

**WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES OF THE WEDNESDAY, JULY 14, 2021 BOARD MEETING**

The following is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Woodbury County, Iowa, Conservation Board held on Wednesday, July 14, 2021, at Snyder Bend Park beginning at 4:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Neil Stockfleth

STAFF PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Mark Monson, County Supervisor

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Gehling 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 Chris.

To approve the consent agenda.

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

The consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

- C1. Approve Minutes of the June 16, 2021 Regular Meeting and June 30, 2021 Special Meeting.
- C2. Approve the June 2021 Claims and Expenditures
- C3. Receive and Place on File the June 2021 Financial/Budget Report
- C4. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations:
 - Rosie Kuehne for \$3,000 for playscape enhancements
 - Rosie Kuehne for children's books
 - Lyle & Tina Listamann for miscellaneous program materials
 - Ed & Jane Keane for bird seed

ITEM R2. Southwood Assistant Resource Manager Update

Dan announced that Tyler Knight, Southwood Assistant Resource Manager, will end his employment on July 23rd. He will have used all his accrued vacation and comp time, so there will be minimal payout required. The open position has been advertised on the county, department, & state association websites, as well as in the Sioux City Journal. The position description has been changed to require the applicant to live within 30 minutes of park headquarters. Application deadline is July 30th with interviews anticipated to be held the second week of August. Due diligence will be performed as discussed.

ITEM R3. Capital Improvement Projects Update

1. Brown's Lake – Beach/Road/Campground Projects Update

Dan stated that he met with the county engineer's staff. They have the road work pretty much laid out but will be coming out to do more measurements. They will try to bring the road height up to match the parking lots. They are working with the planned campsite changes. They may be cutting down the cottonwoods that are in the right-of-way.

Dan mentioned that when the roads are poured, there won't be a way to get people out of the park. In the past, golf carts have been rented to transport people to a vehicle staging location. Option B would be to go through the arboretum or along the field. Work will start after April 15th. The project will be ready to go out for bid this fall.

Brian reported that Mike Barkley visited the park to visualize the campsites and will get plans drawn up with several options for tank placement. It looks like it will work out with the current infrastructure. The current drain field will be used, but a tank and possibly more leach field may need to be added. The plans should be ready in a couple weeks. Mike has done all the previous work and knows where the lines and transfer tanks are.

A few hydrants and electrical pedestals will need to be moved this fall after camping closes. Dan stated that the campground may close right after Labor Day to allow a longer window to get work done. Aaron encouraged him not to close any sooner than necessary due to decreased revenues at Snyder.

Dan reported that they have been having trouble finding sand to haul in for the beach. The closest L.G. Everist has available is Brookings, and they are charging \$11/ton plus shipping. It took close to 1,000 tons for the Little Sioux beach. Dan would like to get it while things are so dry and the lake level is down. He also wants to get the sidewalks poured and let bids for the concession building for fall construction.

2. Snyder Bend Update, Concerns

Dan reported that the DNR did the fish kill on the remaining water in Snyder Bend Lake, but most of the fish were already dead.

He stated that Forest Johnston provided a bid to excavate down to 10' in front of the campground. Doug Chafa had said he would explore funding options for the refuge, but he has not responded to Dan's calls or emails recently.

Discussion was held regarding the potential Winnebago Tribe transfer. Dan had a conference call yesterday with representatives from Senator Grassley's office and others. He was told that the tribe has no interest in 119A, only 119 and 210. The biggest concern is that if they take 210, the tribe would control the water level and could either flood or dry up the lake. Dan stated that

Supervisor DeWitt talked to Lance Larson who called his contacts in Washington. He was told they don't have the votes to get it out of committee, but that could change. With the uncertainty of the situation, Dan indicated that he doesn't feel comfortable moving forward with dirt removal in front of the park.

Dan received word of someone who needs 5,000 cubic yards of fill and potentially could excavate the top three feet. If that doesn't work, the board agreed to have the DNR put the logs in, fill it up, and stock it. Ben Wallace said that if this timing doesn't work, it might be possible to use mini dredges later and pump it into biodegradable nylon socks. Dan will keep board updated via email.

