

**WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2024, BOARD MEETING**

The following is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Woodbury County, Iowa, Conservation Board held on Thursday, September 12, 2024, at Snyder Bend Park beginning at 4:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth, and Tom Limoges (partially by phone)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Dan Heissel, Brian Stehr, Theresa Kruid, Josh VanVoorst, Skyler Foley, Hayden Thilges, and Dawn Bostwick

OTHERS PRESENT

None

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Bennett called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ITEM R1. Approve Consent Agenda

MOTION by Neil, second by Aaron.

To approve the consent agenda.

VOTE:

Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth & Tom Limoges (By phone)
Nay: None
Absent: None

The consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

- C1. Approve Minutes of the July 18, 2024, Regular Meeting
- C2. Approve the July and August 2024 Claims and Expenditures
- C3. Receive and Place on File the June FY24 Final Accrued, July 2024, and August 2024 Financial/Budget Report
- C4. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations:
 - \$50,000 via WCCF from Gilchrist Foundation for exhibits
 - \$5,000 via WCCF from Rosemary Kuehne for Playscape
 - \$25 from Dawn Snyder for Annie Greiner memorial
 - \$20 from anonymous for Annie Greiner memorial

- \$600 from Michael Greiner for trail bench/Annie Greiner memorial
- \$50 from Carl Juanchu for Beehive sponsorship
- 17 books and field guides from Jerry Morgan
- 2 arrow/spear points and 3 life jackets from Rich Stolpe
- Monarch rearing materials and insect nets from Jenny Jorgensen
- 3 Nature's Grace poetry books from Diana Howard
- Baskets for Nature Calls auction items from Linda Bockelman, Pam Ridgway, Betty West, and Gina West

ITEM R2. Driveway Request – Brown's Lake

Dan reported that the County Engineer had received a request from Steve DeGeest to add a driveway from his property to the park road across from the Bigelow Park. Dan explained that although the park is conservation property, permission would also be needed from the Iowa DNR to allow a driveway to be placed on or across state property. Dan presented a map showing possible access routes but expressed concerns about safety issues. Chris provided additional information about the landowner's intended plans for the parcel.

MOTION by Aaron, second by Chris.

To approve and authorize the Director to work with the landowner on an easement for a new driveway access onto the Bigelow Park Road and with the Iowa DNR for the 28E agreement.²⁴⁻²²

VOTE:

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

ITEM R3. Equipment Updates

1. Dump Truck

Dan reported that the tandem-axle dump truck has a problem with the dump box cylinder. Steffen Equipment said that due to rust and wear, the box would need to be replaced along with the cylinder which would cost approximately \$38,000. A quote was obtained from Hiway Truck Equipment of Fort Dodge, and they said the truck wasn't worth putting on a new box. They think they can repair it for between \$3,000 and \$7,000, depending on if they can rebuild the cylinder, but that it will only last about three years. Secondary Roads won't be replacing any dump trucks until 2026 and 2027, so this would buy some time until a truck can be obtained from them.

(Tom Limoges arrived.)

2. Forestry Grinder

Dan reported that the forestry grinder has been having issues with vibration. John Deere balanced the plate, worked on the shaft, and replaced bearings. Then they found that the disk is bent and needs to be replaced. A new disc is \$18,000. Malloy balanced the disk which helped but didn't take the vibration away completely. A machine shop is going to get the spindle squared and put it back together.

3. New Pickups

The new pickups should arrive the week of September 23rd.

²⁴⁻²² To approve and authorize the Director to work with the landowner on an easement for a new driveway access onto the Bigelow Park Road and with the Iowa DNR for the 28E agreement.

ITEM R4. Capital Improvement Projects Update

Dan reported on the following capital improvement projects.

1. Little Sioux Park Fiber

The fiber has been installed from the box in Correctionville all the way to the park. The duct work has been installed in the shop and residence. A call has been made to Long Lines, and they will come hook up the shop. Derek will pay on his own to have it hooked up in the residence if he wants. The next step will be to start looking into a system to supply the campground.

2. Nature Center Foundation

The nature center foundation project is ongoing. The foundation had settled a quarter inch, but when they came back out and measured again, it was back up a quarter inch. They had calibrated their equipment and used the same stations to do the marks.

Dan and Brian recently met with Holly from Concrete Raising along with an engineer they are using for expertise on the helical supports. They can't figure out why the outside wall hasn't cracked when the floor has moved so much. The engineer pointed out a couple cracks in the corners indicative of the floor sagging.

