



Benton County Conservation Board Minutes

Monday, November 13, 2023

Benton County Nature Center, 5718 20th Ave Drive, Vinton, IA

Board Members Present: Becky Van Wey, Dan Hill, Tracy Seeman, Mike Lagrange, Denni Randall, Randy Scheel

Staff Present: Layla Hagen, Cecilia Dirks, Cam Grubic, Shelby Williams, Zach Parmater, Aaron Askelson

Public Present: Samantha Hunter, Dale Henry, Vic and Andrea Jones, Karen and Marv Johnson, Marlys and Tim Harms, Melissa Stieferman, Eric Legue, Kelly Williams, Brad Routier, Marcus and Amy Morin

Call to Order 5:30 by Hill

Guests or public participation

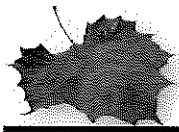
- a. Andrea and Vic Jones, Johnson, Stieferman, and Harms would like to see the sites leveled, fire rings rocked, picnic tables replaced, and UTV/ATV access at Wildcat and Benton City. Legue would like UTV/ATV access to Rodgers Park. Hill stated the rules will be updated at future meetings with these concerns taken into consideration.
- b. Marcus and Amy Morin discussed boundaries and hunting rules at Minne Estema. Marcus Morin requested more public postings. DNR and staff have signed property lines.

Consent Agenda (previous minutes and last month's expenditures and revenues) motion made by LaGrange, Van Wey second, all aye, motion passed.

Organizations

- a. **TriCounty Snowmobile Association** - next month
- b. **Wildcat Disc Golf Volunteers** - Kelly Williams and Routier reported that the season went well and it is beneficial to have Routier as a seasonal. Routier reported 3391 play counts on UDISC alone.
- c. **Foundation** - Next meeting: Tuesday, January 16th, 2024 at Hannen Lake Park. Williams reported they are looking for a fundraising champion, someone to coordinate fundraising efforts. They voted for a suggested minimum \$50 donation when vendors attend an event.
- d. **OCNT Committee** – Next meeting: Spring 2024
 - i. Vinton Trailhead: Williams stated the trailhead has been recorded, working on a deed.
- e. **Winegar Equestrian Volunteers** - Williams suggested changing the title to BCC Equestrian Volunteers to allow the group to expand their efforts and focus.
- f. **REAP Committee** – Next Meeting: Tentatively April 2024

New Business



- a. **Budget** - The Board discussed the budget as presented. LaGrange moved to approve the presented budget with \$1000.00 added to the Operations Telecommunications line item 6110-414000, seconded by VanWey. All aye, motion passed.
- b. **ICCS Fall 2026** - It was suggested that we co-host the ICCS Conference fall of 2026. A disc golf tournament is a possibility as a preconference option. Williams recommends board and staff members go to the ICCS conference September 17-19, 2024. Scheel moves to pursue hosting the conference in 2026, Randall seconds, all aye, motion passed.
- c. **Hannen - Lake Restoration Program** - Staff will work with the DNR to get involved with the Lake Restoration Program.
- d. **Maps**- Hagen reported on mapping updates.
- e. **Ice Fishing Tournament - Saturday, January 20th, 2024 - Hannen Lake Park** - Discussed the operations and changes for the upcoming ice fishing tournament.

Old Business

- a. **Animal Shelter/Old VFW Post** - Waiting on attorneys
- b. **One-Acre Parcels** - Williams - Waiting for more records to be found.
- c. **City of Atkins – Atkins Roundhouse**
 - i. Lease - no update
 - ii. Canopy Grant - Waiting on environmental review before we can move forward with anything.
 - iii. Trails/Greenspace Concept - Atkins has shared their trails concept.
- d. **Hannen Lake- Shop**: Staff and Board discussed the shop progress.
- e. **Wells**
 - i. Iowa Geological Survey Sample Station - no movement
 - ii. Iowa Flood Center Hydrostation - no movement
 - iii. Rodgers Park - Parmater updated the board on Rodger's well.
- f. **Wildcat Bluff Recreation Area**
 - i. Funding/Outreach - Waiting on submitted grants. Williams is submitting a letter to the tribes of Iowa for input on the acquisition.
 - ii. Development - The Iowa DNR is requiring us to complete a viability assessment before moving forward.
- g. **Garrison Paha**
 - i. Resolution 2023-03 Scheel made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-03 for the grant, Van Wey seconded, all aye, motion passed.
- h. **Conservation Easements** - Tabled
- i. **Winegar Tobin Wildlife Area** - Board discussed the easements and driveways of Winegar Tobin Wildlife Area.

Environmental Education - Askelson gave an update on EE programming and confirmed the REAP CEP grant has been submitted.



Law Enforcement - LEC position is in the budget with rough draft description. Scheel made a motion to post the position internally, LaGrange seconded, all aye, motion passed.

Director Updates

- a. Shared drive vs attachments - Board discussed form of communications prior to meetings.
- b. Director Review RE: possible closed session per Iowa Code 21.5(1)(i) To evaluate the professional competency of an individual whose appointment, hiring, performance, or discharge is being considered when necessary to prevent needless and irreparable injury to that individual's reputation and that individual requests a closed session.
 - i. Hill and Van Wey performed the review November 13, 2023 at 5pm.

Set next meeting – Monday, December 11, 2023 at 5:30pm, Benton County Nature Center

Adjourn - LaGrange made a motion to adjourn at 7:54, Van Wey second, all aye, motion passed.

Minutes Submitted by: Cecilia Dirks

[Handwritten Signature]

12-11-2023

Approved

Date