ITEM R4. Board member/staff reports

1. Administrative items

Dan reported on the following items:

a. August Meeting Date

Dan noted that there hasn't always been an August meeting. It would depend on whether there is board action needed for bid letting. The next meeting was tentatively set at 4:00 p.m. on August 18, 2021, at Southwood Conservation Area.

b. REAP Grant – Salsness – Resolution

Dan stated that a resolution needed to be approved to authorize him to apply for a REAP grant for the Salsness property. He also noted that a new templated system was initiated on August 1st, and, therefore, the grant deadline was moved to August 27th.

MOTION by Cindy, second by Suzan.

To approve the resolution authorizing Dan to pursue and write a REAP grant for the Salsness land acquisition.²²⁻²¹

VOTE: Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett,
& Suzan Boden

Nay: None

Absent: Neil Stockfleth

c. Old Business

None

d. Other Business

Dan complimented the Snyder Bend staff on how good the park looks and added that doing the road shoulder work was a good thing.

²²⁻²¹ To approve the resolution authorizing Dan to pursue and write a REAP grant for the Salsness land acquisition.

2. Nature Center Activities

Dawn reported on the following Nature Center activities:

- The programs and visitors report was presented.
- Programs and visitation has been going well with no issues or problems.
- A few summer camp kids were stung by yellow jackets that were nesting on the trail steps at the nature center, but none had an allergic reaction. The nest has been taken care of.
- Camps have been going phenomenally well. Turn out has been pretty good for the campground programs.
- Tyler Flammang and habitat intern, Brian Moore, will be working with the CCI crew next week. They will be clearing woody vegetation on the west ridge off Gobbler Point to open up the prairie.
- A new swinging bench is being installed at the playscape. The playscape pergola posts were also discovered to be rotted. A black locust was harvested in Stone Park to replace them.
- Summer camps are full but at only half the normal number of sessions. Visitors have been solid during the week and weekend.
- There will be a WCCB booth at the Woodbury county fair again. Board members were welcomed to come spend some time on a shift. A reptile program will be provided on kids' day.
- Funding is being solicited for a Tale Trail with stations of a storybook along a trail. Dawn sent proposal to Neil for CF Industries.
- The nature center brochure was last printed in 2017, and Dawn is looking for quotes on a reprint. The park brochure needs reprinted, but since it is frequently changing with new land acquisitions, a print-on-demand option is being explored. Students from Morningside University put together the park brochure draft.
- The Nature Calls river otter logo was shown. Online ticket sales will start on August 1st. Auction items are still being gathered. Sponsorships are up to \$19,000.
- Grant was received from AmeriCorps for a quarter-time position. The cost share is \$1,950 for summer. To pay outright, it would be about \$5,000.

3. Park Activities

Brian reported on the following park activities:

- The fourth of July holiday weekend went well with no problems other than a few fireworks.
- Staff has been spraying and cultivating food plots and has added late season plots.
- Southwood staff has been spraying invasive species, such as crown vetch.
- Engineered chips have been delivered at all playgrounds. Two have rubberized chips and need a couple bags to fill in under swings, etc.
- Mike Barkley has been working on hooking up the new well at Fowler Forest and should be done by the end of the week. He will also be abandoning the old well at Fowler Forest, as well as several others that were recently discovered at Oak Ridge. The state will reimburse \$500 per well to abandon them.
- The new UTV was delivered to Southwood on Monday and is very similar to the ones at the nature center and Little Sioux.
- The firewood conveyor was delivered in June. It has been utilized already and found to be a big timesaver.

4. Board Information

Mark gave a brief update, including information on gravel production and COVID funding.

ITEM R5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

The above minutes were recorded by Dawn Bostwick.

Recording Secretary, Dawn Bostwick

Board Secretary, Neil Stockfleth

Board Chair, Aaron Gehling