

OSCEOLA COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD MINUTES

April 13, 2021

The Osceola County Conservation Board met pursuant to the law in the Classroom at Willow Creek County Park, the meeting was also available via Zoom due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, with the following members present: John Corbett, Ann Byers, John Schmidt, and Zach Marco. Jason Otto was available via Zoom.

Absent: None

Staff present: Nick Schmalen, Director

Visitors: Jerry Helmers, Supervisor's Liaison; Justin Trout, NRCS *via Zoom

The meeting was opened at 7:04 P.M. by John Schmidt, Chairperson.

A motion was made by Ann Byers, seconded by John Corbett, to approve the agenda. All voted "AYE," motion carried.

A motion was made by Jason Otto, seconded by Ann Byers, to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. All voted "AYE," motion carried.

A motion was made by Zach Marco, seconded by John Corbett, to pay the attached claims. All voted "AYE," motion carried.

Director Nicholas Schmalen submitted three quotes for burying the remains of the house at the Loof Homestead. They were as follows: MEGA, Inc, \$1500.00; Jeppessen Gravel, \$2000.00; Clauson Excavating, "better not submit a quote." A motion was made by John Corbett, seconded by Jason Otto, to accept the quote of \$1500.00 of MEGA, Inc to bury the remains of the Loof House. All voted "AYE," motion carried. Zach Marco abstained. The Conversation then shifted to the plan for development of the South Quarter of the Loof Farm. Upon advice from the County Attorney, John Schmidt abstained from the conversation and the chairperson duties were transferred to Vice-Chairperson Ann Byers. Director Nicholas Schmalen shared an email with the Board that he had gotten from the County Attorney that stated he had legal concerns about the lack of a definition of Conservation Purpose, and the payment structure that had been proposed by the Osceola SWCD for rental of the Loof Property for the purposes of the Demonstration Farm. Justin Trout from the Osceola County NRCS office shared that the Osceola SWCD Commissioners did not feel as though they could pay closer to fair market value for land

rent, and that if the Osceola County Conservation Board wanted to move forward with the Demonstration farm, they needed to meet with the County Attorney and come up with a payment structure that would work for the Osceola SWCD and the Osceola CCB.

Director Nicholas Schmalen then presented a plan to convert all of the tillable acres over to habitat over a period of eight years. After discussion, Justin Trout, asked the Board to make a decision on whether they were open for moving forward with the Demonstration Farm or pursue the all-habitat route. A motion was made by John Corbett, seconded by Zach Marco, to move forward at the Loof Farm planning to put all of the acres to habitat over a period of years TBD. All voted "AYE," motion carried.

There were few updates on progress of moving the Ocheyedan Sign at the North "Y."

Director Nicholas Schmalen informed the Board that he had talked with the Benit Family twice about the possibility of expanding the campground at Willow Creek, and that he would be having a call with them again on Friday, April 15.

The Board discussed opening up the western portion of Willow Creek County Park as a dog training area. This will not be pursued at this time.

Bids for the 2007 Ford F-350 were opened as follows: 1) \$8501.00, 2) \$6826, 3) \$14,325, 4) \$8500.00, 5) \$8875.00, 6) \$2871.00. A motion was made by Zach Marco, seconded by Ann Byers, to accept bid number 3 of \$14,325 from Steve Dykstra with payment to be made by certified or cashier's check. All voted "AYE," motion carried.

Director Nicholas Schmalen informed the Board he was still waiting on prices from two dealerships for trading the Batwing Mower. He will forward them on to the Board as soon as he receives them.

No applications were received for the Loof Memorial Scholarship this year.

Director Nicholas Schmalen submitted the monthly schedule.

A motion was made by Zach Marco, seconded by Jason Otto, to approve the hire of either of the seasonal applicants. All voted "AYE," motion carried.

There being no further business, a motion was made by John Corbett, seconded by Ann Byers, to adjourn at 9:10 P.M. All voted "AYE," motion carried.

Nicholas J. Schmalen, Director

Jason Otto, Chairperson