LINN COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2022, BOARD MEETING

The following is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Linn County, Iowa, Conservation Board held on **October 24, 2022,** at Wickiup Hill Learning Center, 10260 Morris Hills Road, Toddville, IA 52341.

Board Members Present
George Kanz, Hillary Hughes, Cindy Burke, Brent Oleson
Members Burke and Hughes joined the meeting by phone.
Member Oleson was appointed acting Secretary.

Board Members Absent
Emerson

Staff Present
Dennis Goemaat, Executive Director; Daniel Gibbins, Deputy Director; Randy Burke, Planner; Ted Doscher, Planner; Ryan Schlader, Community Outreach Specialist; Dana Kellogg, Nature Resources Manager.

Others Present
Dave Lamka, Laura Dnummy, Jeremy Wilhelm, Mary Clapp, Jackie Kepler, Judy Lucas

Call To Order
Member Kanz called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM

Public Comment

Dennis Brandt commented about the Grant Wood Trail surface being firm and stable. Dennis suggested increased bicycle traffic on Secrist Road would occur if the portion of the trail from Creekside Road to Paralta was developed. Dennis noted his opinion that the trails current natural state would be best.

Mary Clapp commented on the public meeting and noted she felt the format was not conducive to discussion or information sharing. Mary also noted that she was told that trail use would likely increase and asked if a study of current use could be conducted before development.

Jackie Kepler voiced concerns about development of the section from Secrist Road to Springville Road. Jackie commented that she felt she hadn't received a response from the Board to an email, but only a response from staff. Jackie further commented that the public meeting didn't have enough representation and the format was difficult. Jackie noted that she felt trees and habitat would have to be removed if this segment of trail was to be developed and requested this route be left natural. Jackie noted that people she has met are opposed to this trail being developed.

Judy Lucas commented that people she met at the public meeting were in favor of not paving the section of trail east of Creekside Road. Judy commented that her measuring the mowed portion of the trail averaged a width of 17.2" and that wildflowers would be taken into total extinction along the trail if it was developed. Judy noted that asphalt would be too hot and contribute to climate change.

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 September 26, 2022 monthly meeting**

ITEM C2. **Approve claims list and expenditures – Claims List # 2023-4.**
Claims and Transfer list #2023-4 involving claim #4-447 through #4-571

ITEM C3. **Receive and place on file the September 2022 financial/budget report.**

ITEM C4. **Receive and place on file the September 2022 activity report.**

ITEM C5. **Acceptance of gifts.**

1. Gift #8-2023 – Monetary donation ($100) from Kim Tucker for support of the South Juan Wilderness Trek.

ITEM C6. **Award a contract to JEO Engineers for wetland design work for the Bird Preserve**

ITEM C7. **Capital Improvement Program updates**

ITEM C8. **Report out of closed session – acquisition of 129-acre addition to the Cedar River Greenbelt**

REGULAR AGENDA:

ITEM R2. **Public hearing regarding the proposed plans, specifications, form of contract and estimated cost for tree removal at Pinicon Ridge Park for the campground expansion, Project #29-21.**

The Conservation Board conducted a public hearing in accordance with Iowa law regarding the proposed plans, specifications, form of contract and estimated costs for tree removal at Pinicon Ridge Park for the campground expansion, Project #29-21. Proof of publication was presented. No written or oral comments or objections were received.

MOTION by Oleson, second by Burke

To close the public hearing.

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

ITEM R3. **Discuss and decide on Resolution #2022-33, approving the plans and specifications, form of contract and estimated construction costs for tree removal at Pinicon Ridge Park for the campground expansion, Project #29-21.**

Randy Burke reviewed the plans and specifications, form of contract and estimated construction costs for tree removal at Pinicon Ridge Park for the campground expansion, Project #29-21.

MOTION by Oleson, second by Hughes

To approve Resolution #2022-33 approving the plans and specifications, form of contract and estimated construction costs for Pinicon Ridge Park for the campground expansion, Project #29-21.

