

September 1, 2011
5:00 p.m.

The Woodbury County Conservation Board met on Thursday, September 1, 2011 at the Southwood Conservation Area Shop beginning at 5:00 p.m. Members present: Greg Grupp, Frank Gray, Chris Zellmer-Zant, and Mark Taylor. Staff members present: Schneider, Peterson, Snyder, Haahr, and Schultz.

Vice-President, Gray called the meeting to order and asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Hearing none, a motion was made by Zellmer-Zant, second by Taylor to approve the agenda. Motion carried. Motion by Zellmer-Zant, second by Taylor to approve the minutes of the July 7, 2011 regular meeting. Motion carried. July and August expenditures in the amount of \$ 176,144.44 and \$ 126,418.49 were read respectively. Motion was made by Zellmer-Zant, second by Taylor to approve these expenditures. Motion carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

Schneider discussed with the board a request by a citizen to permit the public to bow hunt on the Riverside Bluffs Area. This is in response to Stone State Park letting the public conduct a special bow hunt for deer this fall with a drawing for a limited number of permits. It was the board's consensus that there is no process to allow permit hunting on the Riverside Bluffs Area at this time and there are no plans to change the existing policy. The Board will consider permits if a city-wide effort to control the deer heard is conducted in the future.

EDUCATION ITEMS

Snyder informed the board that sponsorships for Nature Calls have met the goal of \$16,000. Auction items and publicity for the event is progressing. Tickets are now on sale.

Snyder noted that the nature center is experiencing a few minor problems with the exhibits. A few of the components have not been functioning properly and we are working with Split Rock to resolve them. A representative from Split Rock visited on August 15th, and addressed the main issues we were having with the exhibits. He did some repairs and adjustments. We are also having problems with people touching the prairie plants and animals in the prairie diorama. This is potentially destructive and we may look at pricing security cameras to more easily monitor the area.

The Junior League of Sioux City has awarded Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center a grant to plan for a future outdoor playscape at the nature center. Snyder noted that she had met with the committee members in August and they plan to tour a few regional playscapes in September and October for research.

Snyder informed the board that she attended the Western Iowa Tourism meeting in Okoboji on July 27th. The speaker was from Google and gave additional tips how to use their services for non-profits. The state Tourism Conference is Oct. 19-21 at Okoboji. She will likely be attending part of the sessions. The NAI workshop is in St. Paul this November, and Snyder has received a scholarship that covers the registration fees. She will attend and research outdoor classrooms and playscapes. Jim Henning will be attending the IACCB conference in Buchanan County in September.

Snyder discussed with the board the possibility of erecting a 20' x 50' double Raptor enclosure. There is approximately \$1,300 to \$1,400 set aside for this project. Snyder will continue to look for addition funds. The total cost is estimated at between \$10,000 and \$15,000. The next step will be to develop basic plans for the enclosure and raise money to fund the project.

FIELD/PARK ITEMS

Peterson reported that park projects have been limited primarily to clean up efforts at Snyder Bend. Park crews, with the help of Secondary Road's large equipment, were able to completely clean up storm damaged trees in the campground area south to the pump house. Remaining trees will be cleaned up and removed soon once the water level returns to below flood stage and the ground dries. Secondary Roads crews have removed and leveled the earth dike around the Brown's Lake residence. Secondary Roads plans to rent a machine that will separate sand bags from the sand. Camping at Brown's Lake has picked up with the cooler weather and the lake reopening to boating. Little Sioux Park has been extremely busy all summer. A new septic system was installed for the west lake side shower and restroom facility in July at Little Sioux Park. Southwood crews have been busy with campers as well, spraying at Owego, and recently began installing parking posts and rock for the new parking lot accesses at Oak Ridge and Fowler Preserve.

Peterson informed the board that staff has contracted with the Conservation Corps Iowa crew for the last week in September to assist in the next Timber Stand Improvement project on Oak Ridge Unit 2. They will be working on approximately 10 acres of timber.

Peterson noted that he has been preparing specifications for a new track skid loader scheduled to replace the 1976 small dozer. Specifications were presented to the Board. After some discussion, a motion by Zellmer-Zant, seconded by Grupp to authorize Request for Quotes for a new Track Skid Loader.¹⁻¹² Motion carried. Peterson informed the board that a 1997 2510 Kawasaki Mule UTV is scheduled to be placed on the City Auction September 24. The timing chain is out and it does not run. After some discussion, a motion by Grupp, seconded by Zellmer-Zant to approve selling the 1997 2510 Kawasaki Mule UTV at the upcoming City Auction September 24.²⁻¹² Motion carried. Two grapple fork attachments for the John Deere tractor and Bobcat skid loader were purchased. These two items have helped to make tree cleanup much more efficient and will be a big help in the future.

DIRECTOR ITEMS

Schneider distributed a draft of the FY 11 Annual Report for the board's approval. After a discussion of the report, a motion by Grupp, seconded by Taylor to approve the draft of the FY11 Annual Report pending addition of the Financial Statement when that information is available.³⁻¹² Motion carried. The final version will be presented to the Board of Supervisors and placed on our website for the public.

Schneider distributed the FY11 Final Accrued June statement as well as the FY12 July and FY12 August statements. He noted that the budget continues to be skewed due to flood related expenses being paid from a separate account. Schneider noted that he has been working with the assigned FEMA crew on submitting claims to reimburse flood related expenses for both Category B (prevention measures) and Category A (clean up measures). Initial reimbursements have been submitted through July 24, and he will be working on the next time period soon.

Schneider reported that the board should be receiving final reimbursement for the WIT Trail DOT Enhancement grant since the last repair has been completed and documented to DOT.

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²⁻¹² To approve selling the 1997 2510 Kawasaki Mule UTV at the upcoming City Auction September 24.

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Schneider informed the board that he received final approval from FEMA for the plans and specifications on the Brown's Lake tornado safe room/camper shower and restroom facility. Schneider will put a notice out informing the public of a special board meeting to open bids, hold a public hearing on expenditure of funds for the project, and take action to accept a bid and award a contract pending final review by the architect at 4:00 p.m. September 14 at the Nature Center. The architect has indicated there has been interest in the project from several potential bidders. Construction should begin around the beginning of October, and the campground will close for the season at that time. Staff will also work on campground renovations before re-opening next spring.

Schneider recommended that the annual appreciation picnic typically scheduled in October be held at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center. After some discussion of schedules, the date of October 13th was agreed upon.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.