

**WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2016, BOARD MEETING**

The following is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Woodbury County, Iowa, Conservation Board held on Thursday, April 7, 2016, at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center, beginning at 5:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Don Dixon, Neil Stockfleth, and Suzan Boden

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Schneider, Peterson, Snyder, Stehr, and Bostwick

OTHERS PRESENT

Larry Clausen, County Supervisor

CALL TO ORDER

President Bennett called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

Schneider shared a news article that he co-authored last week for the Sioux City Journal urging elected officials to fund the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust. He also shared other recent articles supporting the Trust written by Senator David Johnson and Marian Riggs Gelb of the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation.

ITEM R1. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Dixon second by Zellmer-Zant.

To approve the consent agenda.

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

Consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

ITEM C1. Approve minutes of the March 1, 2016, monthly meeting.

ITEM C2. Approve March 2016 claims and expenditures.

ITEM C3. Receive and place on file the March 2016 financial / budget report and the 3rd Quarter FY 16 Reserve Fund Report.

ITEM C4. Acceptance and approval of Cooperative Grant Agreements.

1. Prairie Partners
2. US Fish and Wildlife Service

ITEM C5. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations:

1. Connie Hoag – Monetary donation (\$50).
2. Scott Kayl – Monetary donation (\$20) for animals.
3. Ed Walding – Monetary donation (\$1,000) for intern fund.
4. Dally Varner – Box turtle shell.
5. Avery Outdoors – Siouxland Daily Board advertising.
6. Mark Taylor – Rakes, shovels and hand tools.

ITEM R2. Consideration and approval of contracts for hay removal in certain areas. (Peterson)

Peterson reported that a notice was published in local papers and that eight information packets were mailed out to interested individuals in regard to brome hay removal at Oak Ridge Conservation Area. Only one bid was received. He recommended accepting the bid from Bruce Parker for three years at a rate of \$85.50/acre on 47.6 acres for a total of \$4,069.80/year.

MOTION by Boden second by Stockfleth.

To approve and accept the bid from Bruce Parker for brome hay removal at Oak Ridge Conservation Area at a rate of \$85.50/acre per year for three years.¹⁰⁻¹⁶

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

ITEM R3. Consideration and approval for digitizing microfilm documents. (Schneider)

Schneider expressed the desire to digitize old department documents, currently stored on microfilm, due to inaccessibility of a microfilm reader. He located a company from Cedar Rapids (Advantage Companies) that is able to digitize microfilmed documents. The initial estimate for the project is \$1,800-\$5,000, depending on how many images are stored on each roll. Advantage Companies provided a prepaid shipping label for the rolls to be sent to them for evaluation in order to give a better cost estimate.

MOTION by Dixon second by Zellmer-Zant

To authorize Schneider to send microfilmed department documents to Advantage Companies in Cedar Rapids for digitization at a total projected cost of up to \$5,000.¹¹⁻¹⁶

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

ITEM R4. Report on equipment purchases for FY 16. (Peterson)

Peterson reported that the new 2016 Silverado has been received and equipped with the law enforcement radios and DMI bumper. The remaining equipment balance is \$24,000, including city auction proceeds of \$5,200. Identified equipment needs include a used disc, a slip-on fire unit, and a 1-ton stake bed pickup. It was agreed by consensus to pursue purchasing these three items with the remaining equipment budget.

¹⁰⁻¹⁶ To approve and accept the bid from Bruce Parker for brome hay removal at Oak Ridge Conservation Area at a rate of \$85.50/acre per year for three years.

¹¹⁻¹⁶ To authorize Schneider to send microfilmed department documents to Advantage Companies in Cedar Rapids for digitization at a total projected cost of up to \$5,000.

ITEM R5. Consideration and approval of budget for marketing and advertising. (Schneider/Snyder)

Schneider led a discussion regarding establishing a budgeted amount for advertising and promotion in an effort to be more deliberate about promoting department areas and programs. In the past, these expenditures have been paid from the Reserve Fund through the Nature Center programs budget. Over the last few years, an average of \$2,440 has been spent each year on advertising and promotional items, including the county fair booth. Schneider suggested that the board consider designating \$3,000 per year for these expenses when the FY18 budget is set next fall, including incorporation of some of this expense under the regular tax-supported budget.

He stated that new line items have been approved for the FY17 budget to better track certain expenditures currently attributed to an “unspecified” category, including programs food, programs supplies, animal care and promotional activities.

Schneider presented a sample advertisement that will be printed in the Northwest Iowa Outdoors publication four times. The advertising contract also includes a presence on their website and calendar of events.

ITEM R6. Consideration and approval of revised Beach Rules. (Schneider)

Prior to replacing worn and damaged park signs, Schneider asked the Assistant County Attorney to review the current beach rules. Suggested changes included a minor wording change and an increase in the maximum fine to \$625. The updated rules were presented to the board for approval. New Beach Rules signs will be ordered for installation this spring.

MOTION by Stockfleth, second by Zellmer-Zant.

To adopt the amended Beach Rules as presented.¹²⁻¹⁶

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

ITEM R7. Capital Improvement Projects Update (Schneider)

Schneider reported on the following projects.

1. Southwood Cabins, Little Sioux Park Cabin Improvements

The walls are up in both cabin units at Southwood, and they will be completely enclosed very soon. Schneider met with the furniture maker to review progress. Each piece of furniture will be unique.

Sidewalks will be poured at the Little Sioux cabins, as well as a concrete living area near the handicap-accessible cabin. The sidewalks are currently white rock, which ends up being tracked into the cabins.

