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**Board Members**  
Joellen Schantz  
Vacant  
Josh Hardin  
Shawn Maine  
Elizabeth Kling

### **Louisa County Conservation Board - Regular Meeting Agenda**

The Louisa County Conservation Board met in regular session on Monday, January 6, 2025 at 3:00 pm at Louisa County Office Complex.

**Board Present:** Josh Hardin, Joellen Schantz, Elizabeth Kling and Shawn Maine

**Staff Present:** Jacob Ewart, Lana Artz-McComb, Tanner Hollingsworth

**Public Present:** Jim Rudisill

**Meeting called to order:** at 3:01 by Maine

1. **Agenda Approval** – Hardin motioned to approve the agenda, Schantz seconded. Motion passed all ayes.
2. **Audience Consideration** – none
3. **Consent Agenda** – Schantz motioned to approve, Kling seconded. Motion passed all ayes
4. **Officer Election** - Schantz motioned to leave the officers the same. Hardin seconded. Motion passed all ayes
5. **Officer Oath** – No oath because there is no new board member.
6. **New Board Member Update** – no applications were received. Ewart will run the posting in the papers again. Schantz suggests Ewart call past applicants to gauge interest. Ewart will reach out. New deadline is Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup> so they can attend the February meeting.
7. **Hoover Nature Trail Land Sales Update** – Sale complete. All check received totaling ~\$5200 as of 1/6/25
8. **Fair Labor Standards Act Exempt Employee Status** – Texas ruling stopped FLSA. Gruefe (HR) told Ewart that the board could still allow exempt employees to earn comp time. Following discussion the Board decides to leave employee status the way it is currently.
9. **Approval for Eden Park Disc Golf Course** – Eden Park trust would cover the ~\$11,000 needed for the construction of the 9 hole course. Estimated completion by July 1. Hardin motioned to proceed with the disc golf course. Schantz seconded. Motion passed all ayes. Board asks that Ewart make sure Horak Insurance knows about the project. Ewart will move on the picnic shelter to be constructed at Eden Park after budget season.
10. **Approval for Memorial Swinging Bench** – Ewart found a ~\$1400 “standard” swinging bench and frame. Board decided that the “conservation green” color with black frame will be the approved color scheme. Memorial swinging benches will be completed with an IPI bracket sign containing the memorial language totaling \$2400 for bench, frame, and sign. Kling motioned to approve the donation of a memorial swinging bench and plaque for placement at Chinkapin Bluffs Recreation Area. Hardin seconded. Motion passed all ayes. Ewart will create a standard memorial bench policy for the February meeting.
11. **2025 Summer Seasonal Positions – approval** – LCC would like to hire 1 naturalist seasonal (Emily Hemphill), post for a 2<sup>nd</sup> naturalist seasonal, hire 1 6 month seasonal (Luke Perkins), and



post for a 2<sup>nd</sup> 3 month conservation seasonal.

Hardin motions to post and hire for 2025 seasonal positions. Kling seconded. Motion passed all ayes

**12. Environmental Education Update** – Wilson’s interpretive panels are complete. Chinkapin Bluffs panels are almost complete.

**13. Maintenance Update** – Hollingsworth reported on finishing work at Chinkapin including shelter light replacement, bracing on overlook, trimming trees. He has been working on vehicle maintenance. LCC staff burned the Complex prairie with LCSO staff in preparation for shooting range construction.

**14. Director Update** – Ewart is working with Horak to get all our equipment corrected and updated. Also working to get all buildings on the insurance plan. Messy, but will work it out

**15. FY26 Budget** Ewart went through the preliminary FY26 budget, line by line, to let the Board know what his plan is. Important highlights are that it included returning to full staff with Hollingsworth becoming Operations Supervisor and hiring a Natural Resources Tech. Includes better improvements for better parks. Includes a 0% raise. There is a \$43000 decrease from FY24. FY 25 was a 25% decrease and we are asking for 18% back.

Maine asks Ewart to make a budget with a 3% raise and no new staff member. Indicates that other departments will ask for their positions back. Kling notes that other departments have more people than conservation. A director filling in as a staff member is not a fair comparison. Schantz corrects Kling and states that secondary roads is missing 1 person and it’s making a big difference. Ewart reminds Schantz that this is a conservation board meeting. Maine states that Treasurer’s, Recorder’s, Auditor’s, and Secondary Roads are all missing staff. If there’s money for all positions, great but if not, be prepared.

Ewart returns to Agenda Item 14 and amends his report with presentation of the ICCS salary survey comparing Louisa County Conservation staff with similar sized counties with similar tax structures.

Hardin asks Ewart if it would be helpful to have another part time technician position. Ewart explains that he’s currently flexing in and out between the shop and Conservation office. A new part-time position would not help with the higher thinking projects.

Discussion on utilities changing at the Complex once solar panels come online. Unknown at this point.

Maine wonders if LCC could buy rock from Secondary Roads, looking into a county rate from River Products for county-wide needs. Hardin Agrees.

Hardin says that there is no harm in asking for the Full-Time position back.

Hardin motions to approve the budget as presented with a 0% raise version and a 3% raise version. Kling seconded. Motion passed all ayes.

There will most likely be a special meeting the last week of January after the Supervisor’s Budget meeting.

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CONSERVATION



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**16. Next regular meeting: Monday, February 3, 2025 Location: Louisa County Office Complex**

**17. Adjournment 4:26 pm.** Hardin motions, Schantz seconds, motion passed all ayes.

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Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary/Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Approved

*Chair – Shawn Maine*

*Vice-chair – Joellen Schantz*

*Secretary/Treasurer – Elizabeth Kling*

\*Louisa County Bylaws regarding voting by the Chair/Acting Chair:

*According to Article II, number 2.4 of the Louisa County Conservation Board Bylaws, "At all meetings that a full quorum is present, the board chair does not vote except to break a tie. In a three-member quorum, all persons present cast a vote."*