



LINN COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MONDAY, MAY 18, 2020, BOARD MEETING

The following is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Linn County, Iowa, Conservation Board held on **May 18, 2020**, by conference call.

Board Members Present

Steve Emerson, John Hanson, Cindy Burke, Hillary Hughes and George Kanz

Board members joined by conference call due to COVID-19 requirements and recommendations by the State of Iowa and Linn County Public Health.

Board Members Absent

None

Staff Present

Dennis Goemaat, Director; Daniel Gibbins, Deputy Director; Randy Burke, Planner; Ryan Schlader, Community Outreach; Dana Kellogg, Natural Resources Manager; Jason Baumann, Resource Manager;

Others Present

Lindsay Beaman and Patrick Williams, Snyder & Associates, Inc.

Call To Order

Board President Emerson called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM.

Public Comment

None

ITEM R1. Approve Consent Agenda

Motion by Kanz, second by Hanson

To approve the consent agenda.

Vote: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: Burke, Hughes

The consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

ITEM C1. Approve the April 27, 2020 Monthly Meeting Minutes

ITEM C2. Approve claims list and expenditures – Claims List #2020-11.

Claims and Transfer list #2020-11 involving claim #11-721 through claim #11-869.

ITEM C3. Receive and place on file the April 2020 financial/budget report.

ITEM C4. Receive and place on file the April 2020 activity report.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

5/18/2020

ITEM C5. Acceptance of gifts.

1. Gift #42-2020 – Monetary contribution (\$34,500) from the Greater Cedar rapids Community Foundation for Wings2Water projects.
2. Gift #43-2020 – Monetary contribution (\$300) from John and Kathi Pudzuvelis for a Legacy Tree to be planted at Morgan Creek Park.

ITEM C6. Approve FY 2021 road seal coat program and authorize the Executive Director to sign a contract with L.L. Pelling for the seal coat applications.

ITEM C7. Capital Improvement Program updates report.

REGULAR AGENDA:

ITEM R2. Public hearing regarding the plans and specifications, form of contract and estimated construction costs concerning the Squaw Creek Park wetland, Project #26-19D.

The Conservation Board conducted a public hearing in accordance with Iowa law regarding the proposed plans, specifications, form of contract and estimated costs for the Squaw Creek Park wetland, Project #26-19D. The published notice of the public hearing was presented. No written or oral comments or objections were received.

Cindy Burke joined the meeting by phone at 12:02 PM.

Hillary Hughes joined the meeting by phone at 12:02 PM.

MOTION by Kanz, second by Hanson

To close the public hearing.

VOTE: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: none

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES
5/18/2020**

ITEM R3. Discuss and decide on Resolution #2020-3, approval of the plans and specifications, form of contract and estimated construction costs concerning the Squaw Creek Park wetland, Project #26-19D.

Kellogg reviewed the plans and specifications, form of contract and estimated construction costs concerning the Squaw Creek Park wetland, Project #26-19D.

MOTION by Kanz, second by Hanson

To adopt Resolution #2020-3 indicating that a public hearing was held and approving the plans, specifications, form of contract and estimated costs for the Squaw Creek Park wetland, Project #26-19D, and to authorize staff to receive and open bids.

VOTE: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: none

ITEM R4. Discuss and decide on resolution #2020-4 setting date and time for the public hearing regarding the proposed plans, specifications, form of contract and estimated cost for the day use development at Morgan Creek Park including restrooms, shelter and playground, Project #3-19.

Randy Burke reviewed Resolution #2020-4 setting the date and time for the public hearing regarding day use development project at Morgan Creek Park for Monday, June 22, 2020 at 12:00 PM.

MOTION by Burke, second by Hanson

To approve Resolution #2020-4 setting the public hearing.

VOTE: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: none

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

5/18/2020

ITEM R5. Discuss and decide regarding cancelling the agricultural lease at Squaw Creek Park to allow a pollinator planting to occur in 2021.

Gibbins reviewed a staff recommendation to cancel the agricultural lease at Squaw Creek Park for 2021 to allow native pollinator seeding to occur in 2021 as part of the 1,000 Acres Pollinator Initiative. Hanson asked about agricultural nutrient input and possible data collection to track water quality improvements from conversion to prairie. Goemaat and Kellogg confirmed a current stream assessment study is under contract that will provide a stream assessment report for Squaw Creek within the park. Goemaat noted future changes will be needed to the remaining pasture land under lease for grazing to protect Squaw Creek.

