

# Clay County Conservation Board

## Meeting Minutes

June 8, 2020

The Clay County Conservation Board met, via zoom meeting, on June 8, 2020 at 5:30 PM. The following being present: Lee Schoenewe; Hope Bumgarner; Ron Creswell; Bree Blom, Naturalist; Britney Snell, AmeriCorps Naturalist; Kevin Maassen, Chief Ranger, Burlin Mathews, B.O.S.; four members of the BCHIA; and Will Horsley, Director.

**#1.** The meeting was called to order at 5:39 PM.

**#2. Approval of Agenda** – Motion to approve the June 8, 2020 meeting agenda by Ron, seconded by Hope, all in favor. Motion carried.

**#3. Public Comments** – NA

**#4. Approval of Minutes** – Motion to approve the May 11, 2020 meeting minutes by Ron, seconded by Hope, all in favor. Motion carried.

**#5. Director Report** – The current FY revenue and expenditure reports were provided to the CCCB members. A report was provided regarding FEMA and Iowa Homeland Security pertaining to park repairs. There was discussion on the Wanata Park roadway damage. A report was provided on park maintenance, wildlife habitat projects, native prairie planting efforts, invasive weed and brush removal, and Scharnberg Park operations.

**#6. Naturalist Report** – A verbal report was provided to the board members on current and upcoming educational classes, programs, and courses. The AmeriCorps Naturalist, Britney Snell, was introduced and welcomed to the CCCB. The Naturalists are preparing for upcoming Youth Summer Camps and additional “Pop Up” programs. There was discussion on Covid-19 and safety procedures that will be implemented during the Naturalist’s upcoming programs to promote safe and healthy students.

### **Old Business:**

**#7. Bertram Reservation Trail System** – Members of the Back-Country Horseman of America, Iowa Chapter, (BCHIA) presented information on the Bertram Reservation and the equestrian trail system. There was discussion on continuing to improve the equestrian trail system to enhance the safety and future recreational opportunities. The BCHIA members understand the importance of mitigating soil erosion and are working to preserve the current trails as well as establish new riding trails on areas that are less likely to erode. The BCHIA club is currently working to procure a local grant funding source in order to continue to enhance the Bertram Reservation. There was discussion on the public parking area and the lack of space that is currently available for park guests. It was suggested the BCHIA could fiscally support a parking area expansion project. The CCCB will provide maps/specifications and a cost estimate on materials and labor required to expand the current parking area. This information will be forward onto the BCHIA chairman Brian Pierick.

**#8. Oneota Environmental Learning Center** – A project update was provided. There was discussion on the current USDA loan/grant program. A zoom meeting was held on June 4<sup>th</sup> with members of the USDA, SMU, ILEC, and CCCB. A verbal commitment was secured from SMU and ILEC to sponsor the CCCB while they pursue the USDA loan program. CMBA was contacted and a new project construction cost estimate was provided. There was further discussion regarding the USDA loan/grant program and additional funding options to support the OELC project. It was suggested a general contractor be consulted and included in upcoming construction meetings.

**#9. Donahoo Property Update** – A project summary was provided to the CCCB members. The property has officially been recorded through Clay and Buena Vista County. Plans are being made to begin working on property signage, building of fence lines, and the development of guest parking areas. It is suggested to work with the BVCCB on a future maintenance agreement. The CCCB would like to have the park operational and open for public guests by October.

**New Business:**

**#10. Scharnberg Park Cabin Rentals and Cleaning Contract** – There was discussion on the cleaning procedures and current operations pertaining to the CCCB’s rentable cabins. The Contractor who has been hired to clean the three cabins at Scharnberg Park has recently been consulted. The Contractor has reported with the current Covid-19 pandemic and the importance of additional cleaning procedures, cleaning operations are now taking considerably more time than ever before. There was discussion on providing the Contractor wage increases currently. Motion by Ron, seconded by Hope, to increase the cleaning Contractor’s wage \$5 / cleaning session on Maple Cabin, and \$6 / cleaning session on Pine and Oak Cabins. All in favor. Motion carried.

**#11. Audit and Approval of Bills** – The CCCB members reviewed current claims from 37 vendors. All questions regarding the current CCCB bills/claims were explained and discussed. Motion by Hope to approve all presented claims, seconded by Ron, all in favor. Motion carried.

**#12. Adjournment** - Chairman Lee Schoenewe adjourned the meeting.

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CCCB, Secretary

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Date