All work will be covered by Building Services and Supervisors CIP fund. Some of the area by the pond will be tied in, but then it will be up to the conservation department to have Sewalson come and put it all back.

ITEM R5. Board Member/Staff Reports

1. Administrative Items (Dan)

Dan reported on the following items:

a. Set Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. on October 10, 2024, at Brown's Lake.

b. Little Sioux Park

1) Concessions Building

During the long-range planning at Little Sioux Park, a concession building was discussed. Staff brought it to Dan's attention again. They are excited about seeing something happen and really want to get paddle boat rentals, etc.

Brian and Dan looked at the existing building thinking it could be renovated but decided it is too far from the beach to have visibility of the beach and rental boats. It would also require tearing into the roof line and tearing concrete out. Dan stated that it would be cheaper to build a new standalone building without restrooms using the concept from the Brown's Lake concession plans. The building would be 20' x 40', with half for the concession area and half for storage. The contractor who built the Brown's Lake concession building gave an estimate of \$72,000-\$75,000 to build it.

Dan has a concern about competing with the city clerk who owns the dairy queen in town. He wants to talk to her first to make sure there isn't a conflict since the concession would only be doing ice cream bars, candy bars, and pop.

Dan asked for permission to move forward with having the contractor take plans to the lumber yard and spec it out to get a firm quote. Depending on the cost, Dan would like to move forward next spring.

Neil asked for a site plan, and Aaron asked about paddle boat costs. Dan stated that there was a 15% off sale on paddle boats last month, but he talked to them and got them to honor that price until after the board meeting. He stated that he could get concrete prices and a site plan to bring back to board for a final decision.

Tom questioned the labor situation in the Correctionville area and whether there would be enough people available to staff it. Josh noted that having someone present on the beach made all the difference in the atmosphere at Brown's Lake.

MOTION by Neil, second by Tom.

To authorize the Director to develop a concept plan for the Little Sioux concession stand project.²⁴⁻²³

VOTE:

Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth & Tom Limoges

Nay: None

Absent: None

2) Playground Edging and Mulch

Dan stated that every two years mulch needs to be replaced at all the playgrounds, because the wood chips break down. The cost of purchasing the chips and having them hauled to the parks gets to be quite costly. The playground at Snyder Bend cost \$3,100 last time. Brian stated that the regular rubber mulch made with shredded tires has problems with metal fragments and chemicals, etc. He discovered a company called Jelly Bean Rubber Mulch that has mulch made with 100% virgin materials cut off of non-slip tiles. It is nontoxic and guaranteed to last 20 years. It meets the highest standards for playgrounds, meets requirements for VOC, and can even be used indoors. The price comparison in bulk rate is not much more than wood chips, approximately \$3,000. A depth of only 4" is needed, but an edging would be needed to contain it. Dan and Brian recommend starting with the two playgrounds at Little Sioux Park and completing one park each year. The cost would be \$23,840 with the edging and would be paid from the REAP fund. The plan would be to remove the wood mulch and fill the area with sand from the gravel pit, add fabric, and then mulch. Then a poured mowable edging would be added. Dan stated that he knows the playgrounds are dated and will need to be replaced, but this mulch can be reused at other playgrounds.

²⁴⁻²³ To authorize the Director to develop a concept plan for the Little Sioux concession stand project.

MOTION by Aaron, second by Neil.

To approve and authorize purchasing rubber mulch for the Little Sioux Park playgrounds.²⁴⁻²⁴

VOTE:

Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth & Tom Limoges

Nay: None

Absent: None

3) Riverbank Erosion Issue

Dan stated that there is a high bank along Little Sioux Park that has been affected by the flood and has a lot of sloughing off above the riprapping. He said that it is going to affect the park and needs to be addressed. He is hoping to be able to add it to the FEMA expenses for the county. The whole area may need to have riprapping. Dan will bring more information later.

c. Paddle Boat Purchase – Brown’s Lake & Little Sioux

Dan requested another paddle boat for Brown’s Lake during the 15% off sale at a cost of \$4,305.75.

MOTION by Neil, second by Tom.

