

The Mahaska County Conservation Board (MCCB) held its regular monthly meeting on Thursday, July 6, 2023, at the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) at Caldwell Park. Board Vice-Chair Steven Dixon called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. Also present at the meeting were Board Members Linda Fox and Curt Jager. Board Member Jennifer Peterson were absent. The members of the staff present were Director Chris Clingan, Naturalist Laura DeCook and Administrative Assistant Dorothy Wedgewood. Members of AmeriCorps present were Aubrey Brown, Kristine Jaennette, and Cheyenne Reake. Present from the public was Rodney Anderson, President Friends of Mahaska County Conservation (FMCC).

Board Vice-Chair Dixon asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Clingan stated that there were no changes. Fox made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Jager seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Minutes were discussed.

- I. Fox made a motion to approve the Minutes of the June 1, 2023, regular board meeting as presented. Jager seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.
- II. Jager made a motion to approve the Minutes of the June 9, 2023, special board meeting as presented. Fox seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Expenditures were reviewed.

- I. Clingan discussed several items on the expenditures listing.
- II. Dixon asked how the MCCB ended the fiscal year financially. Clingan explained that there was overlap with Sedivec and Clingan's salaries and MCCB paid less on the sewer and water bill than estimated leaving an excess of \$3,600.00.
- III. Jager made a motion to approve the expenditures as presented minus the claim for the City of Oskaloosa in the amount of \$8,500.00. This claim will be addressed under Item XI Park Comprehensive Plan Approval and payment for this claim will be decided at that time. Fox seconded this motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Caldwell Park was addressed.

- I. ELC
  - A. Clingan discussed the open house held at the ELC and stated that it was very successful. Clingan estimated between 300 and 350 people attended the open house.
  - B. Clingan advised he accepted three (3) new mounts. A bull elk mount and a full body mount of a black bear were donated by Dave Beaty and a bison head mount on loan from Gerad Clingan.
- II. Fall conference was addressed.
  - A. Discussion ensued regarding the cost of staying Thursday night. Dixon stated that he felt that board members that wanted to stay Thursday night should pay for this night themselves because the evening activities are optional and hosted by the Pottawattamie Conservation Foundation not part of the conference. The Board concurred.
  - B. Discussion ensued regarding renting an additional room for the new board member and if there is no new board member by the time of Fall Conference, this room could be cancelled. This was discussion only and no action was taken.
- III. The Henry W. VanWeelden Commemorative Night was addressed.
  - A. Clingan advised the Board that he would like to invite Bonnie VanWeelden and family to either the August or September meeting to honor former Board Member Willie VanWeelden.

1. Dixon asked if Clingan had a date in mind. Clingan recommended either the August or September regular board meeting, leaning towards the September meeting.
  2. In discussing VanWeelden's commemorative night in September, Fox asked when in September Youth Outdoor Field Day was to be held. DeCook said September 30, 2023.
- B. Fox stated that MCCB will be receiving memorial money in honor of Willie VanWeelden.
- IV. The Public Safety Update given.
- A. Eveland Access Campgrounds
1. Clingan presented the monthly camping report. He added that there is a change to the spreadsheet which includes the number of camping days at the campsites.
  2. Clingan stated there were no issues at the campgrounds last month, however there was an individual picked up on a warrant for a bad check charge filed by MCCB.
  3. Clingan presented the information on the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau (GTSB) grant he received. He said that this is the first time a county conservation board has received this grant.
  4. Clingan notified the Board that all the work on the patrol vehicles has been updated except for the rear directional lights in his and Ryan's vehicles.
  5. Fox asked Clingan if the campground host had obtained a freezer to store bagged ice at the campgrounds. Clingan stated that a freezer has not been purchased to date. Discussion ensued.
- V. The Externship Update was addressed.
- A. Clingan told the Board that Nicole Craig has been frilling trees and treating them at the Eddyville Dunes and Sand Prairie and mowing brush and the woody sections the park rangers cleared last fall.
1. Clingan said Craig has possibly found two different locations where the turtles are nesting.
  2. Clingan also stated that Craig has been putting out live traps and removing anything captured from the area to protect any nesting turtles/eggs.
- B. DeCook advised the Board that Stephanie Visser has been working with DeCook with day camps and programs. Visser is working on a project on invasive species.
- VI. The AmeriCorps program was updated.
- A. Clingan notified the Board that there have only been a few days AmeriCorps has been able to work because they have been working for other entities on other projects. Clingan added that once those projects are done MCCB will have a steady schedule for AmeriCorps.
- VII. The Park Comprehensive Plan was discussed for approval.
- A. Clingan explained to the Board that the Park Comprehensive Plan, if approved, will be a partnership between the City of Oskaloosa, Oskaloosa Engineering, Mid-American Energy, and the MCCB.
1. The cost of the partnership for MCCB is \$8,500.00, which could be paid from REAP funding.

