

O'Brien County Conservation Board
May 12, 2021

The O'Brien County Conservation Board met in regular session at the Mill Creek Park Lodge at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were: Royd Chambers, Kathy Luedke, Jack Wallinga, and Darwin Dau. Sherri Bootsma joined the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

Visitors from the community included Carolyn Bootsma, Mary Hicks, Molly Hicks, Dave Stoll, Denise Steffen, Lydia Hansen, Claude Struve, Mari Radtke, Richard Radtke, Eric Brown, Tom Konz, Randy Feekes, Terry Feekes, Dorothy Wegner, Lynn Burmakow, Cindy Richter, Jill Rausch and Patty Vollink.

On a motion by Wallina, seconded by Dau, the minutes from the April 14, 2021 meeting were approved. Motion carried, unanimous. On a motion by Wallinga, seconded by Luedke, the minutes from the May 3, 2021 special session meeting were approved. Motion carried, unanimous. Monthly expenditures were approved on a motion by Dau, seconded Luedke. Motion carried, unanimous.

Eric Brown from Paullina Hardware discussed with the board a proposal to keep kayaks that the hardware store rents out at Mill Creek Park. Brown would like to store the kayaks on the concrete that surrounds the old concession stand. The chairman instructed the director to seek closed bids for the opportunity to store water recreation equipment at the park and provide rentals to park patrons. Proof of insurance will need to be provided by whomever bids.

Dave Stoll presented questions to the board regarding the status of the relationship between the Conservation Board and the Little Sioux Valley Conservation Association. The chairman advised that the Conservation Board would like to continue to work with the Little Sioux Valley Conservation Association after the audit of the association is completed by the Iowa State Auditor's office. The board will continue to discuss this issue.

Cindy Richter of the Paullina Trail Group updated the board about the status of trail project that was first discussed at the special session meeting on May 3. The route of the trail has been changed slightly since the May 3 meeting. The grant for the project will be submitted in O'Brien County's name. The supervisors approved adding a line item for trail maintenance beginning in fiscal year 2023.

The director informed the board that the Scout Island riprap project is near completion. Remaining work includes cutting trees and continuing to place rock in some areas.

The director proposed to the board that the Prairie Heritage Center be opened on Saturdays, and not Sundays, until enough volunteers are found to staff weekend shifts. On a motion by Luedke, seconded by Bootsma, the Prairie Heritage Center will continue to be open on Saturdays from 1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. The center will temporarily be closed on Sundays until at least 10 reliable, trained weekend volunteers are found. Motion carried, unanimous.

A bridle trail has been staked out at the McCormack area. Signs have been put up in the parking area and along the roads that lead to the area. The grant that was submitted by Jolene Hultgren of Backcountry Horsemen was fully funded. The grant will help to provide funds for a kiosk and trail markers. Conservation Board staff will continue to work with Hultgren to design signage and organize a workday for trail improvements.

Moved by Bootsma, seconded Wallinga, to accept the resignation of Chairman Royd Chambers with regrets. Motion carried, unanimous.

Camping rules and regulations were reviewed by the board.

Moved by Dau, seconded Wallinga, to adopt the O'Brien County Conservation Board Law Enforcement Policy as presented. Motion carried, unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m. The next meeting will be Wednesday, June 9, 2021 at the Prairie Heritage Center.

Sheri Boobma