

Polk County Conservation Board

4:30 p.m. – Mally's Park – Trail's End Mitigation Bank Tour
5:30 p.m. – PCC Board Meeting

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLK COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

The Polk County Conservation Board met in person for regular session Wednesday, August 10, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

- #22-0801 **Roll Call**
Members Present: **Lewis, Mollenhauer, Crane**
Members Absent: **Altringer, Cataldo**
- #22-0802 **Public Comments**
- #22-0803 **New Employee Introduction**
a. Zoey Schorzmann – Administrative Supervisor
- #22-0804 **Environmental Education Annual Report Presentation – Patti Petersen-Keys**
- #22-0805 **Financial Reports**
- #22-0806 **MOVED BY Mollenhauer** to approve the July 13, 2022 meeting minutes.
Vote Yea: **Lewis, Mollenhauer, Crane**
Members Absent: **Altringer, Cataldo**

CONSENT AGENDA

- #22-0807 **Approving** bill list.
- #22-0808 **Approving** pay scale increases for the following Conservation seasonal and intermittent positions pending a fund allocation through the Board of Supervisors as part of the recently submitted budget appropriation process.
- #22-0809 **Approving** the combined cleaning services bid proposal from Reliable Maintenance Company for a one year contract term (with the provision for two, one-year extensions) beginning on September 1, 2022.
- #22-0810 **Approving** contract with JEO Consulting Group, Inc for engineering/design services for a floodplain restoration project at Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt in the amount of \$32,500.
- #22-0811 **Approving** contract award to paleBLUEdot for development of a Sustainability Plan for Polk County Conservation in the amount of \$51,800.
- #22-0812 **Approving** updated Administrative Manual of the Polk County Conservation

Board. All changes in this manual will be retroactive to July 1st, 2022.

LET THE RECORD SHOW it was moved by Mollenhauer to approve the consent agenda.

Vote Yea: **Lewis, Mollenhauer, Crane**

Members Absent: **Altringer, Cataldo**

ACTION ITEMS

#22-0813 **Approving** an Iowa REAP grant resolution requirement for the Ziel Property acquisition in Alleman.

LET THE RECORD SHOW it was moved by Mollenhauer, Lewis 2nd to approve Action Item 22-0813.

Vote Yea: **Lewis, Mollenhauer, Crane**

Members Absent: **Altringer, Cataldo**

#22-0814 **Approving** the transfer of two properties, totaling 0.9 acres, within Fourmile Creek Greenway from the Des Moines Metropolitan Wastewater Reclamation Authority (WRA) to Polk County Conservation.

LET THE RECORD SHOW it was moved by Lewis to approve Action Item 22-0814.

Vote Yea: **Lewis, Mollenhauer, Crane**

Members Absent: **Altringer, Cataldo**

BOARD DISCUSSION

Director's Remarks – Staff reports show how much great work PCC employees are doing. My philosophy is to hire good people and get out of their way! That's the way it's supposed to be!

ARPA – Rich has been following it for a long time – \$15 million has now been designated for water quality initiatives. At the beginning of ARPA funding discussions, water quality was allocated between \$3-\$5 million, then around \$8-\$10 million – and now it's \$15 million! The BOS has a lot of good will towards water quality, public works, and PCC.

\$2 million has been allocated for the Walnut Creek watershed basin – this area is experiencing high development right now. Now is the time to get in and do something good for the watershed before development. Jon Swanson will be the point person but we will collaborate with him.

PCC has been given \$2 million to go towards the Brenton Slough/Beaver Creek Greenway. Second appraisal is in the works.

ICON – got \$2 million largely due to Pat Boddy and her involvement.

East Polk Watershed Protect – \$1.5 million (public works program) – want to kick off bioreactor/saturated buffer initiative.

Wetlands Batch & Bundle – try to get landowners/wetland owners to go together simultaneously to improve water quality through public works.

\$1 million to CBG drainage district project – PCC has been involved with this drainage district for a long time – first accused of backing up water on farmland, hired engineers and they determined we weren't doing this but land owners contested – PCC wants to re-wild the area but we need the land owners permission. Farmers would have to implement some watershed

practices to prevent silting in. PCC would then re-route the drainage ditches to re-wild the route of the Skunk River. This is innovative and no one in the state of Iowa has done this before. This could be a re-wilding template for others.

General sentiment exists that the public and landowners don't understand water quality. A Water Quality Scientific Review is requested – Iowa Lakeside Labs, Des Moines Waterworks involved – \$1 million has been allocated.

\$600,000 has been allocated for the Ankeny Stormwater Wetland project – Rich Eichner is involved - Manatts area – Eichner wanted to donate a section of creek that was standalone but Ankeny declined management. Jon Swanson found out that a drainage ditch is in the area – building wetlands on Eichner's site could treat water that goes into 4 Mile Creek. Ankeny finally agreed to take care of area after it's built.

\$250,000 allocated to Sustainable Iowa Land Trust (SILT) – Susan Endsman managing – initiative to take a piece of land and use beginning farmers to do sustainable farming – fruit trees/nut trees/riparian zones. Intended to be implemented in metro area if possible. Working in Story County and maybe Iowa City.

\$250,000 – Non-Profitable Acre Assistance - allocated to technology that detects land not holding its value due to effort needed to make it profitable – could help identify areas that farmers could sell to Conservation.

\$250,000 – Urban Ag Seeding Partnership – improve water quality and reduce flooding

\$250,000 - allocated towards farmland owner outreach – Jon Swanson, Amanda Brown, and Cassie Cook do great at outreach but this is to supplement their efforts.

\$150,000 – allocated towards outreach to disadvantaged communities – there currently exists a marketing approach in metro areas to make immigrant populations think the drinking water is bad here so they buy bottled water – this funding can help with educational outreach to those populations.

\$100,000 – Edge of Field Batch & Bundle initiative

\$100,000 - Elkhart is growing and did a sewage lagoon retrofitting – sustainability & water quality supplemental funding towards Elkharts efforts

Dollar breakdown found on website for ARPA.

We could probably leverage the \$15 million to get to \$40-50 million towards water quality.

Palebluedot consulting firm – will analyze and make recommendations for sustainable practices within PCC. Polk County has sustainability committee also but not investing the same level of effort so we are proceeding with hiring own consultant and implementing own sustainability plan.

Board & Chair Remarks – Staff are doing a great job and thank you for the tour of Trail's End Mitigation Bank site.

CLOSED SESSION - **NO CLOSED SESSION**

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, THIS MEETING IS ADJOURNED.

Mollenhauer moved to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.