

Harrison County Conservation Board
Monthly Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 4, 2024
Welcome Center

The Harrison County Conservation Board (HCCB) held its regular March meeting on Monday, March 4, 2024, at the Welcome Center. President Nate Epperson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Those members present were Ben McIntosh, Danelle Myer, Kimberly Nunez, and Kris Pauley who joined via Zoom. Also present were Operations Supervisor Mike Weis, Naturalist Connie Betts, Administrative Assistant Laura Hansen, Supervisor Tony Smith, and Director Scott Nelson.

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Minutes, and Bills was made by Myer, seconded by McIntosh. Motion carried.

There were no Public Comments.

Nelson gave the following Updates:

- The HCCB received a Loess Hills Alliance (LHA) grant in the amount of \$2,500 for grinding at Old Town Conservation Area.
- Sealed Bids were opened:
 - Toro Mower – no sale
 - Kawasaki Mule - \$2,955 from Brandon McHugh
- The classroom HVAC issues have been resolved for now.
- Nelson met with the Board of Supervisors and presented the Annual Report and Economic Impact Statement. He also discussed options for utilizing the unspent balance of the Willow Lake Nature Center (WLNC) loan.
- The overhead door in the lower level of the WLNC has been finally replaced.
- The HCCB hosted the quarterly meeting for District 4.
- Staff participated in the annual CPR and First Aid refresher course.
- Nelson will be meeting with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Wetland personnel to learn more about the Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE) program.
- Nelson will be attending the Spring ISAC conference on March 14 & 15 in Des Moines.
- The Boyer Valley Pheasants Forever banquet will be on March 16.
- The HCCB will be hosting the County Conservation Peace Officers Association's Spring Workshop for Western Iowa on March 20.
- Campgrounds and Parks are scheduled to open on April 1st.
- The General Fund spending and income are right on schedule. The REAP balance is \$21,839 and the Trust balance is \$285,650. Fund 30110 has an unspent balance of \$724,600.

Emily Naylor with Bolten/Menk joined the meeting via Zoom at 7:15 pm. She presented the draft of the Strategic Plan and narrated the progress to date. She will make appropriate changes derived from Board member feedback and will email Nelson the semi-final product for Board review for the April meeting.

Nelson presented Fish Habitat Agreement: #24-13F, Willow Lake Brittle Naiad Treatment for consideration. This is a grant cost-share agreement with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to not exceed \$17,820.00. After review and discussion, a motion to approve the Fish Habitat Agreement: #24-13F was made by McIntosh, seconded by Myer. Motion carried.

Nelson presented Phase II – HCCB Maintenance Shop, Demo, Grading, Well, Parking Lot, and Roadway proposal, utilizing the unspent balance of the 30110 Willow Lake Nature Center account. This account has approximately \$724,000 of the unspent loan from the Board of Supervisors, and these funds could potentially be used for Phase II. The Board reviewed the proposal, and a motion was made by McIntosh, seconded by Nunez for Nelson to work with the Board of Supervisors on an amicable solution to accomplish Phase II.

President Epperson handed out materials to the Board from the Executive Director Committee session involving Epperson, McIntosh, and Director Nelson. These include “what does the Board want” in their new Executive Director, timeline, salary comparisons, job description, interview questions and score sheet, and exit interview questions. The Committee met on February 19th for two hours to review, discuss, and make changes to these documents in preparedness for the full Board. Epperson also reviewed with the full Board that he reached out to all full-time staff to garnish feedback. After discussion, Epperson and McIntosh will collect further thoughts from the Board before the April 1st meeting.

Department Reports were reviewed.

In Other/Future items:

- The next meeting will be April 1 at Willow Lake.
- Intern Recommendations
- Feedlot proposal that borders the Old Town Conservation Area – Kenny Kline
- Larry Oliver, Resource Technician at the Welcome Center submitted his resignation, effective June 30, 2024. Mr. Oliver has been employed since June of 2021 and has done an excellent job and impacted the growth and expectations for the program. Thank you, Larry, for all your hard work and dedication to the HCCB!

With no further Business, a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 pm was made by Pauley.

Nate Epperson, President

Danelle Myer, Vice-President

Kris Pauley, Secretary