MOTION by Burke, second by Hughes

To approve cancellation of the agricultural lease at Squaw Creek Park.

VOTE: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: none

ITEM R6. Discuss and decide regarding authorizing a change order to the contract with Peak Construction to address wet soils onsite at the Wapsi Bluff Shelter (Project #4-19) and authorizing the Director to sign the change order.

Randy Burke reviewed the change order to the contract with Peak Construction to address wet soils onsite at Wapsi Bluff Shelter. Hughes asked whether the site will have moisture issues in the future and if other measures are needed to prevent problems. Randy Burke affirmed the site will be moist for a period of time after construction, but this change order will help ensure no future impacts to the hard surface parking and walkways from subsurface moisture.

MOTION by Kanz, second by Burke

To approve the change order and authorize the Executive Director to sign the change order on behalf of the Board for \$61,768.17.

VOTE: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: none

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

5/18/2020

ITEM R7. Discuss and decide on updating current Board policies – Series 3 Board Process including:

The Board reviewed Policies 3-7, 3-8 and 3-9 and proposed changes.

3-7 Board Members Expectations and Principles of Performance and Conduct

3-8 Open Meetings and Records of the Board

3-9 Credit Card Security

MOTION by Hanson, second by Hughes

To approve policies 3-7, 3-8 and 3-9, as proposed for immediate implementation with readings waived.

VOTE: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: none

ITEM R8. Discuss Director performance evaluation process.

Goemaat reviewed past process and deadline for the Director performance evaluation process. Board consensus was to follow last year’s process. No action was taken by the Board. Discussion only.

ITEM R9. Discuss and decide regarding Covid-19 response and possible closure of park roads or other actions.

Goemaat reviewed COVID-19 response by the department including current facility closure dates and protocols for reopening of department facilities once they are cleared to open. Goemaat reviewed campground opening, upcoming opening of restrooms and shower houses and public response to social distancing rules. Hanson reviewed the idea of closing the Squaw Creek loop road to promote walking with social distancing on Sundays. Goemaat discussed considerations such as accessibility, access for equestrian and mountain bike facilities, and indicated no current conflicts between cars and walkers have been noted. Jason Baumann discussed the difficulty of access for picnicking or campfire ring use if the road was closed. Emerson asked if a future trail construction along the roadway might promote this idea and improve walkability. Baumann and Goemaat confirmed a contract for a trail route study is in place to review future park trail alignment. Kanz commented that having the roads open year round and expanding park trails are goals to promote year round use and walkability. Kanz mentioned the possibility of doing some education at parking areas.

No action was taken by the Board. Board consensus was for staff to address openings and management changes based on conditions and consultation with other agencies.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES
5/18/2020

ITEM R10. Board member / staff reports – Board members and staff may report and/or discuss meetings or activities in which they have been involved.

- 1) Coe College 2020 Student Research Symposium – Nitrate in Iowa Watersheds: Hanson reported on a class at Coe College that conducted a Morgan Creek water quality study and applauded their focus on water quality.
- 2) Community Outreach/Marketing: Gibbins reported on efforts by Communications staff concerning coordinated COVID-19 communications, Facebook video viewership and preparations for a virtual open house for public input on Pinicon Ridge Dam design options.
- 3) Updates:
 - a. Pinicon Ridge dam modification – Gibbins discussed project design progress and planning efforts to gather public input during the early summer for project design and considerations through an online open house format. The Board will be updated as materials become available.
 - b. Legislative update – Goemaat discussed drafting a communication to area legislators requesting consideration for continued funding for important State grant funding sources such as the Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) grant, Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) grant, and Iowa's Water and Land Legacy (IWILL). Kanz asked for a copy to be sent to the Board.

ITEM R11. Public comment

None.

ITEM R12. Adjourn

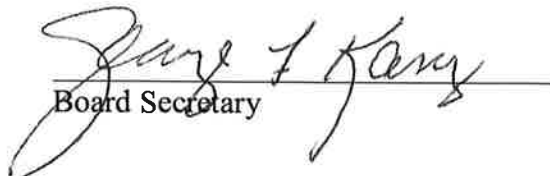
The meeting was adjourned at 12:39 PM.

Catherine Kastens typed the above minutes.

SEAL



Recording Secretary



Board Secretary