

**WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD  
MINUTES OF THE TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2020, SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

The following is a true copy of the minutes of the special meeting of the Woodbury County, Iowa, Conservation Board held on Tuesday, December 1, 2020, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center beginning at 5:00 p.m. via teleconference.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth & Suzan Boden (Via telephone)

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

None

**STAFF PRESENT**

Dan Heissel and Brian Stehr

**OTHERS PRESENT**

None

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Bennett called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and did a roll call vote to verify who was present. Susan Boden – Aye, Aaron Gehling – Aye, Neil Stockfleth – Aye, Chris Zellmer Zant - Aye

**CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS**

None

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

**ITEM R1. Approve Agenda**

**MOTION** by Neil, second by Aaron.

To approve the agenda.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Neil Stockfleth  
& Suzan Boden

Nay: None

Absent: None

**ITEM R2. Salsness Property – Discussion on Counteroffer – Action**

The board held considerable discussion on the cost of the property and how it adds to what we already owe the INHF for the Briese property along with Zook. Dan explained that we should be getting a habitat grant this January for the Zook property and that would be off the books. We have enough in the REAP Fund to match a Habitat grant to get maximum cost effectiveness points and should have a good shot at receiving that one for Briese also. If so, we would then only owe for the Salsness tract if the board chose to move forward on it. It was also discussed that grants aren't a given depending on the quality of the parcels we own and going up against those with fens and oak Savannahs. Discussion was brought up on how much land is enough and should we be putting this money into developing our parks that make us money. There was good discussion around this point, and it was brought up this parcel had been on our list from long range planning for years as a #1 piece. Discussion was brought forward that those plans can change over the years. It was discussed that this counteroffer goes over the appraised value by \$101 and should the board be setting into that precedent. One board member felt this

was such an integral piece that this instance warranted it. There was also concerns of not being able to develop grounds into parks if bought by the INHF for us. Dan explained it depends on which grant is used to purchase, REAP allows development where Habitat Stamp doesn't. Questions on usage and why and how we tracked programs at Nature Center and is there a way to do this for number of hunters, hikes and mushroom hunters etc. Dan explained that there is not out in the county, only way we were able to do for Nature Center was the centralized area and only two to three people handling reservations and tracking data of turned down programs etc. Archaeological features were discussed and the benefits for grant writing on this parcel. The question was asked on how we got the information on the Flemming parcel. Dan explained it was all done by DOT as they went through planning process to put in HWY 20. We were able to use all this information for our grants. We would have to get out on the Salsness parcel and do surveys to see what is there. Discussions pro and con were put forth on delaying CIP projects in the parks to pay for ground. Revenues from parks allow us to do these things, revenue this spring has been down due to COVID and has affected CIP especially Browns Lake beach and concession property. The question was asked if we could sell an undesirable piece of ground we owned. Dan advised against it because of other counties and how they would feel statewide. Chickasaw tried it a few years ago and it was very unpopular.

After considerable discussion, Neil asked if anyone had anymore they wanted to bring up or he was ready to make a motion. Cindy asked if anyone had anything else to bring up.

**MOTION** by Neil, second by Aaron

To Offer \$835,000 for the 240 acres and if they want naming rights to have some sort of concession on price.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

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

Nay: Chris Zellmer-Zant

Absent: None

Dan then brought up a phone call he got last night from Eric O'Connell; he wants to sell his 116 acres before the end of the year. Dan told him good luck but he would bring it to the board at our regularly scheduled board meeting next week on December 10, 2020 because it is not on this agenda for action. The board held some discussion on property, quality, boundaries and asked Dan to have more information available for next week's meeting and to have it on the agenda.

**ITEM R3. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

The above minutes were recorded by Dan Heissel.

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Recording Secretary, Dan Heissel

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Board Secretary, Suzan Boden

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Board Chair, Cindy Bennett