

# Clay County Conservation Board

## Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2020

The Clay County Conservation Board met, via zoom meeting, on May 11, 2020 at 5:30 PM. The following being present: Lee Schoenewe; Hope Bumgarner; John Sheridan; Sheriffa Jones; Ron Creswell; Bree Blom, Naturalist; Kevin Maassen, Chief Ranger, Burlin Mathews, B.O.S.; one visitor, and Will Horsley, Director.

**#1.** The meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM.

**#2. Approval of Agenda** – Motion to approve the May 11, 2020 meeting agenda by Ron, seconded by Sheriffa, all in favor. Motion carried.

**#3. Public Comments** – A meeting guest provided positive feedback regarding the CCCB's efforts to offer public grazing opportunities to local cattle producers.

**#4. Approval of Minutes** – Motion to approve the April 13, 2020 meeting minutes by Sheriffa, seconded by Ron, 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 the Mycountyparks.com (MCP) reservation system and the current volume of transactions at Scharnberg Park and Oneota Lodge. A report was given on current and upcoming wildlife area operations to include RX fires, food plots, and mechanical brush clearing efforts. A report was given on the CCCB seasonal employees and their upcoming work schedule.

**#6. Naturalist Report** – A verbal report was provided to the board members on current and upcoming educational classes, programs, and courses. Bree has been busy working on the OELC playscape and has several components of the playscape completed at this time. She also is offering "Wings and Wetlands" educational packages to park guests. Bree gave a report on upcoming Summer Camps.

### **Old Business:**

**#7. Oneota Environmental Learning Center** – A project update was provided. There was discussion on the current construction of the OELC playscape. A report was provided on the option of utilizing a USDA loan to continue construction of the OELC. It was suggested to investigate USDA loan options with more details and work up a detailed budget on the loan funds. Will is going to contact the USDA representative and work up a detailed project report.

**#8 Heissel Addition Grazing Contract** – A report was provided on the Heissel Addition cattle grazing project in order to promoting ecological diversity and suppress cool season grasses. The CCCB office received one complete grazing bid on 5/8/20 at 10:31 AM. The Rancher who submitted the bid met with Will on the grazing site and a complete overview of the project was discussed. There was discussion on the ecological goals of this grazing practice and the option of future grazing on other CCCB recreational areas. Motion by Ron to accept Mr. Brady Rusk’s grazing bid, seconded by Sheriffa, all in favor. Motion carried. A follow up meeting with the Rancher will be scheduled and cattle grazing will begin in June on the selected acres.

**New Business:**

**#9 Bertram Reservation** – There was discussion on the maintenance of the existing trail system throughout the park. Will has met with local members of the Back-Country Horseman of America (BCHA). The BCHA would like to continue improving the trail system and enhance the recreational opportunities for equestrian riders. There was discussion on highly erodible trails and the importance of preserving the native prairie acres in the park. The BCHA members understand the importance of mitigating soil erosion and are working to preserve the current trails, as well as establish new trail riding trails on areas that are less likely to erode. There was discussion on the option to close the equestrian trails to riders immediately following a heavy rainfall event in order to preserve the trail system. There was discussion on the ability to renovate the Bertram Reservation in order to promote a better equestrian riding experience. The option of improving the eastern park access / parking area, picnic shelter, and trails was discussed. It was suggested to research these options more and continue discussion during upcoming meetings.

**#10 Audit and Approval of Bills** – The CCCB members reviewed current claims from 30 vendors. All questions regarding the current CCCB bills/claims were explained and discussed. Motion by Hope to approve all presented claims, seconded by Sheriffa, all in favor. Motion carried.

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

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CCCB, Secretary

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Date