

Ida County Conservation Board (ICCB): Meeting Minutes

299 Jasper Ave., Ida Grove, IA, 51445

Monday, August 14th, 2023

6:00pm, Lodge, Crawford Creek Recreation Area

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

Others Present: Zach Hall, Director; Danielle Bennett, Naturalist; Dan Hedberg, Ops. Supervisor; and Kay Luscombe, Conservation Tech.

The August 14th, ICCB business meeting was called to order at 6:10pm by Synda Jepsen.

Primary Agenda Topics:

- **ICCB agenda:** A motion to pass the agenda was made by Sue and seconded by Dennis, all were in favor.
- **Minutes:** A motion to approve the July 10th minutes was made by Don, seconded by Sue, all were in favor.
- **Monthly Bills:** ICCB discussed expenses for CCRA's fishing pier. A motion to approve the bills was made by Don, seconded by Dennis, and all were in favor.
- **Budget:** Hall reported the YTD expenditures, revenue, UBI bank balance, and monthly standings. FY24 August expenditures are on track with annual plans with 79% of ICCB's General Basic remaining.
- **Public Input:** ICCB discussed the pros and cons **if** they permitted duck hunting only along the Maple River in Moorehead Park. The discussion included what waterfowl seasons should be considered, what policies need to exist, and how to communicate with neighboring landowners and the city of Ida Grove to ensure that private land is respected no matter of ICCB's future decisions on this topic.

Secondary agenda topics:

ICCB update: new regulation signs were posted at Crawford Creek Recreation Area (CCRA) for park visitors. Staff training events are going to occur this fall. Operations, administration, and education aspects are continuing to keep staff busy as summer transitions to fall.

Dept. Revenue: \$1,472 of cabin revenue was deposited into ICCB's Conservation Purposes account during July. This funding stream can be used at ICCB's discretion in future fiscal years for projects to improve ICCB owned and managed areas. Hall presented that this account should grow slowly over time, pending that deficit spending from year to year does not occur.

CCRA Campground: YouTube Anglers named "AnglerAsh" and "PigPatrol" stayed at CCRA and made fishing videos of the park, published on YouTube.

Grants: ICCB's grant application to the Wildlife Habitat Stamp committee was awarded \$347,142.71 for the purchase of the Rich Smith Wildlife Habitat Area (WHA). This grant was requested to be a direct payment to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF) to complete the purchase of the property. The Natural Resource Commission approved the grant award after the ICCB meeting on August 17th.

INHF - Contract to sell: INHF, holders of the Rich Smith WHA, offered to sell the WHA for a total of \$697,520.00 to ICCB, the price after the Smith family donation. Don made a motion to accept and sign the contract, Randy seconded the motion. ICCB discussed that the property should be open to public access on Sept. 1st for upcoming hunting seasons, but to have an advertised grand opening in October. ICCB performed a roll-call vote and the motion passed unanimously. The plan is for the property to close on the day of the grand opening, October 15th. Updates will occur during the Sept. 18th ICCB meeting.

Dept. Policies: The Rich Smith WHA property policies were presented by Director Hall. Sue made a motion to accept the new property's Rules and Regulations, the motioned was seconded by Dennis. Discussion occurred to enhance or amend the policies in the future if management issues arise. ICCB decided the regulations will take effect Sept. 1st. ICCB performed a roll-call vote and the motion passed unanimously. The public may find the WHA policies published at: <https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Ida/Park/Rich-Smith-Wildlife-Habitat-Area.aspx>. Call the office at (712)364-3300 if you have questions.

ICCB and partners: The CCRA handicapped accessible fishing pier is nearing completion with a new sidewalk and railings, funded by the local Conservation Foundation and the Willer Family donation. Moorehead Park's handicapped accessible fishing pier was recently updated and completed thanks to the Ida County Community Betterment Foundation grant and the Hiykel Family donation.

FY22-26 CIP: ICCB discussed and selected the priority to turn the Crawford Creek Lodge into a large family overnight cabin, when the finances could support their objective. ICCB discussed that WiFi was another top CIP priority.

Open Discussion: ICCB toured recent Crawford Creek Recreation Area projects.

After discussion, the ICCB meeting adjourned at 9:00pm. The next ICCB public meeting is **Monday, September 18th, 2023**, at 12:00pm at the Conservation Center in Moorehead Park. ICCB meetings and documents can be found at: <https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Ida/Content/Meetings.aspx>.