

Dickinson County Conservation Board meeting

2279 170th St., Okoboji

7 p.m. Tuesday, July 11, 2017

Chair: Joan Gronstal

Vice chair: Steve Anderson

Members: Eric Stoll, Kathy Kleen

Employees: Lee Sorenson, Kiley Roth

Board liaison: Pam Jordan

Call to order at 7:40 p.m.

Agenda approval: Motion by Anderson, Kleen second. Approved.

Approval of past month's minutes: Motion by Kleen, Anderson second. Approved.

Conservation Foundation of Dickinson County: The board is looking for new members, and up to 12 are allowed to serve on the board. Possible new members are interested in serving, but by-laws do prohibit anyone from serving as chair, vice chair, treasurer or secretary until after the first year of service.

Environmental education update: Ashley Hansen has been hired as a new naturalist and will start on Aug. 28. Summer children's programs have been busy and more sessions may be added next year. Our conservation board will have a booth during the Blue Water Festival in Arnolds Park.

Dickinson County Conservation Board areas

-Jim Kraninger's land: The conservation board has been working on purchasing a parcel connecting to Little Foote Forest west of Milford. He is considering requesting to keep the barn and sell the property around it. The parcel to be sold is approximately 13 acres.

-Pioneer Park Nature Preserve: Closing is pending between the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and Dickinson County Conservation Board. Grand opening is 4 p.m. Tuesday, July 18, during the Pioneer Days celebration in Milford.

-Ainsworth-Orleans Beach bathroom: The new bathroom opened the week before July 4 and also includes an outdoor shower area to wash off sand from the beach. The boat dock light was not working and is supposed to be fixed soon. The railing along the spillway will also be updated.

-REAP grant approval for Reeds Run: The conservation board will not be submitting a REAP grant application this year, but the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation will be submitting a grant request in the board's name for the Reeds Run ground that will eventually be under the ownership and maintenance of the conservation board. Anderson motion to approve submittal of the grant, Stoll second. Approved.

Operations and facility update

-Recycle center: The new wheel loader at the recycling center is working well, but the lower window has been broken when moving brush. Chipping of brush will be set up soon, when it works for the chipping company. A compost screener is also being ordered to clean it up and make it more usable for people, although they are looking at imposing a handling fee for loading it for people/contractors.

-Horseshoe Bend shop update: The bid opening for the project was held Monday, July 10. The low bid came in about \$150,000 more than expected at \$451,847, and the high bid was \$651,000. Approximately \$50,000 could be tweaked. However, it was recommended to re-bid in the fall when contractors are more available.

-Pollinator Paradise update: The groundbreaking ceremony was held prior to the meeting and construction will start this month.

Approval of expenses: Kleen motion to pay bills, Stoll second. Approved. The total of the bills needs to be corrected, so individual amounts were approved.

General discussion

-Anderson will be attending the fall board member conference, and other board members need to let Sorenson know if they will be attending before the August board meeting.

-Board members are to turn in their evaluations of Sorenson for his annual assessment.

-Vegetation specialist Aric Ping has been inundated with complaints about weeds and the addition of weed commissioner to his job may need to be reevaluated with the Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management role.

-Sorenson and Ping had talked about creating a Watershed Management Authority with John Wills but were encouraged to wait because of changing regulations. A WMA is now in the works, and the conservation board is looking to be a part of the project. A meeting will be held 10 a.m. Tuesday, July 18, in the supervisors room of the Dickinson County Courthouse.

-Jordan recapped portions of the Dickinson County Board of Supervisors meeting.

Adjournment motion by Anderson, second by Kleen. Approved. Adjourn at 8:49 p.m.