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

ITEM R4. **Discuss and decide regarding awarding a contract for tree removal at Pinicon Ridge Park for the campground expansion, Project #29-21.**

Randy Burke reviewed bids received for Project #29-21. Apparent low bid was $40,000 from Bill Miller Logging. Bids received were as follows:

#	Contractor	Total Bid
1	Brandenburg Drainage	$ 170,000.00
2	Klime Drainage	$ 98,500.00
3	Miene Septic Service	$ 84,000.00
4	Bill Miller Logging	$ 40,000.00
5	Sz Construction	$ 68,480.00
6	Schrader Excavating	$ 82,245.00
7	Lahr Custom Excavating	$ 105,500.00
8	Aaron Crane Construction	$ 47,000.00
9	Connolly Construction	$ 94,500.00
10	Gansen Excavating	$ 55,500.00
11	Eastern Iowa Excavating	$ 128,500.00
12	Rathje Construction	$ 88,250.00
13	Veracity Excavating	$ 92,000.00
14	Cook Construction	$ 75,000.00
15	Arends Excavating	$ 152,000.00
16	Hennick Tree Service	$ 69,850.00
17	Boomerang Corp	$ 137,777.00

Hughes asked about the use of the trees removed. Randy Burke discussed the products the contractor would produce for sale. Member Burke asked about the bid amounts compared to the estimate. Randy Burke described the project and efficiencies that would likely have reduced the bid amount from the estimate. Hughes noted the difference was also the ability to sale the trees and products by certain contractors.

MOTION by Oleson, second by Burke

To approve the low bid of $40,000 from Bill Miller Logging and authorize the Director to sign the contract.

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

ITEM R5. Discuss and decide regarding awarding a contract for tree debris cleanup activities at Wanatee Park related to the derecho.

Kellogg reviewed bids received for tree debris cleanup activities at Wanatee Park related to the derecho. Apparent low bid was $30,000 from Bill Miller Logging, Inc. Bids received were as follows.

Contractor	Bid
Bill Miller Logging Inc.	$30,000.00
Forestry Consulting Services, LLC	$91,925.00

MOTION by Oleson, second by Burke

To approve the low bid of $30,000 from Bill Miller Logging Inc. and authorize the Director to sign the contract.

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

ITEM R6. Discuss and decide regarding awarding a contract for ash tree removal related to emerald ash borer at Wanatee Park.

Kellogg reviewed bids received for ash tree removal related to emerald ash borer at Wanatee Park. Apparent low bid was $20,000 from Bill Miller Logging, Inc. Bids received were as follows.

Contractor	Bid
Bill Miller Logging Inc.	$20,000.00
Miene Septic Services Inc.	$64,500.00

Burke asked if there was an ash borer treatment for the ash trees. Kellogg described the treatment options for Emerald Ash Borer. Burke asked about tree diversity in our plantings. Kellogg confirmed native trees with a diversity of species are being planted to restore the forests.

MOTION by Oleson, second by Burke

To approve the low bid of $20,000 from Bill Miller Logging Inc. and authorize the Director to sign the contract.

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

ITEM R7. <u>**Discuss and decide regarding a contract amendment with WHKS Engineers for construction oversight and administration for the Pinicon Ridge dam modification, Project #19-19.**</u>

Gibbins reviewed a contract amendment for up to $95,000 with WHKS Engineers for construction oversight and administration for the Pinicon Ridge dam modification, Project #19-19. Hughes asked if construction would be tracked with drone footage. Gibbins noted this was the intention of staff to document the process.

MOTION by Oleson, second by Hughes

To approve the contract amendment with WHKS Engineers and authorize the Director to sign the amendment.

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

ITEM R8. <u>**Discuss and decide regarding accepting an alternate to the Buffalo Creek Park improvement project to pave the road and camping pads.**</u>

Doscher reviewed a contract bid alternate to the Buffalo Creek Park improvement project to pave the new road and camping pads. Kanz noted concrete was a good option for the environment and supported concrete as a surface in general.

