

LINN COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2021, BOARD MEETING

The following is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Linn County, Iowa, Conservation Board held on **September 27, 2021**, at Wickiup Hill Learning Center, 10260 Morris Hills Road, Toddville, IA 52341.

Board Members Present

John Hanson, Hillary Hughes, Cindy Burke, and Brent Oleson

Member Hughes joined the meeting by phone.

Burke was appointed as acting Secretary.

Board Members Absent

Steve Emerson

Staff Present

Dennis Goemaat, Director; Daniel Gibbins, Deputy Director; Randy Burke, Planner; Ted Doscher, Planner
Ryan Schlader, Community Outreach Specialist; Kent Rector, Nature Center Manager;

Others Present

Ted Hoffman, Steve Myres

Call To Order

Board President Hanson called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM

Public Comment

Ted Hoffman offered public comment on the proposed NextEra solar proposal. Mr. Hoffman submitted notes and discussed his reasons why the Linn Learning Farm should not be used for solar panel placement. Mr. Hoffman noted reasons including conservation goals, bond language, and wetland creation and wildlife goals for the property. Steve Myers offered additional public comment also toward the proposed NextEra solar farm. Mr. Myers offered comments toward balancing of green energy with production and indicated his opinion that solar held undiscovered consequences and requested the Board reject this proposal on Conservation land.

ITEM R1. Approve Consent Agenda

Motion by Oleson, second by Burke

To approve the consent agenda.

Vote: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: Emerson

The consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

ITEM C1. Approve minutes of the August 23, 2021 monthly meeting

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

9/27/2021

- ITEM C2. Approve claims list and expenditures – Claims List #2022-3.
Claims and Transfer list #2022-3 involving claim #3-193 through #3-344.
- ITEM C3. Receive and place on file the August 2021 financial/budget report.
- ITEM C4. Receive and place on file the August 2021 activity report.
- ITEM C5. Acceptance of gifts.
1. Gift #3-2022 – Monetary donation (\$25) from Sarah Brakke for support of the education program at Wickiup Hill Learning Area.
 2. Gift #4-2022 - Monetary donation (\$100) from Tyler Gorton for support of the Cedar Valley Nature Trail.
 3. Gift #5-2022 - Monetary donation (\$100) from Sharon Laird for support of the education program at Wickiup Hill Learning Area.
 4. Gift #6-2022 - Monetary donation (\$1,000) from Linn County Pheasants Forever for support of the Morgan Creek Park redevelopment project.
- ITEM C6. Approve design contract with Shive Hattery for a pedestrian bridge over Morgan Creek.
- ITEM C7. Authorize staff to submit a Derecho Community Forestry Grant Program for tree planting.
- ITEM C8. Capital Improvement Program updates report.

REGULAR AGENDA:

- ITEM R2. Discuss and decide on bids received for the pedestrian bridge at Morgan Creek Park and authorizing the Director to sign the contract.

Doscher reviewed bids received for the pedestrian bridge at Morgan Creek Park. Continental Bridge was the low bid at \$44,300. Wheeler Bridge was the only other bid received with a bid of \$53,100. Oleson asked if the bid was an open bid process. Doscher confirmed requests for bid were sent to multiple bridge manufacturers, but only two bids were received.

MOTION by Burke, second by Oleson

To authorize staff to purchase the Continental Bridge for \$44,300 and authorize the Director to sign the purchase contract.

VOTE: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: Emerson

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

9/27/2021

ITEM R3. Discuss and decide on bids received for culvert installations on Woodpecker Nature Trail at Pinicon Ridge Park and authorizing the Director to sign the contract.

Ted Doscher reviewed bids received for culvert installations on Woodpecker Nature Trail at Pinicon Ridge Park, project # 6-21. Rathje Construction was the low bid at \$59,700. Bids received were as follows:

Company	Bid
Rathje Construction	\$59,700
Iowa Bridge and Culvert	\$84,020
Bomerang	\$73,400
Boulder Construction	\$104,400

MOTION by Oleson, second by Burke

To accept the low bid of \$59,700 from Rathje Construction for project #6-21 and authorize the Director to sign the contract.

VOTE: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: Emerson

ITEM R4. Discuss and decide on Resolution #2021-19 authorizing staff to submit a Federal Recreation Trail grant application for the Cedar Valley Trail bridge replacement and underpass installation north of Urbana.

Gibbins reviewed an application for trail funding to the Federal Recreation Trail program for the Cedar Valley Trail bridge replacement and underpass installation north of Urbana.

MOTION by Oleson, second by Burke

To authorize the Director to sign and submit a grant application to the Federal Recreation Trail program on behalf of the Board.

VOTE: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: Emerson

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

9/27/2021

ITEM R5. Discuss and decide on bids received for the Plains Campground improvements and authorize the Director to sign the contract, Project #13-20.

