



**LINN COUNTY, IOWA, CONSERVATION BOARD**

**MINUTES OF THE MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2020, BOARD MEETING**

The following is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Linn County, Iowa, Conservation Board held on **April 27, 2020**, by conference call.

**Board Members Present**

Steve Emerson, John Hanson, Cindy Burke, Hillary Hughes and George Kanz

Board members joined by conference call due to COVID-19 requirements and recommendations by the State of Iowa and Linn County Public Health.

**Board Members Absent**

None

**Staff Present**

Dennis Goemaat, Director; Daniel Gibbins, Deputy Director; Randy Burke, Planner; Ryan Schlader, Community Outreach; Dana Kellogg, Natural Resources Manager;

**Others Present**

Conference call information was advertised through the agenda posted for the public meeting.  
Isaac Hodgins, Shive-Hattery

**Call To Order**

Board President Emerson called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM.

**Public Comment**

None

**ITEM R1. Approve Consent Agenda**

**Motion** by Burke, second by Kanz

To approve the consent agenda.

**Vote:**            aye; all present  
                      nay; none  
                      absent: Hughes, Hanson

The consent agenda was approved and involved the following items:

**ITEM C1. Approve the March 23, 2020 Monthly Meeting Minutes**

**ITEM C2. Approve claims list and expenditures – Claims List #2020-10.**

Claims and Transfer list #2020-10 involving claim #10-620 through claim #10-720.

**ITEM C3. Receive and place on file the March 2020 financial/budget report.**

**ITEM C4. Receive and place on file the March 2020 activity report.**

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- ITEM C5. Acceptance of gifts.**  
None this month.
- ITEM C6. Update regarding resource managers' position reclassification.**
- ITEM C7. Authorize purchase of new equipment - pumper unit.**
- ITEM C8. Capital Improvement Program updates report.**

**REGULAR AGENDA:**

- ITEM R2. Discuss and decide on approving a grant agreement with the Iowa Department of Transportation for funding through the Federal Recreation Trails Program (RTP) for funding the reconstruction and surfacing of the Cedar Valley Trail from the Benton County line through Urbana and authorize the Executive Director to sign the agreement.**

Randy Burke reviewed the grant agreement with the Iowa Department of Transportation.

**MOTION** by Kanz, second by Burke

To approve the grant agreement with the Iowa Department of Transportation and authorize the Executive Director to sign the agreement on behalf of the Board.

**VOTE:**            aye; all present  
                          nay; none  
                          absent: Hughes, Hanson

- ITEM R3. Discuss and decide on resolution #2020-2 setting date and time for the public hearing regarding the proposed plans, specifications, form of contract and estimated cost for the Squaw Creek Park wetland project, Project #26-19D.**

Kellogg reviewed Resolution #2020-2 setting the date and time for the public hearing regarding Squaw Creek Park wetland projects for Monday, May 18, 2020 at 12:00 PM.

John Hanson joined the meeting at 12:03 PM.

**MOTION** by Burke, second by Kanz

To approve Resolution #2020-2 setting the public hearing.

**VOTE:**            aye; all present  
                          nay; none  
                          absent: Hughes

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**ITEM R4. Discuss and decide on resolution #2020-3 setting date and time for the public hearing regarding the proposed plans, specifications, form of contract and estimated cost for pond construction at Squaw Creek Park, Project #26-19E.**

Board tabled this item until the May meeting.

Hillary Hughes joined the meeting at 12:06 PM.

**ITEM R5. Discuss Morgan Creek Park redevelopment project including the following items:**

- a. Discuss and decide regarding authorizing a change order to the contract with Rathje Construction and authorizing the Executive Director to sign the change order.
- b. Discuss and decide on authorizing staff to order three Huffcut restroom buildings for the park development project.

Randy Burke and Isaac Hodgins reviewed a change order to the contract with Rathje Construction. Hodgins discussed the process of negotiating the lump sum change order due to quantity estimate differences between the contractor and the engineer. Goemaat indicated staff recommendation was to accept the change order. Goemaat discussed overall project budget in regard to various grant applications.