MOTION by Oleson, second by Burke

To approve the bid alternate for paving the project portion of the road and camping pads and authorize the Director to sign the alternate.

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

ITEM R9. **<u>Discuss the Conservation Board's preliminary FY 2024 budget including operations, and capital projects.</u>**

Goemaat reviewed the preliminary FY24 budget including operations, and capital projects. Goemaat noted guidelines would be released soon by the County and the draft would be updated. Hughes asked if FY24 would likely have no bond sale. Goemaat confirmed that FY24 bond sale would be determined by project progress. Goemaat noted a request for increases to seasonal staff pay, firewood budget, and the fuel budget. Oleson asked if a fuel budgeting discussion had occurred with other departments. Goemaat confirmed discussions had occurred. Oleson requested that the Department budget for new boat rental equipment to replace dated equipment to keep the service modern and vibrant. Goemaat noted kayak replacement would occur in FY23 and a couple paddle boats. Oleson requested consideration for kayak transport along with canoes for float trip rentals. Kanz requested GSB applications in future years for areas being converted to asphalt. Goemaat noted a program for GSB had been developed by staff. Hughes asked when budget guidelines would be received. Goemaat noted early November was the typical timeline to receive budget guidelines from the Finance Department.

No motion was made.

ITEM R10. Board member / staff reports – Board members and staff may report and/or discuss meetings or activities in which they have been involved. (Conservation Board & staff)

1. Ryan Schlader – Schlader reported on recent community outreach, media and marketing efforts.

2. Updates:

a. Wapsipinicon River Water Trail – Oleson requested staff look at steps to designate the Wapsipinicon River as a water trail from Troy Mills to Stone City or where appropriate with a timeline to be in place for the completion of the dam modification project. Oleson asked if Conservation could list vendors that provide various kayak services. Goemaat noted staff would clarify what the department is allowed to advertise.
b. Grant Wood Trail Public input meeting – Goemaat reviewed the turnout and process of the meeting with around 65 people that attended. Goemaat noted a number of viewpoints were shared about connection to Springville, and opinions as to whether or not to pave the trail. Oleson noted that his appreciation for the comments and that he has walked the trail twice. Oleson noted the Conservation Board is voluntary and discussed a couple comments that he took issue with. Oleson noted he talked to people that had each opinion and that his position would probably support a dual track trail design and that it could be done in a way to benefit everyone. Goemaat noted that a lot of input from the meeting would be taken into account and a report could be developed to address public input and design options. Burke noted she was out of country, but would have attended. Burke responded to a comment about no response. Goemaat and Gibbins confirmed that staff try to respond on behalf of the Board when a response is requested by the public. Hughes commented that the engineer's presentation and report out would be timely at the next meeting.
c. EMA Warning Siren request. – Goemaat reviewed a request for an EMA siren to be placed at Matsell Bridge. Board consensus was to partner with EMA to get the siren installed.
d. Goemaat noted that Kendall Hausmann would be a new Board member starting in January to replace outgoing Hillary Hughes.

ITEM R11. **Public comment**

Dennis Brandt asked if the trail grant money specifies what the grant money is to be used for.

Jackie Kepler noted there was a level of distrust as to whether the public is being heard. Jackie also stated that trees, shrubs and wildflowers would have to be removed.

Mary Clapp noted that Anderson Bogert did not state that trees would have to be removed and that the format was not good for communication. Mary also commented on her desire to designate the trail to first responders.

Jeremy Wilhelm commented that he had attended the public meeting and advocated the development of the trail as a wildlife refuge as a destination from both Springville and Marion. Jeremy noted he would like to be able to present his ideas at the next meeting.

Judy Lucas commented that staff had suggested she use other grass trails.

ITEM R12. **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:49 PM.

Daniel Gibbins typed the above minutes.

Paul Gibbins

Recording Secretary

SEAL

Cindy

Board Secretary