

**WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD  
MINUTES OF THE TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2022, BOARD MEETING**

The following is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Woodbury County, Iowa, Conservation Board held on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at the Southwood Conservation Area shop building beginning at 4:00 p.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth, and Tom Limoges

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

None

**STAFF PRESENT**

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

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Ron Pauley, Smithland

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Stockfleth called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m.

**CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS**

None

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

Dan introduced Brodie Skinner who has been working as Assistant Resource Manager at Southwood Conservation Area for six months. Brodie gave a brief summary of his background, and Erik commended him for the great work he has been doing.

**ITEM R1. Approve Consent Agenda**

**MOTION** by Tom, second by Chris.

To approve the consent agenda.

**VOTE:** Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth, & Tom Limoges  
Nay: None  
Absent: None

The consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

- C1. Approve Minutes of the June 9, 2022, Regular Meeting and June 16, 2022, Special Meeting.
- C2. Approve the June 2022 Claims and Expenditures
- C3. Receive and Place on File the June 2022 Financial/Budget Report and 4th Quarter FY22 Reserve Fund Report

C4. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations:

- Jim Schneider for \$50 cash for Nature Center
- Chris Warren for various camp supplies
- Mark Dixon for Big Sioux River book
- Woodbury County Library for \$300 donation for Nature Center
- Noah's Hope for 300 pounds of Nyger bird seed

**ITEM R2. Vehicle Bids**

Brian presented bids for a 2023 one-ton diesel pickup to replace the order cancelled by Chevrolet last fiscal year. He stated that the bids were almost \$10,000 higher this time with less incentive for fleet. Ford was not able to put in a bid at this time, but bids were received from Knoepfler Chevrolet and Woodhouse Ram. Dan and Brian recommended going with Ram because of the better lead time and the lack of confidence in Chevrolet being able to deliver.

**MOTION** by Tom, second by Chris.

To approve and authorize the purchase of a 2023 Ram 3500 pickup from Woodhouse for \$53,415 after trade-in of a 2005 extended cab Ford F-350.<sup>22-20</sup>

**VOTE:** Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth, & Tom Limoges  
Nay: None  
Absent: None

**ITEM R3. Capital Improvement Projects Update**

**1. Brown's Lake Projects**

**a. Campground Project**

Dan reported that 19 of the 29 campsites at Bigelow Park were opened for the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend, and 9 sites were filled. He is hoping to open the remaining sites this week as everything is basically done. Concrete pads still need to be poured for the dumpsters and to connect the trail.

Aaron mentioned that trees are coming up through the riprap, and Dan said there are plans to spray them with a water-safe chemical.

**b. Concession Project**

Dan stated that he has a Zoom meeting scheduled with the DNR and JEO tomorrow to try to determine how to move forward with connecting the sewer system. Dan summarized that the sanitarian came up with an estimate of 1300 gallons per day and felt it was too close to 1500 gallons per day license requirement that she passed it over to the DNR. The DNR decided that it would require a permit. The engineering firm determined that it was less than 1300 gallons, but the DNR denied it and said they are considering it as a cumulative system going forward. A request has been made to hook into the current system temporarily. The DNR suggested pumping the tank daily, which would cost \$200 per day. Dan asked why the current leach field couldn't be used, and they are looking into it. The shower towers are now going to be allowed to pump into a French drain rather than the sewer system. The DNR will

---

<sup>22-20</sup> To approve and authorize the purchase of a 2023 Ram 3500 pickup from Woodhouse for \$53,415 after trade-in of a 2005 extended cab Ford F-350.

determine if they will require a closed system, which would result in costly maintenance. Dan noted that if a septic system goes bad in one of the parks in the future, it will have to go through the DNR rather than the county sanitarian.

Dan reported that the rest of the project is coming along. The parts have been coming in. The water line will be hooked up tomorrow, so plumbers will be able to test their fittings, but it won't be known where the high-pressure line is going until after meeting with the DNR. There are still some small things to finish up. The countertop and glass cases are being built. The hydroseeder has been borrowed from Clay County for another project and will be used to seed this area, probably with rye for now and reseed to grass later.

**c. Oak Ridge Dam**

Dan reported that the Oak Ridge dam project is mostly done. Erik will be seeding it with the hydroseeder. The WCCB has paid \$69,000 of the \$71,000 due on the project. Ben Kusler is figuring all their staff time and the WCCB staff time to be used as an in-kind contribution. At the most, \$7,000 may be owed. The expenses will be reimbursed to the Conservation Reserve fund from the grant. Erik noted that the hydroseeding time and seed costs should be added to the in-kind figure as well.

*(Tom left the meeting.)*

**ITEM R4. Board member/staff reports**

**1. Administrative items**

Dan reported on the following items:

**a. August Meeting Date**

The next meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. on August 11, 2022, at Little Sioux Park.

**b. Snyder Bend Cabin Air Conditioner Replacements**

Dan stated that there have been issues with the air conditioning in Eagle cabin at Snyder Bend. The cabin was occupied when it failed, so three small air conditioners were purchased to get by. The air conditioner in Hawk had also been acting up and has started losing the coolant again. The repair estimate is \$3,000. He noted that these units are 12 years old with a life expectancy of 10-15 years. They were also taken apart and reassembled during the flood of 2011. Bids obtained from C W Suter and Kalins were within \$600. Suter couldn't get the units until next week, but Kalins could do it this week with a one-day installation. To avoid having to buy three more window units to cover upcoming cabin rentals, two units were ordered from Kalins at a cost of \$8,600 each. They are a Lennox Merit brand, which was determined to be the most efficient in this situation. A maintenance agreement is also being considered.