**MOTION** by Kanz, second by Burke

To approve the change order to the contract with Rathje Construction and authorize the Executive Director to sign the change order on behalf of the Board.

**VOTE:**        aye; all present  
                      nay; none  
                      absent: none

Randy Burke reviewed the project design related to three Huffcut restroom buildings to be included in the Morgan Creek Park development project, along with cost and schedule for placing the order by the Department.

**MOTION** by Kanz, second by Burke

To approve the purchase of three Huffcut restrooms and authorize staff to place the order.

**VOTE:**        aye; all present  
                      nay; none  
                      absent: none

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**ITEM R6. Discuss and decide on an agricultural lease for 225 acres of land at the Linn Learning Farm and authorize the Director to sign the lease.**

Kellogg reviewed the agricultural lease for 225 acres of land at the Linn Learning Farm. Hanson asked if there will be a biological survey. Kellogg confirmed a nutrient study is planned. Goemaat and Kellogg confirmed review of prairie remnant species and the attempt to conduct controlled burning to promote prairie resurgence. Kellogg discussed future surveys that could be conducted for inventory of various species.

**MOTION** by Burke, second by Hanson

To approve the agricultural lease and authorize the Executive Director to sign the lease on behalf of the Board.

**VOTE:**        aye; all present  
                      nay; none  
                      absent: none

**ITEM R7. Discuss and decide regarding a change order to the contract with Snyder and Associates for additional design work for wetlands at Squaw Creek Park and authorize the Director to sign the change order.**

Kellogg reviewed the change order to the contract with Snyder and Associates for additional design work for wetlands at Squaw Creek Park.

**MOTION** by Hanson, second by Kanz

To approve the change order and authorize the Executive Director to sign the change order on behalf of the Board.

**VOTE:**        aye; all present  
                      nay; none  
                      absent: none

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**ITEM R8. Update regarding Covid-19 actions:**

- a. Reservation facility refunds – verbal report – Gibbins reported on status of reservations and refunds due to COVID-19 and discussed communications by staff to future reservation holders. The Board concurred with staff process concerning customer contact and reservation refund allowance through 2020.
- b. Covid-19 response, staff directives and changes in operations. Goemaat noted the effort by staff to research best practices for management and sanitation of facilities.
- c. Best practices for opening campgrounds during Covid-19 – statewide collaboration – Goemaat noted collaboration with the State Department of Natural Resources and other county conservation boards to discuss unified campground opening protocols.
- d. Discuss and decide regarding authorizing staff to enact special management protocols as needed at various facilities per guidance from the Governor, Public Health or as determined by staff to promote the health and safety of park users.

No action was taken. Board consensus was for staff to continue to enact various management protocols as needed to manage COVID-19 through guidance from the State and Public Health.

**ITEM R9. Discuss and decide on forwarding certain bond-funded projects to the Linn County Bond Review Board.**

Goemaat and Gibbins reviewed potential bond-funded projects for a future bond #3 to be forwarded to the Linn County Bond Review Board.

**MOTION** by Burke, second by Hanson

To forward all bond-funded projects as presented to the Linn County Bond Public Review Board.

**VOTE:**            aye; all present  
                          nay; none  
                          absent: none

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**ITEM R10. Board member / staff reports – Board members and staff may report and/or discuss meetings or activities in which they have been involved.**

- 1) Community Outreach/Marketing: Ryan Schlader reported on COVID-19 communications including Conservation Education videos and social media, future communications for campgrounds and future facility openings.
- 2) Updates:
  - a. Squaw Creek name update - Goemaat updated the Board on additional research on park naming related to Native American names. Investigation continues.
  - b. Goemaat discussed upcoming meetings including the June meeting date. The Board consensus was to hold the June meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month.

**ITEM R11. Public comment**

None.

**ITEM R12. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:43 PM.

Catherine Kastens typed the above minutes.

SEAL

  
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Recording Secretary

*Minutes approved via conference call*  
*5/18/2020*  
*Dennis E. Bennett, Director*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Secretary