

**WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2020 BOARD MEETING
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

The following is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Woodbury County, Iowa, Conservation Board held on Thursday, March 19, 2020, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center via teleconference beginning at 4:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT (VIA PHONE)

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

None

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Bennett called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ITEM R1. Approve Consent Agenda

MOTION by Suzan, second by Aaron.

To approve the consent agenda.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth & Suzan Boden

Nay: None

Absent: None

The consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

ITEM C1. Approve Minutes of the February 13, 2020 Monthly Meeting.

ITEM C2. Approve the February 2020 Claims and Expenditures.

ITEM C3. Receive and Place on File the February 2020 Financial/Budget Report.

ITEM C4. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations

- Connie & Mac Smith for \$20 memorial for Frances Mikkelsen
- Deb Combs for quilt hanging

Dan requested the addition of the following discussion topic:

ITEM R6. Board member/staff reports

1. Administrative items (Heissel)
 - e. Other – COVID-19 Discussion

MOTION by Neil, second by Chris.

To approve the amended regular agenda.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth & Suzan Boden

Nay: None

Absent: None

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

Dan reported that the county budget was approved by the Board of Supervisors with the inclusion of the new full-time Naturalist position. He also stated that the Supervisors were receptive to converting the current Resource Naturalist position into a GIS/Resource Technician position once the new Naturalist is on board. The salary for that position will be adjusted at that time to reflect the new duties. Job descriptions will be put together by staff and presented to the board in April. Efforts will be made to bring the new Naturalist on board effective July 1st.

ITEM R3. Consideration and Approval of Garbage Service Contracts

Brian presented the proposals received for non-hazardous waste pickup service. Only one bid was received for the parks (Southwood Conservation Area, Little Sioux Park, and Fowler Forest) from the current provider, CHN Garbage. The total yearly cost of \$9,450 is down \$3,066 from the last contract. The total number of dumpsters was decreased according to past usage, and the dumpster size was increased from 2 yards to 3 yards.

MOTION by Neil, second by Chris.

To approve and enter into a two-year contract with C.H.N. Garbage Service, Inc., for non-hazardous waste pickup service at Little Sioux Park, Southwood Conservation Area and Fowler Forest at a cost of \$9,450 per year.⁶⁻²⁰

ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth & Suzan Boden

Nay: None

Absent: None

Three proposals were received for waste pickup at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center. The lowest bid was from Waste Management at a cost of \$663.81 for the first year and \$513.40 for the second and third years. The other bids included Western Disposal, the current provider, at a cost of \$690 per year and Gill Hauling at \$850 per year. Discussion was held regarding past issues with Waste Management including hidden charges and contract buyout requirements. It was noted that Western Disposal has been very easy to work with and that their proposal includes dumpster capacity of 4.5 yards versus 4 yards with the other two providers. After lengthy discussion, it was decided to continue with Western Disposal.

⁶⁻²⁰ To approve and enter into a two-year contract with C.H.N. Garbage Service, Inc., for non-hazardous waste pickup service at Little Sioux Park, Southwood Conservation Area and Fowler Forest at a cost of \$9,450 per year.

MOTION by Chris, second by Suzan.

To approve and enter into a two-year contract with Western Disposal for non-hazardous waste pickup service at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center at a cost of \$690 per year.⁷⁻²⁰

ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth & Suzan Boden

Nay: None

Absent: None

ITEM R4. Discuss Proposed Flood Plan for Snyder Bend Park

Brian presented a preliminary flood plan with three options for consideration. He stated that the NOAA flood projection through the end of April shows a 10-15% chance of flooding.

Option 1 would be available if the water level stays below 30 feet at Sioux City, in which case sand bags behind the cabins should be sufficient. Sand bags are still in place from last year, but the plastic will need replaced. Cabin reservations would likely still have to be cancelled because the sewer system would not be functioning. Water would also need to be pumped out of the cabin crawl spaces. However, if water levels exceed 30 feet, all sides will need to be protected.

Option 2, the most cost-effective option, consists of purchasing a 500' long x 36" tall section of Aqua Dam water-filled barrier for the east side of the cabins and protecting the west side with the sandbags from last summer. Approximate cost for the Aqua Dam is \$22,000. The Aqua Dam barrier could be reused in the future to fully encircle the cabins if an earthen dike is constructed.

Option 3 would be to relocate the cabins to an area between the large shelter and the campground which stayed dry even during the 2011 flood. A large investment would be required to move the cabins, move or replace the decks, build a road, parking lot, foundations and septic system, and add new power lines.

Dan added that he would like the board's input on a long-term plan. Cabins will be protected this season, but reservations will likely be lost because of the septic system. A new upper septic system could be put in to switch to during flood situations.

Brian was asked to obtain cost projections from the county engineer for the earthen berm and from a house mover to relocate the cabins.

ITEM R5. Capital Improvement Projects Update

1. Brown's Lake – Concession Stand & Beach Plans – Bids, Informational, Action

Dan reported that bids were opened last week for the Brown's Lake concession stand project and were double what was expected. L&L Builders had the low bid at \$510,000. Dan stated that he feels it was overengineered for the size and type of building. He offered the options of having L&L value engineer it down to \$275,000, which would require guaranteeing they are awarded the contract, or to reject all bids and start over. He also recommended paying off the engineering firm and proceeding independently with the plans they have prepared, revising them as needed.

⁷⁻²⁰ To approve and enter into a two-year contract with Western Disposal for non-hazardous waste pickup service at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center at a cost of \$690 per year.

MOTION by Chris, second by Aaron.

To reject all bids received for the Brown's Lake concession stand project.⁸⁻²⁰

ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth & Suzan Boden

Nay: None

Absent: None

MOTION by Chris, second by Neil.