To approve and authorize the purchase of one paddle boat for Brown’s Lake.²⁴⁻²⁵

VOTE:

Aye: Aaron Gehling, Chris Zellmer-Zant, Cindy Bennett, Neil Stockfleth & Tom Limoges

Nay: None

Absent: None

2. Nature Center Activities

Theresa reported on the following Nature Center activities:

- The programs and visitors reports for July and August were presented.
- Nature Calls:
 - Information was provided on sponsors, guns, live auctions items, and brew list.
 - Tom noted that if the trip sells twice, it must sell for the same price.
 - Ticket sales have been slow. Roughly 90 tickets have been sold, which is about 60-70 lower than last year at this time.
 - Posters and brochures were provided for members to get out.
 - Sweatshirts are being ordered for the 20th anniversary at a cost of \$25.
 - Radio ad is playing. A story will be in the Sioux City Journal on Saturday. Theresa will be on the radio stations next week and is recording an Around Siouxland segment tomorrow which will air next week.

²⁴⁻²⁴ To approve and authorize purchasing rubber mulch for the Little Sioux Park playgrounds.

²⁴⁻²⁵ To approve and authorize the purchase of one paddle boat for Brown’s Lake.

- Shelby has been working hard to get volunteers.
- Due to an earlier event, we can't get into gallery A for setup until 3 p.m. on Friday.
- Summer programs went well, but attendance was lower because of cancellations due to flooding. The 10–12-year-old age group attendance was also down.
- Two meetings have been held with the School of the Wild, and Kari & Mariah met with Woodbury Central. It will be held at Southwood for 46 Woodbury Central 5th graders in October.
- The nature center will be participating in the Siouxland Big Give again highlighting the raptor house repairs. There is also a matching donor up to \$2,000. The estimate to replace floorboards and support beams is \$5,000. Staff would also like to add indoors walls to prevent moisture which would be another \$5,000. When repairs are done, the rough-legged hawk can be obtained from S.O.A.R.

3. Park Activities

Brian reported on the following park activities:

- The parks had good attendance on Labor Day weekend with the good weather. Beaches are now closed.
- Southwood staff succeeded in cutting down a big problem cottonwood next to the Fowler Forest playground.
- Southwood staff has also been harvesting seed. With permission, they picked a bunch on a piece of private property by Rock Branch cemetery. They have also been mowing prairie reconstructions planted at Oak Ridge.
- Little Sioux Park staff has been cleaning up trails following the flood. They worked with Secondary Roads and Bedrock Gravel to replace the two missing sections of Union Bridge Trail and got it opened again quickly. Concrete will be reinstalled in the spring.
- Josh reported that Brown's Lake and Snyder Bend Park staff have been working on maintenance and doing minimal work on Owego. They pumped the old part that hadn't been pumped since 2021. They ran one tank of diesel through it to exercise the wells. Brian added that every pump needs to be run yearly.
- Woodbury CCB is hosting the District III pistol and rifle law enforcement qualifying at Stub Gray Shooting Range on October 3rd, because the normal range at Camp Dodge wasn't available. Twenty-one people have signed up so far. The classroom portion will still be done in Des Moines on October 8th and 9th.

4. Board Information

None

5. Other Business

Dan reported that he has been working on next year's budget, but it is not due for a while. He provided a rough draft to board and will bring the final proposal to be approved next month. He noted that things will be tight this year because of the jail. Currently, there is a \$6,655 or 1.27% increase over last year's budget, not including salaries.

Tom asked about availability of Hunter Ed courses. Josh said that he teaches two per year. He had one in the spring and will have one before deer season. He will be doing the full course this year.

Neil asked about the goat grazing project. Dan voiced his concerns about the plan agreed upon at last month's meeting to have a farmer provide goats and fencing, and then pay the board to use

the land. He stated that he wants to do it but doesn't think that scenario will work. He said that 15 goats would be more than enough, and that Erik is willing to house them over the winter.

MOTION by Neil, second by Aaron.

To approve and authorize WCCB staff to do the things that they feel need to be done to start a goat grazing program within a \$5,000 spending limit.²⁴⁻²⁶

VOTE:

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

Dan will talk to Al Fink to see if it is still possible to use the goats this year or if implementation should be delayed until spring.

ITEM R6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

The above minutes were recorded by Dawn Bostwick.

Recording Secretary, Dawn Bostwick

Board Secretary, Aaron Gehling

Board Chair, Cindy Bennett

²⁴⁻²⁶ To approve and authorize WCCB staff to do the things that they feel need to be done to start a goat grazing program within a \$5,000 spending limit.