved.

The only CIP Project request was for replacement of the 2.2 miles of roads at Little Sioux Park. They were originally done in 1976 with a lift added in 1997. A slurry leveling was completed in the last couple years to get by a little longer. The County Engineer estimates a cost of \$475,000 for asphalt. Board members strongly favored using concrete rather than asphalt.

The Improvements request for FY20 included the GIS and Resource Tech positions requested in previous years. Dan noted that an additional full-time naturalist position should be added in the future due to the number of programs requests having to be turned away. Dawn will prepare a comparison of the number of educational staff members in Iowa counties of similar size.

ITEM R3. Part-Time Clerk Update

Dan announced that Nicole Stevens has been hired for the part-time clerk position and started employment two weeks ago. Dawn B. added that Nicole has been doing very well in the short time since coming onboard and is a great addition to the office.

ITEM R4. Strategic Planning Session – Set Date (Dan)

Discussion was held regarding another strategic planning session. It was decided to have a joint session with the board and higher-level employees, possibly led by a consultant facilitator. The session was tentatively set for the morning of Saturday, February 9th, to be followed by the regular board meeting.

ITEM R5. Nature Calls – Proceeds Discussion (Dan & Dawn)

Dan asked the board to consider developing a budget for the proceeds from the annual Nature Calls event which puts more emphasis on the environmental education program and assisting with intern and AmeriCorps position funding. Currently \$5,000 from the event proceeds and all raffle proceeds are put towards intern salaries. The remainder is deposited into a dedicated fund for CIP projects at the Nature Center. No action was taken at this time.

ITEM R6. Grants – Gilchrist and MHRD (Dan)

Dan reported that both the Foundation and the Board as separate entities are eligible to apply for MHRD grants within the same year. He plans to apply for a large MHRD grant to help pay for the handicap assessable fishing pier at Brown's Lake. He provided information and pictures of the fishing pier recently completed at Blackhawk Lake in Sac County. He recommended building a similar pier but omitting the enclosed fishing shed due to cost and potential security management issues.

Dan stated that he also plans to apply for a small Gilchrist Foundation grant to replace the sand at Brown's Lake beach and the Little Sioux beach with sugar sand.

ITEM R7. Capital Improvement Projects Update (Dan)

1. Browns Lake – Shoreline, Old Concession, New Concession

An update on the Brown's Lake shoreline project was given by Dan. A few items are left to be finished, including seeding, dirt work cleanup, handicap signage and parking lines, and

installation of the hand railings which are on backorder. A final payment of \$22,000 is being held until after completion this spring.

Brian explained the drainage issues near the old concession stand at Brown's Lake which continually washes out a section of the beach. Beach improvement ideas were discussed including razing the old concession building, removing concrete walls, adding a water garden, rebuilding the concession stand in an area with visibility of the beach, and utilizing the bottom parking lot for the beach area. Dan will be meeting with JEO next week and will get a quote from Niewohner Construction for razing the old building. He will also investigate the possibility of adding the building removal to the current project. Details will be presented at the next meeting, and a decision can be made at that time.

Dan presented and reviewed the current Capital Improvement Projects list for 2019 and 2020.

2. Fiber Optics

Dan reported that the Nature Center fiber optics project is complete and is a great improvement. He asked Marty to convey appreciation to the Supervisors for their contribution to the project.

3. DPNC Construction Projects - Action

At the board's suggestion, Dan obtained a quote for carpet squares for the entire lower level area, rather than using the leftover exhibit area carpeting for a portion of the space. He also noted that mice nests were recently discovered inside the roll of leftover carpet being stored in the mechanical room. The salvageable carpet will be kept for possible repairs in the exhibit area. Magic Carpet quoted \$11,007 for a total of 274 yards of carpet squares.

MOTION by Suzan, second by Aaron.

To approve and accept the quote from Magic Carpet for carpeting the lower level of the Nature Center at a cost of \$11,007.⁴⁵⁻¹⁸

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

Dan reported that he had met with WCICC regarding getting on the county ShoreTel VOIP phone system. The new phones will cost approximately \$8,000, but a savings of at least \$480/month will be realized by making the switch.

MOTION by Cindy, second by Suzan.

To approve and authorize the purchase of ShoreTel phones for the Nature Center and transfer the phone service to the Woodbury County VOIP system.⁴⁶⁻¹⁸

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

⁴⁵⁻¹⁸ To approve and accept the quote from Magic Carpet for carpeting the lower level of the Nature Center at a cost of \$11,007.

⁴⁶⁻¹⁸ To approve and authorize the purchase of ShoreTel phones for the Nature Center and transfer the phone service to the Woodbury County VOIP system.

4. Southwood – Earth moving, building informational update

Discussion was held regarding plans to move dirt at the Southwood shop area. Brian showed a map and explained that there is a natural rise that would be taken out to make the area more useable and align better with the grade of the current shop. He will be meeting with Ben Kusler next week and have an update at the next meeting. The project will be bid out to a contractor.

