

Ida County Conservation Board (ICCB): Meeting Minutes

299 Jasper Ave., Ida Grove, IA, 51445

Monday, March 11th, 2024

6:00pm, Conservation Center, Moorehead Park

Board Members Present: Synda Jepsen, chair, Randy Vogt, vice-chair, Sue Knop, Dennis Leonard, and Don Poggensee.

Others Present: Zach Hall, Director

The March 11th ICCB business meeting was called to order at 6:02pm by Synda Jepsen.

Primary Agenda Topics:

- **ICCB agenda:** A motion to pass the agenda was made by Sue and seconded by Synda, all were in favor.
- **Minutes:** February 12th Minutes were reviewed. Don made a motion to amend the minutes to increase the fee for tree stand confiscation. Dennis seconded the motion. Discussion included the dangers of staff removing tree stands to be compliant with state law. A vote took place on the amendment to the minutes: Dennis, Randy, and Don were in favor, Sue and Synda opposed. Amendment to the February minutes passed. A motion to approve the February 12th minutes was made by Dennis, seconded by Sue, all were in favor.
- **Monthly Bills:** ICCB discussed expenses for riprap, monthly internet, prescribe fire tools, and woodworking supplies. A motion to approve the bills was made by Sue, seconded by Synda, and all were in favor.
- **Budget:** Hall reported the YTD expenditures, revenue, UBI account balance, and monthly standings. FY24 expenditures are on track with monthly budget predictions at 30% of ICCB's General Basic remaining.
- **Public Input:** ICCB reviewed public comments on camping passes, park management, and frisbee golf.

Secondary agenda topics:

ICCB update: Staff completed training courses, educational programs, and pursued grant projects. Seasonal work is outlined into shared staff To-Do lists to help prepare for the active park-use season. More than 1,000 cars drove through the parks, just on the weekends, in the first two and half months of 2024.

Internet at CCRA: In February, ICCB received an estimate for fiber optic installation to the Crawford Creek lodge as "Phase One" of pursuing internet updates to Crawford Creek Recreation Area (CCRA). The estimate and project were discussed with the county board of supervisors on February 27th. The board of supervisors tasked Hall to get a service contract in hand to review. A contract was not received as of the date of this meeting. ICCB discussed "Phase Two" of pursuing internet updates to both Moorehead Park and CCRA through wireless connections to the county courthouse. Phase One and Phase Two logistics and maps were discussed. ICCB focused on the need for providing guaranteed communication infrastructure at CCRA for increased public safety and prompt access to emergency responders through WiFi calling. No official vote took place during the meetings.

IA DNR Grants: In February, ICCB voted to approve a DNR Fish Habitat Grant for shoreline armoring and habitat placement at CCRA. The grant was approved by the Natural Resource Commission on Feb. 14th. ICCB will be awarded \$20,687.00 to perform their grant project. The project is underway and should be fully completed in the next couple of months.

ICCBF grant: ICCB's grant application to the Ida County Community Betterment Foundation Grant for a safe mobility path from the lower campground to the lower bathroom/shower house was submitted in February. The project application is to aid all mobility types to access park facilities.

ICCB and Partners: ICCB agreed to donate camping or cabin certificates to Ida County Pheasants Forever banquet. Projects are being discussed with local partners to improve local recreation opportunities.

Park Repairs: ICCB is waiting on sign replacement materials for donors of the "Friends of Moorehead Park Tree planting". The sign was vandalized in 2024 and it will be replaced with a name plaque posted in the Conservation Center.

IA DOT Offer: ICCB received an offer letter to buy .5 acres along Highway 59 North, at the east side of the intersection of 220th street. ICCB members reviewed maps and Hall's report on the property. ICCB unanimously voted against acting on the land acquisition proposal.

Tree stands: ICCB discussed the recent tree stand policy that was passed through the February meeting minutes. ICCB said the policy can be revisited in the future if it needs to be revised.

FY24 CIP: FY24 re-assessments for ICCB's budgets were submitted with FY25 budgets. The FY24 amendments are to help accommodate recent grant awards and Smith's WHA land acquisition project.

FY25 Planning: FY25 budget guidance was provided by the county board of supervisors. ICCB reviewed bottom line increases from 8%. Line items across all ICCB managed accounts were reviewed. Randy made the motion to approve of ICCB's budget for FY25, seconded by Dennis. Discussion occurred on the lack of success to fund a Natural Resource Line item, potential limitations for projects ICCB has on their Capital Improvement Plan, and utilizing FY25 as a year to save for future projects. After discussion, a vote was called and all ICCB members were in favor of the FY25 budget.

Open Discussion: How to reduce the total acres of mowed areas to save on staff time and the potential to plant native prairie in those areas.

After discussion, the ICCB meeting adjourned at 8:11pm. The next ICCB public meeting is **Monday, April 8th, 2024**, at 6:00pm at the Conservation Center in Moorehead Park. ICCB meeting schedule and documents can be found at: <https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Ida/Content/Meetings.aspx>.