2. This partnership will evaluate all the areas within Mahaska County and design a comprehensive plan for all of Mahaska County.
3. This partnership could help with the cost share for some of the updates/upgrades and additional plans MCCB has for their specific areas.
4. Discussion ensued regarding, but not limited to, MCCB's role and risk in the partnership, the benefits of the partnership, public engagement in planning, and any additional cost of the partnership.
5. Graduate students from the College of Design will prepare the plans. The students will be working under the supervision of trained architects that work for Iowa State University. These plans are similar to what MCCB would receive from Shive Hattery for an area project.
6. Jager asked if we had a specific plan for an area, i.e., White Oak, would these plans be extra. Clingan told Jager they would be extra. Clingan said in his discussions with Ashley Utt, she recommends utilizing the architecture program through the University of Iowa for a more specific plan an area like White Oak. A student would work on this plan. Then 75% - 80% of the project would be complete and this plan could be submitted to Shive Hattery or a similar place for completion. This could reduce the cost of the plan. Clingan also said Utt indicated that the grantors have accepted the designs/plans from the University of Iowa in the past.
7. Jager made a motion to approve the partnership and the claim in the amount of \$8,500.00 as MCCB's cost to be included in the partnership. Fox seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously.

VIII. The Service Agreement with Pathfinder RC & D was discussed.

- A. Clingan stated that he signed a service agreement with Pathfinder RC & D, Ashley Utt, for \$1,000.00. Pathfinder RC & D will start on grants and grant applications after July 4, 2023. The following is a list of some of the projects that will be targeted. This is not a complete list.
  1. Natural playscape on the west side of the ELC,
  2. Renovations at the Eveland Access Campgrounds,
  3. Water trail from Cedar Access to Eveland Access,
  4. Water trail from Glendale Access to Rose Hill Access, etc.

IX. The Board Member Recruitment was addressed.

- A. Clingan presented the ICCS Board Member Recruitment and Selection Guidance according to Chapter 350, Section 2, Code of Iowa – County Conservation Boards.
  1. Clingan recommended MCCB following these guidelines, which would include posting the board member position for 90 days and following the interviewing questions guidelines and strategies.
  2. Clingan said that he would also be sharing these guidelines with the Mahaska County Board of Supervisors.
  3. Clingan advised the Board that several people have applied for the position.
  4. Jager made a motion to follow the ICCS Board Member Recruitment and Section Guidance according to Chapter 350, Section 2, Code of Iowa – County Conservation Boards. Fox seconded the motion, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Setting the August Board meeting and Changing the Meeting Time was addressed.

- I. Clingan notified the Board that Board Member Jennifer Peterson had requested a change in the day and time of the regular monthly board meetings.
- II. Discussion ensued regarding changing the day of the week and time of month for the regular monthly board meetings.
- III. The Board asked that this item remain on the agenda for the next monthly board meeting.
- IV. The July Board meeting is currently set for August 3, 2023, and will remain so.

In Other Business:

- I. Dixon passed around mammoth charms.

Jager made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Fox seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_