5. Owego Ditch Cleanouts & tube repairs – Action

Brian reported that a test had been done at Owego on cleaning out the ditch on cell C so the contractor could come up with a more accurate bid. It took the contractor four hours to clean out 150 yards. They quoted \$5,200 to clean out the ditch (3,800 feet) and \$2,200 to clean out other areas (1,600 feet). They have their equipment there now and can do the work right away.

MOTION by Aaron, second by Suzan.

To approve and authorize cattail removal at Owego as presented.⁴⁷⁻¹⁸

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

6. Razing of old Concessions Building – Brown’s Lake Beach – Action

Discussion recorded under Item 1.

7. Brown’s Lake Playground – Remove and Replace – Action

Dan stated that he would like to remove and replace the playground at Brown’s Lake in the spring. He asked for authorization to prepare a plan and put out requests for proposal.

MOTION by Suzan, second by Aaron.

To approve and authorize the director to prepare a plan and requests for proposal to replace the Brown’s Lake playground.⁴⁸⁻¹⁸

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

8. Future projects

Future projects will be discussed at the strategic planning session in February.

ITEM R8. Board member/staff reports

1. Administrative items (Dan)

Dan reported on the following items:

⁴⁷⁻¹⁸ To approve and authorize cattail removal at Owego as presented.

⁴⁸⁻¹⁸ To approve and authorize the director to prepare a plan and requests for proposal to replace the Brown’s Lake playground.

a. Set January meeting date and location

The next meeting was set for 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 8, 2019, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center.

b. Equipment repairs

Dan reported on a recent increase in equipment repairs. A seal on a wide area mower needs replaced at a cost of \$4,000 to prevent blowing up an \$8,000 pump. Additional repairs were made to a few trucks. Dan mentioned that the one-ton diesel has had multiple issues and will likely be phased out soon.

c. Vacation hours – Discussion carryover from performance review – Closed Session, Action

Dan requested a closed session to discuss his vacation hours request from the November meeting which was tabled because all board members weren't present.

The board went into closed session by motion from Suzan and second by Cindy. President Stockfleth held the roll call vote: Aaron Gehling – Aye, Cindy Bennett – Aye, Suzan Boden – Aye, Neil Stockfleth – Aye. Chris Zellmer-Zant – Absent.

A motion was made by Suzan to come out of closed session, which was seconded by Suzan and carried unanimously by roll call vote: Aaron Gehling – Aye, Cindy Bennett – Aye, Suzan Boden – Aye, Neil Stockfleth – Aye. Chris Zellmer-Zant – Absent.

MOTION by Suzan, second by Aaron.

To approve Director Heissel's request to increase his vacation accrual from four weeks to five weeks retroactive to his one-year anniversary date of November 1, 2018.

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

2. Nature Center activities (Dawn)

Dawn reported on the following Nature Center activities:

- Former summer intern, Olivia Parks, has been chosen for one of the AmeriCorps positions and will start January 7th.
- Summer intern positions will be posted soon with a mid-February application deadline.
- Woodbury County has been ranked eighth in the state of Iowa for tourism, bringing in \$311,380,000 in tourism money.
- The Winter Fun Day and Artist Open House event drew in over 300 people. Theresa Kruid did a great job organizing the event and preparing over a dozen types of make-and-take crafts for the public. Several artists had tables with items to sell. Donations of nearly \$100 were taken in, although it was a free program.
- Dawn applied for and received a \$3,300 grant from the Iowa Safari Club International to supplement department archery equipment and enhance the 3-D archery range at Southwood.

- Staff has been working to prepare for the office move upstairs. Regular rental groups have been informed that they will be limited to one classroom or will need to find another meeting place for a few months.
- The *Images Beneath our Feet: Archaeological Discoveries on Highway 20* program will be presented at the Nature Center following the board meeting.

3. Park activities (Brian)

Brian reported on the following park activities:

- Little Sioux staff have been removing a shrub row at the park entrance to make the prairie area more visible when entering the park. They also removed brush from the prairie on the Walling River Access. Shade trees will be planted.
- Southwood staff poured the sidewalk to the observation tower. Gravel will be added once the dump truck repairs have been completed.
- The 3-D archery targets have arrived at Southwood and are very impressive.
- Staff have been repainting the interior of the Snyder Bend cabins.
- The roof ridge vents on the Snyder Bend cabins were replaced with the shingle-over style due to an issue with water leaking through the openings on each end.
- Officers have completed training and are now certified to carry their duty rifles.
- Bob Fundermann has recertified for his general firearms instructor certification, good for another three years.
- Dan and Brian both passed the class A water operator test and have applied for their licenses.
- The Bobcat snowblower attachment has been delivered but is already in the shop due to a missing seal that was causing an oil leak. The repair is covered under warranty.

4. Other

Dawn asked the board if they still wanted to go ahead with the Siouxland Chamber Rush Hour event scheduled for May 16th. It was agreed to go ahead with that date.

Dan shared a thank you note from a visitor who reserved the Southwood cabins for family members attending a funeral in the area and was extremely pleased with the cabins, park and staff.

ITEM R9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

The above minutes were recorded by Dawn Bostwick.

Recording Secretary, Dawn Bostwick

Board Secretary, Cindy Bennett

Board President, Neil Stockfleth