Dan talked to Dennis and Rocky about it and was advised to amend for it within the parks department operating budget. Dan recommended that the board take action on the other two air conditioners and get them all done at the same time.

**MOTION** by Chris, second by Cindy.

To approve the previous replacement of the air conditioning units in two Snyder Bend cabins by Kalins Heating and Cooling and have the other two evaluated and replaced only if deemed necessary.<sup>22-21</sup>

**VOTE:** Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, & Neil Stockfleth  
Nay: None  
Absent: Tom Limoges

**c. Old Business**

**Brown’s Lake Beach Boundary:** Brief discussion was held regarding the property line issue with a Brown’s Lake neighboring landowner. Dan and Brian found the fencing agreement, old surveys, and a new survey which wasn’t recorded yet. Assistant county attorney, Joshua, was out of office, but Dan will be getting together with him on Thursday to go through the file and the concerns. He will determine if they can handle it through their office and, if not, will recommend getting outside counsel.

**Izaak Walton League Property Acquisition:** Dan announced that the contract was signed this morning between the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and the Izaak Walton League to purchase the Izaak Walton League property near Brown’s Lake with a down-payment of \$500. Negotiations will be made for mid-October with either the Iowa Natural Heritage or the conservation board making the purchase.

Chris asked how the new property would be affected by the septic at Brown’s Lake being treated as cumulative, but Dan stated that it shouldn’t be affected since it is a separate property owned by the county.

Dan stated that he can now ask the contractor to inspect the building and make a recommendation. Dan stated that his request was approved to submit a MRHD grant application to help with the acquisition which would be a 75/25 cost share.

**GIS Equipment/Software Upgrade:** Dan gave an update regarding the equipment and software updates needed for Tyler Flammang’s GIS position. The unit from ESRI used for surveying is archaic, and the software is not supported and won’t work with ArcView. A software patch that was believed would work, won’t be supported after this year. Dan stated that they are starting to look into what it will cost to make the jump to ArkDeskPro which was what the professionals advise is needed. It can run on an iPad or phone. It could cost \$400-500 for the iPad, \$300 for the antenna, and possibly \$1000 for the software. It would cost \$10,000 to replace the current unit. More information will be provided at a future meeting. He noted that the GIS mapping is used for underground utilities, property lines, burn maps and public use maps. Without it an engineer would need to be hired to create those maps.

**d. Other Business**

**Part-Time Clerk Position Opening:** Dan reported that Rhonda Kneifl, part-time clerk, has turned in her resignation and her last day will be July 20<sup>th</sup>. He explained that a position with only 16 hours per week has been tough to fill in the past, but several excellent applications were received for the recent receptionist opening at 25-26 hours per week. He plans to work

---

<sup>22-21</sup> To approve the previous replacement of the air conditioning units in two Snyder Bend cabins by Kalins Heating and Cooling and have the other two evaluated and replaced only if deemed necessary.

with the budget director and see if the number of hours can be increased to 24 per week while still staying within our current budget. He will bring more information to the board at a later time.

Brown's Lake Environmental Impact Statement: Neil asked about an old environmental impact statement that is rumored to exist between Iowa Conservation Commission and IPS agreeing to keep water in Brown's Lake. Neal said he works with someone who has seen the agreement. Steve Jauron has said that he has a copy of the original agreement, and it is being tracked down.

Nicolaisen Property: Neal initiated a discussion about the Bernie Nicolaisen property on the east side of Shagbark. Dan stated that the estate sale was today and that he had talked to Heritage Foundation as requested. Dan felt it had too much crop ground and would sell too high. The Heritage Foundation said they didn't have enough time to act on it. Dan called the realtor and told them to call him if they decide to sell off the rough ground without the crop ground. However, he informed the board that buying the rough ground would not score high on habitat or REAP grants.

## 2. Nature Center Activities

Dawn reported on the following Nature Center activities:

- The programs and visitors report for June was presented.
- An email blast newsletter was sent a few days ago. Kari is trying to send one out monthly.
- Camps and programs are going well.
- The nature center has been busy and full.
- A new senior aide will be starting at the nature center on Thursday to work 18 hours per week through an AARP retired senior back-to-work program subsidized by the government. The nature center has participated in this program for many years, but there has been a gap for a while between placements. In the meantime, volunteers have been filling in to answer the phones and staff the front reception desk.
- There will be a WCCB booth again at the Woodbury County Fair. Interns will fill most of the shifts, but board members are welcome to come as well. A walking stick craft will be provided on kids' day.
- Aaron gave an update on the Rotary grant request stating that they are looking at the riverfront as another option. Chris Larson was a former member, and they are looking at highest use. The nature center shelter is still in the running though.
- Nature Calls is about 10 weeks away. Dawn asked board members to please follow up with potential investors. The committee will be meeting with the Convention Center staff next week. Dave at Small Town Sportsman has been contacted for a long gun or a hand gun.
- The new viewing scope has been installed on the nature center deck.

## 3. Park Activities

Brian reported on the following park activities:

- Brian recognized Erik and Brodie for doing a phenomenal job at Southwood. They have been getting rid of cedars and black locusts and making great strides in the park.
- The nature center camera system install is starting tomorrow. They estimate it will only take two days to be installed. They upgraded the cameras, but it won't be an additional cost. Some analytic features are included.

**4. Board Information**

Aaron commended the staff on all of the projects going on this summer.

**5. Other Business**

Dan asked the board about their interest in attending the annual conference in Dubuque. No board members are able to attend. Dan will check with Tom and WCCB staff.

**ITEM R5. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The above minutes were recorded by Dawn Bostwick.

---

Recording Secretary, Dawn Bostwick

---

Board Secretary, Cindy Bennett

---

Board Chair, Neil Stockfleth