

Boone County Conservation Board regular meeting
Monday, April 8, 2024
Boone County Courthouse, 4th floor conference room

Members present: Pat Hagan, Jennifer Schieltz, Gary Nystrom
Members absent: Marilyn Jordan, Randy Johnson,
Employees present: Ex. Dir. Katie Taylor

Acting Chair Hagan officially called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

Nystrom made a motion to approve the agenda, 2nd by Schieltz. Motion passed.

Nystrom made a motion to approve minutes of the previous meeting. Hagan seconded. Passed.

Ex. Dir. Taylor presented the monthly bills totaling \$47,949.68. This included \$28,291.61 toward rebuilding the cart shed that will be repaid by our insurance. There are a few outstanding bills not yet included because we are waiting on invoices this month. Motion made by Nystrom to approve the bills, seconded by Schieltz. Passed.

We then moved to New Business to accommodate our guests.

Boone County Communications tower at Don Williams: County Communications Administrator Emily McCoy and Boone County Sherriff Andy Godzicki explained that the county will be upgrading their microwave and radio communication system. This is an essential service for public safety. Problems with the old systems necessitates this upgrade now to allow communication especially in the northwest part of the county. One of the former towers was at the Landus Cooperative in Boxholm, but this is being torn down and will no longer be available. To avoid a situation like this in the future, where we have >\$1 million in equipment on private property that may become no longer available for us to use, they explored county-owned property and found that the northeast corner of Don Williams park is an ideal location for coverage of the river valley. They are presenting a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to the Conservation Board tonight to begin planning for us to lease the site to them. A formal lease agreement cannot be signed until the environmental assessments and other regulatory steps are completed. Thus, a lease agreement will be drawn up and reviewed at a later date once we reach this stage. Nystrom made a motion to approve the MOU, Schieltz seconded. Approved.

The meeting then moved to Open Discussion to discuss another issue with Sherriff Godzicki before he left: Ex. Dir. Taylor was at the County Conservation Directors conference recently. It was brought to their attention that Mahaska County had a problem with their park rangers operating outside of their conservation properties/ jurisdiction and the county not being okay with it. Many counties have 2080 agreements designed to allow rangers that are certified peace officers to operate outside of just county conservation properties. However, our County Attorney looked at the 2080 agreement in Boone County and is of the opinion that it is not legally sufficient. To address this, an idea has been put forward to make county conservation certified peace officers reserve deputies in the Boone County Sherriff's office, so that they can continue to assist other law enforcement and act on their training outside of county conservation property.

Sherriff Godzicki is willing to look into this and explore if it is possible. He needs to check with HR, the county attorney, and the Iowa law enforcement academy.

Back to Old Business:

There is interest from some in a county employee golf membership discount. Following discussion at last month's meeting, Ex. Dir. Taylor drafted a possible policy to allow all Boone County part-time, full-time, and seasonal/temporary employees to receive a 25% off discount on one annual single golf pass. The County Supervisors are not in favor of this. Some conservation board members expressed concern that our budget has already been set for the year and this might just decrease our revenue without actually increasing membership. It was also noted that our golf rates are already low because they are subsidized by county tax dollars. Discussion was had that it might be too late this year to implement this now and we should wait and discuss it again before next year's budget planning. There was no motion or second to approve this policy, so it will not move forward at this time.

Cart shed update: The new cart shed is almost ready to go. With the additional space it provides, we will be able to offer spots to several people off of our waitlist.

Don Williams clubhouse remodel update: 10Fold architecture is still working on the paperwork to allow us to put this out for bid. We should still be on schedule for bidding by June/July, allowing for construction to begin in the Fall.

Remaining New Business:

Approval of special events permit for the Iowa Bicycle Coalition "Pigtails Ride" on May 18. They completed the application and included proof of insurance. Nystrom moved to approve the permit, pending that Boone County Conservation is listed by the insurance agent as an "additional insured". Schieltz seconded. Approved

Boone County Trails Advisory Committee (BCTAC) update: the BCTAC is a technically a subcommittee of this Board. It was originally created to work on implementing a trail between the city of Boone and the High Trestle Trail. Over the past 5 years or so, this plan has run into several hurdles. A discussion may need to be had on re-framing the intent or mission of this committee, such as to focus on maintaining our existing trails. There is a group based out of Madrid called Friends of the High Trestle Trail that would like to be involved. Ex. Dir. Taylor brought up the idea of trying to incorporate or merge the Friends of the HTT into the BCTAC. This would require re-structuring or changing the bylaws about the membership of the BCTAC.

Other Board Discussion: We need to do a cleanup of the Jay Carlson boat ramp. It is getting very overgrown. Our staff is going to remove trash that has been dumped there. We want to also mow down overgrown areas using either our mowers or ask secondary roads to bring a tractor and bush hog.

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.

Pat Hagan, Acting Chair

Jennifer Schieltz, Secretary