

## **Benton County Conservation Board Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, March 11, 2024 at 5:30pm**

**Hannen Lake Park, 1949 Benton/Iowa Road, Blainstown**

**Members Present:** Becky VanWey, Mike LaGrange, Randy Scheel, Liaison Tracy Seeman, Sam Hunter, Dan Hill virtually

**Staff Present:** Camryn Grubic, Shelby Williams, Cecilia Dirks

**Call to Order:** LaGrange called to order at 5:30 PM.

**Guests or public participation** (kept to a maximum of 3 minutes): Denni Randall was presented with her service to the board gift.

**Consent Agenda** (previous minutes and last month's expenditures and revenues)

- a. Tabled Items:
  - i. TriCounty Snowmobile Association (April)
  - ii. Winegar Equestrian Volunteers
  - iii. REAP Committee – Next Meeting: Tentatively April 2024
  - iv. Animal Shelter/Old VFW Post
  - v. One-Acre Parcels - tabled
  - vi. Iowa Flood Center Hydrostation
  - vii. Conservation Easements
  - viii. Atkins Roundhouse Lease
  - ix.

Scheel moved to accept agenda, VanWey Second, all aye, motion carried.

### **Organizations**

- a. **Wildcat Disc Golf Volunteers (October)** – Board discussed event permitting. Hill made a motion to move forward with the updated document with the deposits and after it has gone through the attorney. Hunter seconded. All aye, motion carried.
- b. **Foundation** – Next meeting: Tuesday, April 16, 2024, at Nature Center at 6:00pm - Grubic gave an update about Hannen t-shirt fundraising.
- c. **OCNT Committee** – Next meeting: Spring 2024
  - i. Spring Run - Freezin' for a Reason - Scheel checked the trail before and had good footing for running. Reported the event went well.
  - ii. Scheel and Dirks discussed the historical signs and plans to get them mounted and have a date for "grand opening." The Garrison Fun Days weekend is after the fourth of July.
  - iii. BCC will be applying for the Guernsey Grant for the Vinton trail head.

### **New Business**

- a. **Roadside Management/Weed Commissioner Appointment**
  - i. Manager Position - Application window is now closed. Williams hopes the other unqualified applicants will apply for Tech positions. Interviews will be conducted



in two weeks. The hiring committee has yet to be set, one board member will be requested.

- ii. Received notice that the IRM skid steer had been damaged, Williams has been in contact with Secondary who is helping work with insurance and plan moving forward.
- iii. LaGrange asked about the weed commissioner appointment. Seeman reported no progress.

**b. Cabin Rental**

- i. Agreements and layout: looking into refund and deposits. Williams asked about preferences for furnishing the house. Hill requested a budget to figure out what needs to be new and what can be thrifted.

**c. Hannen Lake Park Main Shop Walk Through** – Board and staff walked through at the end of the meeting.

**Old Business**

**a. City of Atkins – Atkins Roundhouse**

- i. Canopy Grant - Williams will be at BOS to discuss the steps moving forward. Once we have all of the info, then we can have public meetings. Scheel was approached by a landowner and he informed them to stay off the property.

**b. Wildcat Bluff Recreation Area**

- i. Addition Funding/Outreach - more funding came in after the news broadcast went out. Staff/Foundation is looking to do an invite only outreach, Donuts and Donors. Tentatively the first weekend in June. Board discussed media presence at the event. Scheel is working on Cargill.
- ii. ARPA Development – Bid Packets - Construction permit came in, notice to in the bidders is prepared, bids will be due before next month's meeting, Next month the shower house bid should go out.
- iii. Scheel moved to post the bid packets and start the process, seconded by VanWey. All aye, motion passed.

**c. Wells**

- i. Iowa Geological Survey Sample Station: Sample sites installed. Everything went well. The board requested access to the annual report from that well, stating it might be helpful for conservation efforts in the future.

**d. Garrison Paha**

- i. Wildlife Stamp Grant - Williams showed pictures of the contracted work. The contractor got as much as he was comfortable with. The conservation techs plan to use an AmeriCorps group to finish up the steep areas with cut and treat.

**e. Winegar Tobin Wildlife Area**

- i. There will be an easement established around the drive. Plan on doing line of sight posts with no fences.

**Environmental Education:** The naturalists are finishing up the REAP CEP grant. Dirks gave an update on the Flora Fauna Females dutch oven class.

**Law Enforcement**



- a. CCPOA Spring Conference: BCC is hosting and has about 50 officers RSVP'd. Cedar Rapids Police Department will be leading several parts of the training. Grubic updated on the schedule.
- b. Williams asked for Randall's thoughts about suppressors for the rifles.

**Director Updates**

- a. Northern Natural Gas - Rodgers - Williams and Dirks met with the new pipeline representative and gave him a breakdown for tree mitigation. Williams will be asking the BOS to use the tree mitigation funds towards Wildcat Acquisition. Seeman suggested the contractors do the seeding. Scheel moved to use the tree mitigation portion of the North Natural Gas money towards the purchase of the Wildcat addition, Hunter seconded. All aye, motion passed.

**Set next meeting:** Monday, April 8, 2024 at 5:30pm, Benton County Nature Center

**Adjourn:** Hill moved to adjourn at 6:56 PM, VanWey seconded, all aye, motion passed.

**Minutes Submitted by:** Cecilia Dirks

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<b>Approved</b>	<b>Date</b>
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