



CLAYTON COUNTY CONSERVATION

Promote the health and general welfare of the people; to model and encourage preservation, conservation, education and recreation through responsible use and appreciation of our natural resources and cultural heritage.

May 14, 2024
BOARD MEETING
6pm Osborne

Board Chair Daryl Landsgard called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Members present included Larry Stone, Dave Asche, and Natasha Hegmann. Guest, Catherine Cummings of the DNR CWD Outreach was present. Director Jenna Pollock and Office Manager Molly Scherf were also present. Naturalist & Resource Manager Kenny Slocum joined the meeting at 6:45pm, after attending the Clayton County Foundation for the Future Grant Awards on behalf of the Department.

Stone made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Hegmann. All voted in favor. Motion passed.

The board had not reviewed the previous minutes so they will be approved at the June meeting.

Hegmann made a motion to pay the claims and Stone seconded. All voted in favor. Motion passed.

The board reviewed the monthly report provided by the Auditor's Office.

Old Business

1. Update on Pony Hollow Trail Extension:

Pollock reported that the leading issue was that the DOT was showing this project behind in the bid letting but after contacting Eric with Fehr Graham they have is back on track for October of 2024.

Engineering fees are being questioned due to the original agreement being for the entire two miles of the project, but Fehr Graham feels they can only do mile one due to the amount of work they have put into that up to this point. The county attorney agrees the CCCB are justified to two miles per the original agreement. Pollock is happy with the work that has been done so far by Fehr Graham and understands it has taken quite a while to get this project up and running while waiting for funds and changes of route which have involved more pre-engineering than expected.

Pollock believes projects such as these are running 20-30% lower than engineered estimates. She would like to see construction engineering costs reflect that.

Pollock, Landsgard, and Clayton Co. Engineer, Stickfort, met to see if secondary roads employees could help with the construction engineering needs and save the county funds. Stickfort agreed it was possible if CCCB paid his employee and this will be much lower amount than we would have to pay an engineering firm for the same service. Pollock will run this by the county auditor to see if it's possible to go this payment route.

2. Update on Osborne Campground Construction and Reimbursements:

Vorwalds began boring the water lines last week. The cement should be laid shortly as the showerhouse is arriving soon.

Pollock reported she is waiting for reimbursement from Destination Iowa for the groundwork that was done last year. The grant committee is auditing the paperwork due to not advertising the bids using the state requirements and instead following the county procurement policy. Pollock feels this will be resolved but will take time. All future bids have been done following all state policies.

New Business

1. Consider Resolution #002-2024 CAT Enhance Iowa Contract Authorization and Acceptance:

Pollocks would like the board to authorize her to sign this contract accepting \$220,000 for mile 1 of the Pony Hollow Trail Extension. Hegmann made a motion to authorize Pollock to sign this contract, seconded by Asche. All in favor, motion carried.

Roll Call Vote – Asche: aye, Hegmann, aye; Stone, aye; Landsgard, aye; Kregel, absent

2. Discuss Tree Planting in Flood Plain at Osborne:

Slocum presented a proposal to the board for planting trees in the old buffalo pen area along the Volga River. He has struggled to get a prairie growing there due to poor soil, flooding, and volunteer trees. It has also been difficult to burn.

There is about 5.5 acres in this area that could be planted to trees. Asche said for this type of area he recommends 700/acre if going for a woodland. Asche and Slocum will meet and report back at the next meeting.

3. Discuss Grazing Contract at Osborne:

Slocum was contacted by Caleb Knoblock to discuss the possibility of doing a demonstration conservation grazing at Osborne. The plan would be to use a low stock rate, move cattle daily, and fencing/water would be handled by the renter.

Slocum's goal is to increase the forb ratio on the prairie plantings east of the Osborne Pond. The prairies in this area haven't been as successful and he's hoping a grazing and spot burn would give forbs a better chance of establishing.

The board was leery to allow this practice at Osborne where it is heavily trafficked for recreation. Also, a fear of liability that would come back onto the county even if the renter held their own insurance. The board would be more open to trying this at the Becker property which has lower recreational visitor numbers.

Landsgard would first like to see a burn go through the archery area prairie or a chemical killing of small patches and see if forbs will even survive in the sandy soil if this is Slocum's over-all goal.

4. Review and Approve Agreement for Energy Coordinator Position:

Pollock and Jansen went through the agreement step by step to get to what each group wants. Pollock is comfortable with what they came up with.

Stone made a motion to approve the agreement for the Energy Coordinator, seconded by Hegmann. All in favor, motion carried.

5. Discuss Fiscal Year-End Expenses:

Scherf put in some June expenses into the budget report for the board to show how close we are getting to 0%. Some big-ticket items can still fit into this FY budget such as kitchen windows, turkey fencing, and possibly a septic system.

6. Consider Approval of FY25 Salaries and Hourly Wages:
Pollock presented salary increase of 5% as proposed at budget request and approved by the Board of Supervisors.
Asche made a motion to approve the FY25 salaries and hourly wages, seconded by Stone.
All in favor, motion carried.

Upcoming Programs/Events available at www.claytoncountyconservation.org

Director's Report/Updates/Communications

Welcome Center numbers included 585 individuals and 78 groups in April.

Env. Edu. Numbers for the past month included 81 presentations to 1007 youth and 199 adults, 48.5 hours

Next meeting scheduled: June 11, 2024 Location TBD 2pm