

**Monday, March 11, 2024**

**Minutes of the Hardin County Conservation Board Meeting**

The Monday, March 11, 2024, meeting of the Hardin County Conservation Board was called to order by Chair, Trent Lambert, at 6:03 p.m. at Headquarters Office.

**Board Members Attending:** Trent Lambert (Chair), Julie Jeske (Vice-Chair), Bryan Meints, Kirk Rice, and Jo Baumann.

**Board Members Absent:** None.

**Staff Members Attending:** Wes Wiese (Director), Laura Carr (Office Assistant), Craig Boomgarden (Operations Manager), Logan Grabin (Resource Tech)

**Guests:** Tyler Prochaska, JD Holmes (Hardin County Sheriff's Office), Lance Granzow (Hardin County Supervisor), Steamboat Rifle Range: Randall Copeman, Jerrilee Harms, Douglas Bausmen, Phil Gavagan, Scott Bohn, Kevin Kwester, Steve Priske, Robert S., Steve N., Keith Robinson, Tyler Hill, Kevin Hoffman, Nate Gilmore, Terry Purvis, Ron Hackney, Doc Zierke, James Motch, John Stupp, John H., and Mark P.

**Approval of Agenda:** Jo Baumann made a motion to approve the March 11, 2024 agenda. The motion was seconded by Bryan Meints. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Approval of Minutes:** Kirk Rice made a motion to approve the February 12, 2024 minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Julie Jeske. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

**Approval of Claims:** Julie Jeske made a motion to approve the March 11, 2024, monthly claims as presented. The motion was seconded by Jo Baumann. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

**Monthly Special Reports:**

**Chair Report:** None.

**Board Member's Report:** Kirk Rice noted that he and the Director, Wes, went to look for new locations for the Rifle Range. Jo Baumann noted that a Friends of Calkins meeting is coming up and asked if anything needs to be communicated, but nothing was noted.

**Special Committee's Report:**

**The Lodge Committee:** The Director informed the Board that he will be presenting the Lodge Project to the Destination Iowa Grant Committee on March 29<sup>th</sup>. A determination on grant awards will be made soon after.

**Fundraising Committee:** None.

**Salary Committee:** It was decided that the salary committee should convene soon to discuss how the upcoming budget will affect future hiring.

All reports were given and discussed. Kirk Rice made a motion to approve all monthly reports as presented. The motion was seconded by Bryan Meints. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

## **Old Business:**

- A. **Headquarters Office Roof Repair:** The Director has not received a quote from Hadwiger Roofing. It was decided to allow one more month to receive another quote or the Board will decide with the two bids received.

## **New Business:**

- A. **Steamboat Rock Rifle Range Discussion & Decision:** The Director began by stating that the reason for the discussion about the rifle range's location is due to all the new developments at Pine Ridge and the impact a gun range has on the economics of the area, liability concerns, and noise complaints from residents. Kirk Rice noted the safety concerns and provided various solutions such as potential other locations, limiting the caliber, a sign-in sheet, and proposed no-Saturday shooting. Kirk also suggested forming a subcommittee to find another shooting range site. Jo Baumann expressed her concerns about the economic impact of the shooting range and discussed the list of alternative gun ranges within the area. Brian Meints clarified that he is not against guns but is opposed to the gun range's current location. He noted from a business standpoint, the gun range affects the business at the campground. Trent states that he has no desire to shut down the range but the concerns expressed by fellow board members need to be taken into consideration as well. Numerous members of the Steamboat Rock Rifle Range and the public proposed possible solutions including making the range compatible to address noise and safety concerns, paying the county an amount of money to help with the loss of revenue from the campground, advertising the gun range as an amenity for the campground, or finding an alternative location for the range. The members and public also noted the economic value of the 300-member club to the area and the events the gun range hosts. A few members identified that they are out-of-county members who come to Hardin County and spend money because of their use of the gun range. It was also noted by multiple members that the alternative gun ranges in the area are not suitable to meet the wants or needs of the members due to their proximity, availability, and security. It was noted that the rifle range club has already purchased its annual insurance for the year, as well as scheduled and publicized a couple of large events at the gun range. It was requested that there be no lapse in range availability if the Board did decide to close the Pine Ridge location and that the club would be given at least a year to fulfill its obligations and find a new location. Kirk Rice made a motion to extend the lease to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and appoint a committee to look into possibilities for a range that will report back at the October meeting. The motion was seconded by Bryan Meints. Roll Call Vote: "Ayes" Julie Jeske, Kirk Rice, Bryan Meints, Trent Lambert, "Nays" Jo Baumann.
- B. **Greenbelt Bank CD:** The Director informed the Board that a CD through Greenbelt Bank is coming due in April. It was the consensus of the Board to decide what to do with the monies at April's meeting once the Board has information on the terms and rates of a new CD.
- C. **Region 6 Grant Expense:** The Director noted that Julie Winter, with Region 6, has put significant time into the writing of the Destination Iowa Grant. Region 6 has offered to continue assisting Hardin County with the grant, contingent on the grant being awarded, however, requested compensation for future efforts. The Director stated that the number quoted by Region 6 was \$5,000. Bryan Meints made a motion to pay up to \$5,000 for grant assistance through Region 6. The motion was seconded by Julie Jeske. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

**Informational Items:** None.

**Adjournment:** Next Hardin County Conservation Board Meeting is scheduled to take place on Monday, April 8, 2024, at 6:00 pm. The Monday, March 11, 2024, meeting of the Hardin County Conservation Board was adjourned by Chair, Trent Lambert, at 8:21 p.m.