The Harrison County Conservation Board (HCCB) held its regular May Board meeting on Monday, May 6, 2019 at the Welcome Center. President Kimberly Nunez called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. Those members present were Kris Pauley and Peter Ryerson. Also present were Supervisor Walter Utman and Director Scott Nelson.

Pauley made the motion to approve the Agenda, second by Ryerson. Motion carried.

Nelson gave the following Updates:

1. The Willow Lake Outdoor Day was held this past weekend. The weather was great on the turnout was good. Thanks to all the staff and volunteers who made this event happen. It was also the inaugural Share the Road bike ride into Woodbine. There were approximately 30 riders to help celebrate this new venture.
2. HCCB was involved with the Co-op Burn Week that involved 75+ participants. Natural Resource Technician Thad Pothast and Ranger Mike Weis were heavily involved were in leadership roles in putting prescribed fire on the ground and being mentors to younger participants.
3. Brent’s Trail grand opening will be on Saturday, June 8th. Efforts between the Loess Hills State Forest and the HCCB staffs are forging forward to complete the project, solicit sponsors for water and snacks, and for ensuring that the ribbon cutting ceremony goes smoothly.
4. Naturalist Connie Betts’ father passed away. Staff attended the funeral and flowers were sent from the staff and HCCB.
5. It’s been a slow start to Spring weather, but projects and mowing have been forging ahead.

There were no Public Comments.

The Board toured the Log Cabin preservation project. Hytrek Construction is undertaking the task of replacing and repairing the 169-year-old structure. Many of the hand-hewed logs are so degraded that they need to be replaced. New footing have been installed. The doors and windows, along with a new concrete floor will also be replaced. The projected cost of this project was estimated at $33,000, but may increase as additional damages are being found.

The search for a new Conservation Technician is currently underway. A total of 21 applicants were received and 5 were selected by the committee to interview with the hopes to offer employment with a starting date near the first of June. The criteria for the selection to be interview was a strong conservation experience along with technical skills to preform the maintenance aspects required of the position. The interviews and offer of hire should be wrapped up by the 10th of May.
For the 2019 Summer Intern program, a total of 5 applications were received. All were viable candidates, and offers of employment were offered and accepted by:

- Brodie Skinner. West Harrison graduate who is currently finishing up his Junior year at the University of Iowa, majoring in Biology and Environmental Sciences.
- Nic Hiller. Logan/Magnolia graduate who is currently finishing up his Freshman year at Iowa State University, majoring in Sports Medicine.

Both of these young men will be starting on Monday, May 13th at a wage of $10/hour. A motion to approve the recommendation for hire for the 2019 Summer Intern program was made by Pauley, second by Ryerson. Motion carried.

A sanctioned, trial effort trail ride for horses at the Old Town Conservation Area was suggested by the Back Country Horsemen. Riding would only be on approved trails on the property and the group would help with trail maintenance and identification. Such a trail ride by a specific user group could potentially bring additional exposure to the HCCB’s largest property. The potential timing of the ride would be mid to late June on a weekend and would be for one day only. Discussion ensued and it was recommended to check with the County’s insurance agent and attorney. A motion to approve the trail ride at Old Town, pending on positive feedback from insurance and legal advice, was made by Pauley, second by Ryerson. Motion carried.

Nelson has been working with Rebecca Castle with Golden Hills RC&D/Loess Hills Missouri River Region in identifying potential funding sources. Efforts will be made by both Nelson and Castle to submit various grants. An initial meeting with the Iowa West Foundation has been accomplished. The fundraising efforts are continuing.

The April 2019 Minutes were reviewed. With no corrections or additions, a motion to accept the Minutes was made by Pauley, second by Ryerson. Motion carried.

The April 2019 Bills were presented for consideration. After review and discussion, a motion to approve the Bills was made by Ryerson, second by Pauley. Motion carried.

Department Reports were reviewed.

In Other Business, the next meeting will be June 3rd at Willow Lake. Potential topics could include the hiring recommendation for the Conservation Technician, and FY 19/20 Salary Recommendations for all HCCB staff.

With no further business, a motion to Adjourn at 8:15 pm was made by Pauley.

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Kimberly Nunez, President                           Kris Pauley, Vice-President

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Danelle Myer, Secretary