

Minutes of the Warren County Conservation Board

- i. The Warren County Conservation Board held its regular monthly meeting on Monday, April 12, 2017, at the Annett Nature Center, 15565 118th Avenue, Indianola, Iowa. Meeting called to order by President Kreidler at 6:02 p.m.

Those present:

Absent:

Mick Kreidler, President

Sue Boll, Vice-President

Joe Gavin, Secretary

Ace Hendricks

Ron Miller

Comprising a quorum of the board,

Also present:

Absent:

Jim Priebe, Director

David Youngblut, Op Coordinator

Mark Wilson, Natural Resource Specialist

Karen Johlas-Szalkowski, Naturalist II

Logan Roberts, Naturalist I

Doug Gaumer, Conservation Technician

Tyler Seuferer, Conservation Technician

Guest(s):

Dean Yordi, Warren County Board of Supervisors

Brian Hemaseth, City of West Des Moines

- ii. Reading of Minutes.

Minutes of the March 2017 WCCB meeting were reviewed. Joe Gavind moved to accept the March 2017 minutes as printed. Second by Sue Boll. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

- iii. Staff reports for March 2017 were noted.

- iv. Business Agenda:

New Business 5, Consider agreement with Warren County Board of Supervisors and West Des Moines re. Veterans Parkway and the Great Western Trail, moved to the beginning of the business agenda:

Brian Hemaseth, an Engineer with the City of West Des Moines, detailed West Des Moines' request to use approximately 2.4 acres of sidings along the Great Western Trail in the construction of Veterans Parkway. The sidings are part of the railroad property and were deeded to Warren County when the right-of-way was purchased from the UP Railroad. Not using the sidings would necessitate demolition of two more houses.

Mr. Hemaseth also reviewed preliminary drawings of trail/road intersections. He said final designs would include concurrence from the Warren County Conservation Board.

Mr. Hemaseth discussed Microsoft's commitment of \$250,000 for enhancements to the project and that the funding would be made available to the WCCB for use on the Great Western Trail at the discretion of the WCCB. West Des Moines would want to see an outline of how the WCCB would use the funding and details of actual expenditures. The funding would be available regardless of Microsoft's participation, and would require the conveyance of the 2.4 acres, more or less.

The intersections impacted by the project will be County Line Road, Orilla Road, Adams Street, and 35th Avenue. All intersection but County Line Road will be modified. It is anticipated that County Line Road will be transformed to cul-de-sacs within 2–3 years and there will no longer be a crossing at that point.

Board members noted that the specific intersections being modified were not stated in the draft agreement and they asked for that information to be included.

The actual crossings will be 6-inch reinforced concrete (PCC), will be in the right-of-way of Veterans Parkway, and will be maintained by West Des Moines. Board members noted that the disposition of the original crossings (either removal or modification) was not addressed and asked that West Des Moines include this in the city's responsibilities in the agreement.

The eventual closing of the Adams Street crossing, and its eventual transition to cul-de-sacs, was discussed. Though a time frame is not possible at present, Board members asked that the eventual closing of the Adams Street crossing be included in the agreement.

Board members asked language regarding keeping the trail open during any construction, or at least limiting any closures required, be included in the agreement.

President Kreidler asked about headlight issues with eastbound traffic on Veterans Parkway where the road will become parallel to the trail at the west end of their contiguous runs. Mr. Hemaseth said the road should be lower than the trail and that should limit problems.

WCCB04-12-2017-01:

Ron Miller moved to approve the document titled, "AGREEMENT BETWEEN WARREN COUNTY, IOWA, THE WARREN COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD AND THE CITY OF WEST DES MOINES, IOWA REGARDING THE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY AND THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDING RELATED TO VETERANS PARKWAY AND THE GREAT WESTERN TRAIL" with additional language regarding removal or modification of the existing crossings, the future closure of the County Line Road and Adams Street Crossings, and minimizing needs for trail closure during any construction on crossings or Veterans Parkway. Sue Boll seconded the motion. Motion carried by 5–0 vote.

WCCB04-12-2017-02:

Ron Miller moved to authorize the Warren County Board of Supervisors to convey the 2.4 acres (more or less) listed in exhibit one of the previously approved agreement to West Des Moines, in return for the listed obligation of the city, after all parties have approved and signed said agreement. Ace Hendricks seconded the motion. Motion carried by 5–0 vote.

a. Old Business:

1. Friends of Warren County Conservation report:

Plant Sale will be May 20 & 21.

