

Harrison County Conservation Board
Monthly Meeting Minutes
July 13, 2020

The Harrison County Conservation Board (HCCB) held its regular July meeting on Monday, July 13, 2020 at the Willow Lake Headquarters. President Ben McIntosh called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. Those members present were Kimberly Nunez, Kris Pauley, and Peter Ryerson. Also present were Corey Broderson and Marvin Larson with JEO Architects, Naturalist Connie Betts, Operations Supervisor Mike Weis, Supervisor Walter Utman, and Director Scott Nelson.

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Pauley, second by Nunez. Motion carried.

There were no Public Comments.

Broderson and Larson with JEO presented to the Board 3 options for potentially help reduce the overall cost of the Willow Lake Nature Center project. These renderings and cost estimates were the result of Weis's and Nelson's meeting with them in mid-June. The intent for the potential revamps was to provide options for the Board at reducing costs, along with providing spaces that could be multi-use rooms. Discussion also included the financial opportunities with funding sources, such as private foundations, public grants, public loans, and fundraising options. The Board will provide their feedback to Nelson and Weis, who will compile the desire of each members to formulate a roadmap going forward in the project.

Nelson gave the following Updates:

- Prairie View and Monarch Ridge cabins are open and being rented by the public. Staff has been hearing great reviews.
- Ponderosa Pine is getting closer to being finished. Staff has been working diligently on completing the basement.
- The Fiscal Year 20/21 Budget has begun.
- There will be no ISAC in August.
- Parks have been very busy.
- The Welcome Center opened with restrictions on July 6th. Karla Comfort and Grace Ferguson both have submitted their resignations. Applications are being solicited.
- The trail ride at Old Town Conservation Area took place on June 20th. There were approximately 24 riders. Staff has received good reviews along with requests to allow horseback riding on the property.

Nelson informed the Board that Adam Thein with Thein Farm Management inquired about doing a "readjustment" of the survey at Murray Hill. This request for input was brought on by the original survey is no longer valid/reasonable due to the fact that the bluff slid back in the 1970's. Coupled with the fact that Brent's Trail, along with informational signage – does not take place on county property, but Katherine Johnson's. This realignment would still incorporate the parking lot, and also include the recreational trail to the top of the hill. It would still reflect that Harrison County owns 1.5 acres, the same as the original survey and deed. The Board agreed that this make sense, but to make sure that the

new survey is recorded and documented. A motion to approve Thein Farm Management to continue investigating the readjustment of the survey lines for Murray Hills was made by Nunez, second by Ryerson. Motion carried.

Nelson requested the Board approve an updated Salary Recommendation for the Department. The reason for the adjustment was due to the resignations of two Welcome Center Specialists and to give Kristin Leon a bump in her wage. A motion to accept the updated Salary Recommendation was made by Ryerson, second by Nunez. Motion carried.

Brian Baxter has requested that he and his family be granted permission to rent their kayaks at Willow Lake for the remainder of the summer. Nelson has contacted Warner Insurance to discuss the protocol for the Baxter family concerning liability insurance & certificates, agreements, and waivers. The Board discussed at length what would the HCCB gain from this. Nelson and Weis both agreed that it is a service to the users of the park and not necessarily a monetary gain for the department. Ryerson and Pauley felt that potentially a percentage or fee should be paid to the HCCB. After more discussion, a motion to approve the Baxter Family permission to pursue their adventure into the kayak rental business for the remainder of the summer, and to be investigated more this winter, was made by Pauley, second by Nunez. Motion carried 3 to 1 with Ryerson voting no.

Department Reports were reviewed.

In Other Business, the next meeting will be August 3 at Willow Lake, along with the remainder of the meetings in 2020, and will include the Summer Power Point presentation by Thad Pothast.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn at 9:55 pm was made by Pauley.

Ben McIntosh, President

Kris Pauley, Vice-President

Peter Ryerson, Secretary