Randy Burke reviewed bids received for the Plains Campground improvements, Project #13-20. Low bid received was from Connolly Construction at \$49,056. Bids received are as follows:

Contractor	Bid
Connolly Construction	\$49,056
Midwest Concrete	\$70,935
Rathje Construction	\$58,815

MOTION by Oleson, second by Burke

To accept the low bid of \$49,056 from Connolly Construction for project #13-20 and authorize the Director to sign and execute a contract on behalf of the Board.

VOTE: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: Emerson

ITEM R6. Discuss and decide regarding a 28E agreement with the Metropolitan Planning Organization for funding the Cedar River trail bridge review.

Goemaat reviewed a 28E agreement with the Metropolitan Planning Organization for funding the Cedar River trail bridge review.

MOTION by Burke, second by Oleson

To authorize the Director to sign the 28E agreement on behalf of the Board.

VOTE: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: Emerson

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

9/27/2021

ITEM R7. Discuss and decide regarding authorizing the purchase of an excavator and skid steer for the Services work unit and a skid steer for the North Cedar District.

Goemaat reviewed the proposed purchase of an excavator and skid steer for the Services work unit and a skid steer for the North Cedar District. Equipment quotes are as follows:

Equipment Item	Cost Including Trade
John Deere 135G Excavator	\$124,650.00
Bobcat Skid Steer	\$51,525.27
Bobcat Skid Steer with forestry package	\$85,313.52

MOTION by Burke, second Oleson

To authorize the Director to sign purchase orders to make the equipment purchases as proposed.

VOTE: aye; all present
 nay; none
 absent: Emerson

ITEM R8. Discuss quinquennial celebration of the Linn County Water and Land Legacy Bond.

Member Hanson and the Board discussed a potential 5-year celebration event of the Linn County Water and Land Legacy Bond. Hanson noted ideas submitted for an event with possible speakers, partners, etc. Hanson also discussed photos submitted that might spur a writing contest for the site of the Matsell Bridge mansion regarding its history. Hanson also discussed a potential photo contest for the event. Goemaat mentioned the Ding Darling exhibit has been delayed due to COVID-19. Goemaat also noted the Morgan Creek Park opening would be a potential site for a combination ribbon cutting and bond highlight. Hughes asked what month Hanson was proposing. Hanson noted flexibility. Hughes noted speakers could highlight a partnership aspect. Oleson noted partnership with an existing partner event such as the Trees Forever Symposium would reduce staff time for planning, especially if an event was already scheduled by the partner. Burke noted Monarch Research might also be a good partner for this purpose.

No Motion was made. Consensus was for staff to research potential partners and report back in November.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES
9/27/2021

ITEM R9. Board member / staff reports – Board members and staff may report and/or discuss meetings or activities in which they have been involved.

- 1) Community Outreach/Marketing: Ryan Schlader reported on Iowa Great Places promotional video, Wapsi Bluff Shelter use, Pinicon Ridge Parks as part of the 99 Parks In 99 Weeks program, R.A.R.E. expo at Wickiup Hill, and CVNT trail construction communications.
- 2) Updates:
 - a. Derecho planting grants – Gibbins reported on two grants received for derecho related planting of native trees and pollinator shrubs.
 - b. Archery range review – Gibbins updated the Board on staff analysis of potential archery range location and demand. Burke asked if automatic rifles were allowed at the rifle range. Goemaat confirmed that fully automatic guns take special licenses, but semi-automatic guns are popular. Hanson noted certain muzzle devices that reduce recoil make the gun louder at a range.
 - c. Nature Appreciation structures status – Burke updated the Board on status of the Wickiup Hill Nature Appreciation structure design, cost and timing of a potential contract. Goemaat noted the lower cost is unlikely to meet public hearing threshold.
 - d. Conservation Corp meeting/proposal – Goemaat and Gibbins updated the Board on a meeting with staff from the Conservation Corp and pending proposal to be brought to the Board at a future meeting.
 - e. Education field trip fees – Rector updated the Board on proposed fee relaxation for school field trips due to reduced fundraising capacity of PTO's due to the pandemic. Burke noted appreciation for this and Board consensus was to work with schools as needed on a case by case basis.
 - f. State Recreation Trails Scoring Results – Gibbins updated the Board on a \$400,000 State Recreation Trails grant approved for the Grant Wood Trail hard surfacing project between Waldo Rock Park and Oxley Road. Hanson suggested interpretive signage along the Grant Wood Trail as opportunity arises.

ITEM R10. Public comment

None.

Goemaat noted the REAP assembly on the evening of October 20th.

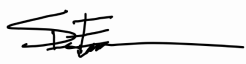
Oleson asked about dog parks on the west side of Cedar Rapids and requested staff to research Morgan Creek Park as a potential partnership location for a dog park. Oleson also asked for a staff update on a partnership with Mt. Trashmore at the November meeting.

ITEM R12. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:55 PM
Daniel Gibbins typed the above minutes.

SEAL



Recording Secretary

Board Secretary