

Dickinson County Conservation Board

7 p.m. June 9, 2015

Dickinson County Nature Center, 2279 170th St., Okoboji

President: Willia Mueske

Vice president: Kathy Kleen

Board members: Steve Anderson, Eric Stoll, Joan Gronstal

Employees: Lee Sorenson, Kiley Roth

Others: Pam Jordan, Bryce Nordblad, Carlo Nordblad, Ann Ditsworth

1. **Call to order at 7:01 p.m.**
2. **Approval of agenda: Gronstal motion, Kleen second. Approved.**
3. **Approval of past month's minutes: Stoll motion, Anderson second. Approved.**
4. **Conservation Foundation of Dickinson County update:** A motion was made to donate \$5,000 to the Spring Run Shooting Range renovation, and a second bid was requested for the Westport Schoolhouse roofing project.
5. **Environmental education update:** Field trip season is over. Pollinator Paradise and Westport Schoolhouse opened June 9 to the public. The kids area in the lower level of the nature center is being renovated to be more interactive and educational.
6. **Operations and facility update:**
 - Recycling center:** A resolution was made by the Dickinson County Board of Supervisors to have \$15,000 in the waste management fund permanently to have the recycling center cleaned of hazardous material in case of closure of the facility. The facility is operating at a positive balance.
 - Schoolhouse roof:** Sorenson requested funds from the Conservation Foundation of Dickinson County; the bid from Five-Star Roofing was \$18,031.51 for a metal shake shingle that will go over the current asphalt roof. The asphalt shingle will help with sound insulation. A second bid from another company has been requested.
 - IRVM plan:** A plan created by IRVM vegetation specialist Aric Ping was approved by the Department of Natural Resources. The plan is in place for five years and then will need to be revised. Ping is working on grant requests from the Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund to help with new program. A 16-acre tract of former crop land at Judd Wildlife Area will be seeded with native grasses and wildflowers.

7. Dickinson County Conservation Board areas

-**Milford Woods:** The property is in two parcels that total to approximately 80 acres. An easement to the Milford Woods property will be utilized as a drive to a parking lot on the property. An area of chopped corn will be turned into a gravel parking lot, including a fence around the area, and then the rest will be seeded down to native grasses and/or flowers. Another drive on the north parcel will be expanded for a second parking area. Access to the Little Sioux River will be by walking. Activities at the park could include bird watching, snowmobiling, fishing, kayaking, hunting, hiking, cross-country skiing. Milford Woods was purchased with funding sources that help with recreational hunting and fishing areas.

Carlo Nordblad, a neighboring landowner, would preferably not have hunting on the area and would prefer it be a wildlife refuge, but the decision is up to the conservation board. Ditsworth is concerned with safety on the land and has had snowmobilers cut fences along the land. Sorenson said if citations are written, word spreads that an area is being enforced and people will stop causing issues.

Carlo Nordblad asked if there would be a sign that would direct people to the parking lot so they do not go down the incorrect road to private property. The county engineer might be able to add an additional and separate entryway as well as signage to the parking lot. Nordblad also asked about the danger of the curvature of the road by the parking lot entrance. Ping will be working on right-of-way vegetation that will help with overgrowth and the visibility along the roadway.

A gate along the easement has been closed, and Bryce Nordblad said he cut the lock on the gate to allow access. The allowance of a gate on the easement will need to be addressed by legal counsel. Anderson said the conservation board will monitor the area and will write citations to people who illegally use the property. Vehicular traffic will not be allowed past the conservation board parking lot to be built.

Stoll said to table the discussion about the property usage, and board members would like to walk the property. Kleen said Sorenson and Ping could come up with a plan for property usage as well.

-Ainsworth-Orleans Beach bathroom and bridge update/pervious pavers: The Department of Natural Resources had \$150,000 budgeted for the bridge and bathroom project at Ainsworth-Orleans Beach park, but the bathroom is now estimated at \$130,000. Bridge funding may be sought after next fiscal year. Dean Madagan requested a boat dock on the beach to keep people from pulling up on his property, but Sorenson denied the request because the dock and its surrounding area would take one-third of the park's beach. Sorenson suggested marking the beginning of private property and put up a fence. New decking and signage was installed at the park.

Previous pavers at the park are plugged, and a street sweeper will try to get the area unplugged of mud. If not, a work day will be scheduled for hand-digging the area.

-Spring Run Shooting Range: Sorenson is working on a grant request for the Dickinson County Endowment Fund to help with the range update. The project, including electrical, is estimated at \$60,000, and about \$10,000 is still needed and would be requested with the grant. Stoll motion, Gronstal second to approve the grant application.

-Horseshoe Bend adjacent property: Anderson requested that the board consider purchasing an adjacent property to Horseshoe Bend, but the property is no longer for sale.

Master plan proposals included the idea for a ropes course, but Kleen said other places offer those services. Jordan said it would be a high-maintenance project, and funds might be used in another way. Members agreed that a ropes course does not need to be a part of the master plan. The county engineer wants to enter an agreement with Bolton & Menk to move the snow tube hill to the other side of the tow rope due to a road construction project.

8. Approval of expenses: Stoll motion, Anderson second. Approved.

9. General discussion: Stoll asked about a canoe trail that Ditsworth had suggested through Milford.

10. Adjournment Gronstal motion, Anderson second, approved at 8:34 p.m.