

Dickinson County Conservation Board

7 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 12

Presiding chair: Willia Mueske

Board members: Kathy Kleen, Joan Gronstal

Members absent: Eric Stoll, Steve Anderson

Employees: Lee Sorenson, Kiley Roth

Others present: Pam Jordan

Call to order, 7:01 p.m.

Agenda approval: Gronstal move, Kleen second. **Approved.**

Approval of minutes: Kleen motion, Gronstal second. **Approved.**

Executive director's comments: REAP grant was approved by Dickinson County REAP committee; two other REAP grants were presented.

Foundation update: The annual meeting was Monday, Aug. 11, and new officers were nominated. Becky Peters was approved as president; JoAnne Sackett was approved as vice president. Erika Leupold remains as secretary; Mary Kay Donovan remains as treasurer for one year; Shirley Rasmussen remains as membership chair for one year. A year of activities, events and accomplishments were presented.

There were \$8,070 in membership dues, with approximately 175 memberships. The foundation has a total of more than \$600,000, about \$400,000 is in an endowment.

Olson Landscaping has not been able to fix the leak in the water feature so far. Dogs in the water feature have become a problem. Kleen would motion to keep dogs out of the water feature; Gronstal would second. Kleen said put up signs and then make a policy for the park, as dogs are supposed to be leashed on the trail and in Kenue Park. Sorenson said unless it's a hunting area typically dogs are supposed to be on leashes. Dogs in the water feature could be a contributing factor to the leak, and the board would like to place something in the Lakes News Shopper. Raccoons could also be a problem.

Environmental education update: Karess Knudtson prepared a Year in Review Powerpoint for the foundation's annual meeting, which was also available to the conservation board.

She met with Kleen and Gronstal to talk about preparing an environmental education plan and how to get the word out to local schools. She will send out a questionnaire to see how best the conservation board can be utilized by teachers.

Knudtson will attend an ANA conference in Michigan.

Operations and facility update

- A. Recycling center update:** The rate for the center manager was raised, as the last candidate turned down the position. Interviews should start next week; one in-house applicant has applied.

Kleen asked about safety for the employees when lifting. Sorenson said lifts are available but they are not user-friendly. Kleen said if the safety equipment is expected for employees, it is better to have them be diligent rather than have a worker's compensation claim. Mueske asked if OSHA inspects the recycling center, but Sorenson said that would only happen if a complaint were made.

Sawyer Marco and Sorenson attended an appliance demanufacturing class on Tuesday, Aug. 12. Kleen is concerned about Marco being alone while demanufacturing in case of emergency.

- B. Naming rights policy:** Sorenson requested to table this, as he has a policy to send out. He said it should be at least \$1,000 or more and the donor must purchase the plaque. The board is getting several requests for naming rights/plaques.

Jordan said it should be a policy between the trails, the foundation and the board so it is consistent throughout.

- C. Needs assessment:** Have not heard from Jane Goeken.
- D. Property names:** Have not met with staff.
- E. Management agreement for trails:** Need to postpone as well, have not talked with Jean Martin. Is the management agreement between the conservation board and the DNR or the trails board and the DNR? When the agreement was formed the trails board was not in existence. The location of the original agreement is unknown.

Conservation Board areas

- A. Well update at Kenue Park:** The well tested positive for E-coli and well most likely will need to be sealed and shut down. Four years it didn't test for that. Kleen thinks that would mean a sewage leak, otherwise it could be wild animals there. Sorenson can shock it, but it won't take care of the E-coli. E-coli must be completely absent. Sorenson said the equipment he used might have been compromised, so another sample could be taken. Kleen said it would make more sense if it was a nitrate or something in the soil rather than E-coli, since it has been so long since animals have been there.

If the water were usable, we would have to put a pump on it. Kleen said it's worth one more shot. It doesn't cost much to sample.

The well is only about 50 feet deep, and the water is about 30 feet from the surface. A normal well is usually about 160 feet deep.

- B. Orleans Park:** The shelter is up, and the picnic tables were installed. The operations crew also worked on the beach. Neighbors think that usage is up at least 30 percent, and the merry-go-round will go back in once it's fixed and repainted. Jordan asked if it had something on it to keep it from going too fast; it should have a governor on it. Kleen asked since we've taken it out, can we put it back in if it doesn't meet current standards? Fall protection has been met. Sorenson will check on regulations and if we have to fix it before we replace it.

- C. **Mill Creek property:** A REAP grant will be submitted by Friday, and Mueske will sign it after the meeting. If it goes through, we will be able to purchase the property this year.
- D. **Milford Woods property:** The board is still in the process of purchasing the property. The appraisal is still being reviewed by the DNR. Ducks Unlimited will donate to that, as it can support any type of nesting ground. The county chairman thinks it should be called the Hunt Woods, but the family did not give a bargain to the conservation board. The naming rights policy will be established before the property is named.

Approval of August expense/fall board member conference: Gronstal is available on Friday. Sorenson will check with Stoll and Steve Anderson. Kleen motion to pay bills, Gronstal second. Approved.

Director's evaluation: Stoll and Anderson requested, tabled until they are in attendance. Gronstal said the evaluation was well-done, and "everyone would say fantastic job, Lee."

General discussion: Kleen: As we build our area, we need to figure out how to maintain it. How do we figure out if areas we plant become weed-infested? Is that the responsibility of volunteers or the board? It should be the responsibility of the board. The seasonal worker hired next year could lead a group of volunteers to help take care of the property. A model would be Coffee & Grounds at Iowa Lakeside Lab. Hired personnel tells the volunteers what to do. Master Gardeners or the garden club could help, because they know what is a weed and what is not.

The area around the water feature has been in question, do we let it become a fuller area or keep it maintained?

The outdoor area should be done by Aug. 23 because the Governor will be doing a bill signing when he is here.

Jordan asked if the county commissioner should go to UNI to learn about weeds.

Adjournment: Gronstal motion, Kleen adjourn. Adjourned at 7:55 p.m.