Blank Park Zoo's Mystery Zoo Animals on May 30th.

The Pollinator Project and the WCCB contribution, and the strategic plan were discussed.

2. Web report presented.

b. New Business:

1. Approve seasonal hirings and terminations:

Staff asked that the Board approve two seasonal hires and one removal from payroll. Sean Seymour, approved for seasonal hire in March has secured full-time employment elsewhere. Effective April 22, 2017:

Name	Year	Wage (2016 wage + 2% + 5¢)
Monty Freeman	18th	\$13.21/hour
Nick Reinter	6th	\$10.54/hour

Remove from payroll effective April 7, 2107:

Sean Seymour

Sue Boll moved to approve the personnel changes as requested. Second by Ron Miller. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

2. 2016 camping reports:

Conservation Technician Doug Gaumer reviewed the camping reports. Ace Hendricks asked the proposed campground for Grant Park. That project is in the 2018 fiscal year budget.

3. 2016 trail counter reports:

Conservation Technician Doug Gaumer reviewed the reports from trail and car counters. The numbers for Gran Park and Hickory Hills were similar to the previous year. There were some early difficulties with configuration of Des Moines Metropolitan Planning Organization counters used on the Summerset and Great Western Trails that skewed those numbers.

4. 2016 butterfly survey reports:

Conservation Technician Doug Gaumer reviewed the local and state butterfly count reports. There were three reporters for the 2016 butterfly survey, two paid and one intern. Cost to the WCCB was about \$1,000.

All 15 regal fritillary sightings in 2016 for the Iowa Butterfly Survey Network were from Warren County.

President Kreidler asked how long the ISBN has been active. Gaumer thought they began around 2014.

President Kreidler asked what Doug's ideas were going forward. Gaumer said he would like to continue with all the counts, but especially Rolling Thunder Prairie and Blue Flag Marsh. He also noted that he currently has only one potential intern interested in the 2017 counts. The cost of the interns and the usefulness of the data were discussed.

Karen Johlas-Szalkowski asked about getting a list of trained volunteers from Reiman Gardens. Doug Gaumer noted that he can do the volunteer training.

Sue Boll asked about volunteer and paid counters and their dependability over the long term, especially at difficult counting sites like Rolling Thunder Prairie.

President Kreidler said the training of counters and scientific nature of the project add to the value of the project. Doug Gaumer and Sue Boll agreed that the project is scientifically structured.

Ace Hendricks asked about how the butterfly surveys could impact management of WCCB areas. David Youngblut stated that staff are trying to maximize diversity, especially in prairie areas. Mark Wilson asked if the data were structured in such a way that WCCB staff can use it. Doug Gaumer felt that in general practice it is useful and has impacted management of Blue Flag Marsh.

President Kreidler noted the value of contributing to the state accumulation of data regarding butterflies, that the financial cost to the WCCB is relatively small, and that she would like to the WCCB continue to participate in the counts.

Ron Miller asked Doug Gaumer how much of his time the counts take. Gaumer said training counters takes about 2 hours, getting them oriented to the field work takes about a day, and an additional 2–5 hours is used later.

Ron Miller said he would approve of continuing for 2017 with one person.

Ace Hendricks said, if the counts are to continue, he would like to see it in its own budget line rather than funded through the seasonal employee line.

Ron Miller moved to fund the counts for 2017 up to \$500 (one counter).

President Kreidler asked about withdrawing the motion to discuss the possibility of funding the second counter with Friends of Warren County Conservation support.

Jim Priebe suggested funding the first counter and then asking the FWCC to support the second counter.

Sue Boll seconded the motion on the table. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

5. Considered at the beginning of the Business Agenda

c. Other Business:

1. Ace Hendricks asked about the printing schedule for the most recent newsletter and any delays that occurred.
- v. Financial reports were distributed.
- vi. Bills were approved and signed.
- vii. Ron Miller moved to adjourn. Joe Gavin Seconded. Motion carried by unanimous vote at 8:19 p.m.

Joe Gavin, Secretary
Warren County Conservation Board