2. LED conversion projects

The LED conversion project is nearly complete, with some lamps remaining to be installed by conservation staff. Final walk-throughs will start in the next week or two. Additional

¹²⁻¹⁶ To adopt the amended Beach Rules as presented.

replacements are possible with contingency funds. An estimate was obtained for the remaining night security lights at the parks, which would include available rebates from the power companies. Schneider contacted Western Iowa Tech about specifics on their parking lot lights as a possible solution for the Nature Center to make it truly an all-LED facility.

3. Brown’s Lake Drainage Project

The Brown’s Lake drainage project is complete.

4. FY 17 – Fowler Forest Shelter Replacement Design

Schneider reported that an architect will be contacted to draw up plans for replacement of the Fowler Forest shelter. The plan is to have an enclosed shelter with an open-air shelter on one end. After this shelter is replaced, the board may look at replacing the Snyder Bend shelter which was built in 1963 and is the oldest park facility.

5. Park Roads

Discussion was held regarding the roads at Little Sioux Park which are 18 years old and in need of repair. Ben Kusler from the Engineering Department evaluated the situation and came up with a proposal to mill 4” and top with 1.5” of asphalt at an estimated cost of \$400,000. It was noted that concrete may be a preferable long-term option, even though the initial investment would be higher. The Board of Supervisors will need to be involved with this project to provide funding.

Schneider noted that the roads at Southwood Conservation Area also need some work. Class A quartzite was recommended to cut down on dust. The estimated cost would be approximately \$50,000.

ITEM R8. Board member / staff reports

1. Nature Center activities (Snyder)

Snyder presented the programs stats for March, as well as a thank you from Rosie Kuehne, the 2015 Conservation Educator Award recipient.

Snyder reported on the following Nature Center activities.

- The volunteer banquet was held on March 29th with about 80 people in attendance.
- Field trips will be going on at the Nature Center through the end of May.
- Staff is working on spring clean-up. The water feature was drained and cleaned.
- A volunteer work day is scheduled at the end of April.
- A slide is being planned for the playscape with the help of volunteer, Dean Van Roekel. The structure will be a series of three slides sculpted into the hillside. Interstate Mechanical has agreed to donate the steel. CF Industries has also made a \$5,000 donation for the playscape, in addition to providing volunteers sometime in May or June.
- Snyder has been working with Carlyn Iverson (recent speaker at the WCCF annual meeting) on ideas for some outdoor sculptures, such as a monarch butterfly, tree frog and turtle.
- The WCCB will be partnering with Scheels for their “Take It Outside” camping event on May 21st and will have a booth offering information on Woodbury County parks and activities.

- Flags are being purchased to put at the Nature Center gate or take to the parks to announce special programs. The flags are 9' and cost \$150.
- Summer camp registration began for Foundation members on Wednesday, April 6th. In two days, 76 campers have registered, and the camps are 25% full. Registration for the general public will begin Wednesday, April 13th.
- WCCB will be partnering with the Woodbury County Soil & Water Conservation District to provide trees to 5th graders in Woodbury County schools.
- Nature Calls planning is under way. Two sponsors have paid, and the committee is getting aligned. The list of potential donors was reviewed for assignment to specific board members to send request letters.

2. Park activities (Peterson)

Peterson reported on the following Park activities.

- Maintenance supplies have been received and distributed to the parks.
- Trees will arrive next week.
- The CXT vault latrine will be installed the week of April 27th.
- Two burns have been successfully performed on 86 total acres.
- One new dock was installed at Brown's Lake today, and the second dock will be installed on Wednesday. The old docks have been reconditioned and will be used at Southwood for a fishing dock along the shore and at the boat launching area on the two ponds.
- Garbage contracts have been signed for the parks.
- The hay addendum with Jeremy Beeson has been signed.
- The brome field rental contract has been signed and prepaid by Jonathon Patton.
- Bob Fundermann taught a hunter safety course in Anthon for 50 students.
- Dylan Bales earned his Class A CDL license.
- Tyler Flammang is working on prescribed fire certification.

Schneider mentioned that there has been bad erosion around the outlet tube at Southwood due to animals blocking it, and this will be repaired this spring.

3. Administrative items (Schneider)

a. Park Facilities Opening Date

The park facilities will be opening for the season on Friday, April 29th.

b. Camping Kick-Off Weekend

Camping kick-off weekend is set for May 6-8. Each camper will receive a can koozie and a certificate for a free night of camping later in the season.

c. Staffing Updates

Schneider announced the following staffing changes.

- Brian Stehr will be promoted to Deputy Director as of July 1st, following Mark Peterson's retirement. He will cover both positions until after Labor Day.
- Bob Fundermann will be promoted to Resource Manager at Little Sioux Park following Bernie Ketelsen's retirement on September 1st. He will be completing his associate's degree over the summer.

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- The new Resource Tech at Little Sioux Park is scheduled to start on July 5th. The position opening will be posted on April 18th with applications due in three weeks or less.

Schneider presented a request from Bob Farmer of The Shooting Shop in Anthon for a special use of the Little Sioux shooting range. The request is for a public event hosted by an arms manufacturer on the afternoon of Sunday, May 15th, with an expected attendance of 100 people. The special use permit was approved by board consensus.

d. Set date/time for May meeting/summer meeting schedule and locations

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 5th, at Little Sioux Park's Heritage Shelter. The June meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, June 1st, at Snyder Bend Park.

ITEM R9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

The above minutes were typed by Dawn Bostwick.

Recording Secretary, Dawn Bostwick

Board Secretary, Neil Stockfleth

Board President, Cindy Bennett