

Dickinson County Conservation Board  
Meeting Minutes  
March 8, 2023  
22785 Nature Center, Okoboji, IA

Chair: Joan Gronstal (via Zoom)  
Vice Chair: Steve Anderson (by phone until arrived)  
Board Members: Kathy Kleen, Eric Stoll, Douglas Nielsen  
BOS Liaison: Steve Clark (via Zoom)  
Employees: Lee Sorenson  
Visitors: None

Called to order by Gronstal at 7:02 pm

Kleen motioned to approve the agenda, Nielsen. All approved, motion carried.

Public Comment (limited to 5 minutes) No comments.

Consent agenda/Items – Stoll motioned to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Anderson. All approved, motion carried. (Consent agenda items- DCCB Minutes, RCC report, EE report)

Dickinson County Conservation Board Area's

The board discussed options that might be possible for the Hope Rolls playground. Sorenson shared he really looked at 2 possible sites, the first was Sherwood Forest Park, but after talking to the landscape designers we would have to make major changes to the current plans which would come at an increased cost and delays. Along with the plan was to keep it all very natural looking so really does not fit into the concept. The second location was at Kenue Park, the first location would be over by the one room schoolhouse. To make this area large enough to fit the playground we would have to take down multiple large oak trees in the area. The second area would be in a prairie area around the nature center, which had their own concerns for working in the area such as Geo thermo lines and past structure material. The Conservation Board at this time does not feel that they have any appropriate location but supports the project and will keep investigating possible locations.

The board reviewed the 28E agreement between the Dickinson County Trails and the Dickinson County Conservation Board. Stoll made a motion to accept the 28E with the addition of adding as per maintenance agreement in section 5, Nielsen seconded the motion. All approved, motion carried.

Sorenson reported that there is a Little Sioux River state water trail landowner meeting on March 15 in Clay county. This meeting is to hear comments and concerns about applying for the river to be named as a state water trail. All landowners adjacent to the Little Sioux River were mailed a letter notifying them of the meeting.

We are moving ahead on the Sherwood Forest Park bidding process, we have not heard from the Destination Iowa grant as of yet but wanting to get this process started so hopefully construction can start this summer.

Operations and facility update.

Board reviewed the quote from Huffcut for the Kenue Park bathroom. Nielsen made a motion to move forward on the quote of the bathroom, Kleen seconded the motion. All approved, motion carried.

Sorenson informed the Board of the struggles they are having finding seasonal staff for the summer. Will wait a couple more weeks and see how many apply but considering raising seasonal wages.

Request to approve an Ornithology grant request for youth snowshoes, this would include 30 small youth and 30 mid-size youth for bird watching hikes through the winter months. Request that the Conservation Board match the grant with \$500 along with Sorenson will request the Conservation Foundation also matches with \$500. Anderson made a motion to approve and apply for the Ornithology grant, Nielsen seconded the motion. All approved, motion carried.

Sorenson informed the Board that the proposed budget for FY23/24 has been reduced by \$250,000 which eliminates the solar panel project for the nature center. Also discussed a budget amendment for the FUND 14 waste management in the amount of \$40,000 increase for the current fiscal year. The amendment is due to the cost of chipping trees which will continue to increase with local communities removal of Ash trees. Currently fund 14 has approx. \$102,000. Anderson made a motion to approve a budget amendment for Fund 14 in the amount of \$40,000 for FY22/23, Stoll seconded the motion.

General Discussion- Dickinson/Clay have been approved for the ICCS Fall Conference in 2025, with planning starting.

Hagendorn land has been surveyed and will be gifted to the Conservation Board soon, will want to go to City of Orleans and possible request and access easement over 3<sup>rd</sup> street for access.

Shooting range plans have been delayed since the surveying was not able to be completed and now, they have to wait until the snow is gone.

Adjournment Motion to adjourn at 7:56 pm by Kleen, Nielsen seconded. All approved, motion carried.