

Iowa County Conservation Board

Minutes of Meeting

December 10, 2019

Rose Danaher called the regular meeting of the Iowa County Conservation Board to order at 6:00 P.M. at the Lake Iowa Nature Center.

Members of the Iowa County Conservation Board present were: Chris Montross, Marcia Wehner, Rose Danaher and Justin Parsons. ICC Staff present were Chris Anderson and Cecilia Hagen. Shane Phillips was unable to attend.

Open Forum

(A) Public Comment: None

(B) Board Comment

Wehner brought up lack of annual house checks. The board had previously voted to check on-site housing on a regular basis to keep the houses in working order, but the checks have not been happening. Date for house check is set for March 7th, 2020. Danaher wanted a checklist tracked down so all important features can be checked and recorded. Parsons wants the board to begin replacing appliances as they start to go out instead of the inhabitants.

Montross asked about the Perch placed in Gateway. Hagen reported that they were not as long as the group had wanted, but they were much fatter than the first batch of Perch they had received. The Gateway group said they would keep this in mind when ordering fish from them the next time.

Wehner asked about outdoor Windex. It was an unsuccessful experiment to get the top nature center windows clean without renting a scissor lift or putting oneself in danger.

Wehner asked if money was being set aside for a new shop or if there was a need for a new shop. Anderson did not think a new shop was a pressing issue. Hagen thought a new shop would be nice but not necessary right now. Wehner suggested starting to put away money now when the need is low so when it does become necessary it can be built right.

Danaher asked about BookHuggers: A Green Book Club. Hagen reported it is a partnership with the Williamsburg Public Library so far. The first meeting was held at Brickhouse Coffee Shop and had 5 attendees. The conversation went for an hour and a half about the book "Silent Spring." The next meeting will be January 11th, 2020 reading "A Sand County Almanac" and will celebrate Aldo Leopold's birthday with cake and ice cream and the Williamsburg Public Library. Hagen would like to rotate the meetings to include all of the libraries in Iowa County.

Parsons moved to approve the minutes from the November 12, 2019 regular meeting. Seconded by Montross, the motion carried unanimously.

Wehner moved to approve the bills, seconded by Parsons, the motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Anderson reported he had been working on brush clearing at the Lake Iowa Park Campground and it had been very successful. Wehner asked about the issue of regrowth after only brush mowing, Anderson reported he had been happy with the results from last year's mowing and thought the effort would continue to be successful.

Hagen reported that she had been to the Fall Iowa Association of Naturalists conference and it had wonderful learning opportunities along with great networking with fellow naturalists.

Business:

(A) Friends of ICCB:

- 1) Cargill check presentation: November 20th, 2019 Cargill came to Lake Iowa Park to present a check for \$15,000 to the Friends group. They surprised everyone with a corporate match bringing the total numbers up to \$30,000. A reporter from the Hometown Current was there and the story made the second page of the newspaper. It is still being decided where the extra \$15,000 will go, if it is saved for stage two or used to add something else to stage one.

Danaher requested the pictures be put on Facebook.

The question of whether or not thank yous will be sent out to donors will be addressed with Mary Bulger.

(B) ICCB Properties

- 1) Tree Removal Bids: Two bids have been received for removing 97 Ash trees from the campground. Kruse Tree Trim and Construction bid \$20,000 total including stump grinding. Tree removal alone would be \$15,000. Becker Tiling bid \$12,500 for tree removal only. Becker said if they were doing the job in Iowa City or Cedar Rapids it would be around 65,000.

Wehner asked if stump grinding was necessary. Anderson was not concerned with stump grinding. He said the stumps would rot away quickly. Wehner brought up the old stump grinder that ICC has, it was deemed unsafe for use and not a good use of time and money.

Another option is to have ICC staff removed the trees. Anderson said the way we remove trees is not efficient. ICC could purchase more equipment to including a grapple bucket for the skid steer and a dump trailer. Parsons said by the time we purchase the equipment alone it would be over \$12,500.

Another company will be coming out on December 11 to put a bid in. The board wanted to wait for all bids to be in before deciding on a company.

(C) Events

- 1) Wild Game Feed and Jam 12.14.19 at 5pm
- 2) Book Huggers 1.11.20 at 11:30 at the Williamsburg Public Library
- 3) Anderson will be attending the Trees Forever symposium. A main topic will be towns after Emerald Ash Borer which fits with what Lake Iowa Park will be facing in the coming years.
- 4) The District 6 meeting will be 12.18 and at least two staff members will be attending.

(D) Budget

- 1) Transferred money previously used to purchase skid steer to go towards displays.
- 2) Fund moved from part time wages to regular employee officer salary to account for Hagen's raise last year, which was done after last year's budget was approved.
- 3) A request was made to have funding from ICCB towards the displays.
 - a) Wehner was concerned about permanent displays affecting the use of the upstairs. Anderson and Hagen reported that the upstairs is not used for rentals, school groups stay downstairs, there will be stadium seating for school groups to use upstairs, and everything will be on castors so it can be moved around and the arrangement can be changed easily.
 - b) Wehner was also concerned with permanent displays not attracting repeat guests. Anderson said being able to move everything around will help and the reading panes at the windows can be easily changed out.
- 4) Parsons made a motion to trust Chris to make adjustments to the budget as needed when the final numbers come in, seconded by Wehner. The motion to approve the 2020/2021 fiscal year budget for Iowa County Conservation carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting will be scheduled for January 14th, 2020 at 6:00 P.M. at the Lake Iowa Nature Center.

With no further discussion, Wehner moved that the meeting be adjourned at 7:03 PM and Montross seconded. The motion carried unanimously.