To pay off the amount owed to JEO Consulting Group for services provided to date.⁹⁻²⁰

ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth & Suzan Boden

Nay: None

Absent: None

ITEM R6. Board member/staff reports

1. Administrative items

Dan reported on the following items:

a. April Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 9, 2020, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center.

b. Southwood Asst. Resource Manager Interviews – Results, Informational

Dan reported that three individuals had been interviewed for the Assistant Resource Manager position at Southwood Conservation Area from a total of 17 applicants. A job offer was extended to Tyler Knight who has been with Conservation Corps of Minnesota and Iowa for several years, is a strong leader and has a lot to offer. He will start on April 6th if favorable results have been received from his background checks and health screenings by that time. He will then be set up for cognitive, MMPI, and physical testing for the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy, and these will need to be passed within six months. His salary will be presented for approval at the April meeting.

c. Southwood Residence Update – Informational

Dan stated that, in the process of remodeling the Southwood residence, major black mold was found in the kitchen behind the sink and cabinets. All studs have been treated for mold, drywall has been replaced and painted, and new cabinets have been ordered. Erik and his wife have completed all the painting. Flooring is being laid. Dan estimated the total cost would be approximately \$14,000-15,000, but it is being tracked and will be reported to the board.

⁸⁻²⁰ To reject all bids received for the Brown's Lake concession stand project.

⁹⁻²⁰ To pay off the amount owed to JEO Consulting Group for services provided to date.

d. HVAC Service Agreement – Action

Dan presented the final HVAC service agreement for the Nature Center from CW Suter as discussed at the February meeting and asked the board to act on it. The agreement is for three years and begins in May at a cost of \$3,250 per year.

MOTION by Chris, second by Neil.

To approve and execute a three-year service agreement with C W Suter & Son as presented in the amount of \$3,250 per year.¹⁰⁻²⁰

ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett,
Neil Stockfleth & Suzan Boden

Nay: None

Absent: None

Dan noted that he would require detailed reporting on each item covered in the agreement at each time of service.

e. Other – COVID-19 Discussion

Following a meeting with county department heads, elected officials and emergency management personnel, and, in accordance with the Governor’s recommendations, Dan decided to close the Nature Center to the public and restrict visits to the office to being by appointment only. All educational programs and classroom rentals have been cancelled through the end of April. There were no existing cabin reservations for April, so the cabins have been blocked for rental through the end of April as well. The park offices are closed with contact phone numbers posted and encouragement to purchase hunting licenses online. All offices are being sanitized daily by staff. Remote access was installed on a laptop to provide Dawn Bostwick the ability to process payroll and accounts payable claims from home if it becomes necessary.

Dawn Snyder stated that in case the office is closed completely at some point, a strategy is in place to ensure the animals are cared for. Part-time receptionists will move their weekend hours to weekdays. The senior aide program through the Community Action Committee has been suspended temporarily as the Department of Labor has voted to keep senior aides out of the workplace but to continue their pay. She stated that cancelled Nature Center rentals and educational programs through April have impacted approximately 28 groups and over 1700 people.

Dan discussed concerns expressed by staff as to using their own sick/vacation time if eventually told they may no longer report to work, and that will be addressed with HR should that need arise. The Board of Supervisors will reevaluate the situation on March 27th and make recommendations.

2. Nature Center Activities (Snyder)

Dawn reported on the following Nature Center activities:

- Summer camp flyers were mailed Friday. The plan is to move forward with registration, but taking them only by mail, and make refunds in the event of cancellation.

¹⁰⁻²⁰ To approve and execute a three-year service agreement with C W Suter & Son as presented in the amount of \$3,250 per year.

- Offers were made to four candidates for the Summer Naturalist Intern positions, and background checks are being performed. The Summer Habitat Intern has completed employment requirements and is scheduled to start on April 27th. The Summer AmeriCorps employee has been chosen and is going through the onboarding process.
- The Nature Calls sponsor list was provided to board members for feedback, but it is too soon to request donations under the circumstances.
- Dawn discovered that the third gallery at the Sioux City Convention Center is not tied into the A/V and speaker system, so she recommends not using it. No contract has been signed, and no payment has been made yet.
- The Foundation agreed to cost share with the Woodbury County Soil & Water Conservation District on the Trees for Schools program again this year. With schools closing due to the coronavirus, it is uncertain if it will take place.
- Educational components are being developed that can be shared on social media during this time of closure.

3. Park Activities (Stehr)

Brian reported on the following park activities:

- Seven seasonal positions are yet to be filled.
- Staff has been burning brush piles.
- Burn plans are ready for the season, and prep will begin as soon as conditions allow.
- Restrooms are being prepped for the season.
- Foam jacking was completed by Thrasher on the Little Sioux Park shop restroom because the concrete floor had settled. While everything was out of the restroom, epoxy was installed on the floor at no charge by a contractor completing warranty work on the shower house.
- Tanner Petersen has passed his CDL and S-130 S-190 fire classes.
- Derek Bean has returned home after the academy dismissed classes on Tuesday due to the coronavirus. He will be doing online learning at home. He will need to complete ASP, chemical spray and standardized field sobriety training locally with the Sheriff's office.
- Law enforcement equipment is being installed in the new trucks. Some of the switches were bad and needed to be replaced.
- Some of the materials for the Southwood building have been delivered. The project was expected to be started early next week but has been pushed back due to rain.

ITEM R7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

The above minutes were recorded by Dawn Bostwick.

Recording Secretary, Dawn Bostwick

Board Secretary, Suzan Boden

Board Chair, Cindy Bennett