

Monday, November 14, 2022
Minutes of the Hardin County Conservation Board Meeting

The Monday, November 14, 2022, meeting of the Hardin County Conservation Board was called to order by Chair, Kirk Rice, at 6:00 p.m. at Hardin County Conservation Headquarters.

Board Members Attending: Kirk Rice (Chair), Trent Lambert (Vice-Chair), Bryan Meints, Jo Baumann, and Jessica Lara

Board Members Absent: None.

Staff Members Attending: Wes Wiese (Director), Chris Barber (Interpretive Park Manager), and Laura Carr (Office Assistant)

Guests: Tyler Prochaska, Julie Jeske, and Sophia Prochaska (DELTA Waterfowl), Ava Haun (District Conservationist with the NRCS)

Approval of Agenda: Bryan Meints made a motion to approve the November 14, 2022 agenda. The motion was seconded by Jessica Lara. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

Public Comment: Tyler Prochaska and Julie Jeske updated the board on the trash that was dumped at Cross' Ford River Access. Local authorities were contacted and located the owners of the trash. The owners cleaned up the trash from the park.

Approval of Minutes: Jo Baumann made a motion to approve the October 10, 2022 minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Bryan Meints. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

Approval of Claims: Trent made a motion to correct the claims sheet to reflect that Wes Wiese was reimbursed for purchasing pumpkins at a total of \$105.00, not \$150.00. The motion was seconded by Jo Baumann. All members voted aye, and the motion carried. Trent Lambert made a motion to approve the November 14, 2022, monthly claims. The motion was seconded by Bryan Meints. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

Monthly Special Reports:

Chair Report: None.

Board Member's Report: Jo Baumann invited the board and public to attend the Annual Southwest Watershed Alliance Water Quality Forum and Trade Show this Thursday starting at 4pm.

Special Committee's Report:

The Lodge Committee: The Director, Wes Wiese, informed the board of the total funds raised as a part of the Barlow Challenge and asked the board to designate an account the monies should be deposited into. Jo Baumann made a motion to place the raised funds into the county 5412 revenue account. The motion was seconded by Trent Lambert. All members voted aye, and the motion carried. The board discussed future fundraising ideas.

Salary Committee: The wage study was shared with the board. Jessica Lara pointed out inconsistencies with the health insurance numbers that were reported to Iowa County Conservation System (ICCS). Wes Wiese will follow up on the reported health insurance numbers to provide the Board clarity.

All reports were given and discussed. Jessica Lara made a motion to approve all monthly reports as presented. The motion was seconded by Trent Lambert. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

Old Business:

Calkins Internet: The Interpretive Park Manager, Chris Barber, updated the board of various internet options for Calkin's internet. Wes Wiese will follow up on a few recommendations to present to the board on Saturday's Special Meeting.

New Business:

Visitor Guide: The Board reviewed the advertisement and prices for the 2023 Hardin County Visitor's Guide and The Iowa Outdoors. Laura Carr, the office assistant, shared feedback from guest satisfaction surveys – noting that majority of visitors heard about HCC through My County Parks, peer referral, and/or Google. The Board discussed alternative marketing avenues. Jessica Lara made a motion to not renew advertisements in the Hardin County Visitor's Guide based off feedback collected from satisfaction surveys. The motion was seconded by Trent Lambert. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

Calkins Aquarium: Chris Barber informed the board that an aquarium in the animal display has a leak due to a silicone seam that is defective. Chris can either attempt to fix it or order a new aquarium at the price of \$4,627 with a lifetime warranty. The broken aquarium will be reused elsewhere in the nature center. Trent Lambert made a motion to approve Chris to purchase a new aquarium. The motion was seconded by Jo Baumann. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

CD Rates: The Director presented CD rates from local banks to place public funds into for a period of 12-18 months. Jo Baumann made a motion to put \$100,000 into three separate 12-month CDs, for a total of \$300,000. The motion was seconded by Bryan Meints. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

Electrical Bikes: The board was presented with the Iowa DNR's policy on electric bikes and the current Hardin County Conservation Park Regulations. The board found that the following Hardin County Conservation policy addresses the inquiry about use of electric bikes on county owned properties. *“ATV's and Snowmobiles Restricted: It shall be unlawful to operate any snow machine, tote bike, air sled, swamp buggy, all-terrain vehicle or any other land conveyance propelled by gasoline, diesel or electric engine and run-on wheels, tracks, runners in or on any area except in areas or trails which the Board may designate.”*

Director's Evaluation: Wes requested to enter closed session pursuant to section 21.5(1)(i) of the Code of Iowa for his annual director's evaluation. Trent Lambert made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to Section 21.5(1)(i) of The Code of Iowa. The motion was seconded by Bryan Meints. Roll call vote: “Ayes” Kirk Rice, Trent Lambert, Jo Baumann, Bryan Meints, and Jessica Lara, “Nays” None, and the motion carried. Closed session began at 8:11 pm. Bryan Meints made a motion to end the closed session. The motion was seconded by Jessica Lara. Roll call vote: “Ayes” Kirk Rice, Trent Lambert, Jo Baumann, Bryan Meints, and Jessica Lara, “Nays” None, and the motion carried. Closed session ended and entered into regular session at 8:20 pm.

Informational Items:

Batch & Build Letter: Ava Haun, District Conservationist through the NRCS, presented information on the Batch & Build program which is a grant that would allow the Southfork Water Alliance to get a full-time project coordinator for their water quality projects. Ava requested a letter of support from the Hardin County Conservation Board to submit with their grant this Friday. Jessica made the motion to send a letter of support and offer Hardin County Conservation facilities for meetings and/or events at no cost, pending availability. The motion was seconded by Trent Lambert. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

Park Tour/Strategic Meeting: The Hardin County Conservation Board will be meeting Saturday, November 19, 2022 for their Park Tour of the properties located on the southern end of the county. The tour will begin at The Lodge at 8am with the intent of returning to The Lodge around 12p for the Special Strategic Meeting.

Christmas Potluck: The Board discussed the annual Christmas Potluck. The December meeting will begin at 5pm for the potluck, business will be addressed following the meal at 6pm.

Adjournment: Next Hardin County Conservation Board Special Meeting is scheduled to take place on Saturday, November 19, 2022. A park tour will begin at 8am at The Lodge in Steamboat Rock, the Special Meeting will take place at 12p at The Lodge. The Monday, November 14, 2022, meeting of the Hardin County Conservation Board was adjourned by Chair, Kirk Rice, at 8:28 p.m.