

Drainage District #37
Meeting of Private Trustees
February 9, 2022

The duly called meeting of the Drainage District #37 Trustees was called to order in the County Administration Conference Room by Chairman Allen McGranahan at 10:00 a.m. In attendance were Allen McGranahan, Bill Gerdeman, and Rodney Dillard. Clerk Connie Swan was in attendance by phone. Luke Langner was in attendance, representing the Langner Family.

Minutes of the November 22, 2021 and January 14, 2022 meetings were read and approved. They will be posted on the website.

Bills were presented:

\$131.84 to reimburse Allen McGranahan for January 15, 2022 election expenses as follows: \$125 paid to the Dickens Community Center for the election location and \$6.84 paid to Spencer Daily Reporter for election notification

\$80.00 to Ben Ashland for 2 beavers trapped in the district with a bounty of \$40 per beaver.

Bills were approved and will be submitted to the Clay County Auditor for payment.

Allen presented the results of the **January 15, 2022 election**. Twenty-one ballots were cast. Allen McGranahan was elected for a 3-year term; Bill Gerdeman was elected for a 2-year term; Rodney Dillard was elected for a 1-year term. All three candidates were elected unanimously.

Thank you notes will be sent to those who worked as clerks or judges at the election:

Jennifer Loudermilk
Mike White
Cindy McGranahan
Lynn Galbraith
Dale Langner
Sandy Langner
Candace White

Allen McGranahan was re-elected as chair. Connie Swan was re-appointed clerk.

There was discussion regarding the **Mission Statement**. It was agreed to ask for suggestions from landowners via the website and also discuss this at a future meeting.

Allen presented information on the **Iowa Drainage District Association**. There was discussion on the value of joining. There is an annual meeting in Fort Dodge the first Friday of December, as well as newsletters and emails. It was moved and seconded to join the Iowa Drainage Ditch Association for at least a year at a cost of \$239.49.

Allen suggested that priority be given to **communications with landowners**. Meeting agendas and minutes will be posted on the web site. Emails will be sent to the addresses that have been received. Allen will draft a postcard that will be mailed to landowners, once again directing them to the website and asking them to provide an email address for future communication.

There was discussion on **how to proceed on drainage maintenance going forward** and whether it was necessary to have a supervising engineer.

Bill Gerdeman has talked to Frank Rouse, who worked at the Clay County Engineer's Office for several years and is also an owner in DD#37. He may be willing to offer some guidance.

Allen McGranahan communicated with Lee Gallentine to see if his engineering firm would be willing to assist, and Lee said that is the type of work they do on a regular basis and they would be willing.

Aaron Rutter of the Clay County Engineer's Office joined the meeting at 10:45. Bill asked him whether an engineer was required for tree removal. Aaron said that an engineer was not required, but there would need to be access to the right of way. Aaron's understanding was that, if a project is under \$50,000 (possibly \$139,000 now), then it is not required to hire an engineer. Three bids should be secured from tree removal companies.

Several names of companies in the area who do tree removal were discussed. Some tree removal companies may be able to sell the trees, which could reduce the bid price, or at least take pallet wood so that it does not remain on the ground.

Aaron was asked whether a request to resolve a problem with trees or tile needed to come from the landowner, or if tenants could make the request. Aaron said that historically, if tenants asked for help with problem trees or tiles, then the County Engineer's Office would investigate.

Allen presented maps that divided the drainage ditch into 5 sections, with Section 1 starting to the north, below Trumbull Lake, and then sectioned according to bridges.

Bill said that an effort should be made to work with landowners to see how and where the trees would be left. Rodney proposed focusing on removing the problem trees and then doing one section to get an idea of what will be required

There was discussion regarding what dirt work would be required. It is not the goal to level the existing spoil bank, but to do enough to allow access.

Luke Langner said that there is a half-mile of Section 3 (per Allen's map) that is owned by the Langner Family, and has a road to a potential spot that could be a starting point to get an idea of the scope. This section also has a beaver dam. There are large trees along the right-of-way that some of the family would prefer to be left standing if possible.

Allen asked about burning along Section 3 in the spring so it would be easier to see what needed to be done, beginning on the east side. A disc could be run on either side of the burn area.

The goals for summer 2022 are:

1. Remove problem trees, which are those that are already in the water or are at risk of being in the drainage ditch or are restricting water in the county tiles.
2. Rodney moved, Allen seconded that work be done on Section 3 this spring, once the Langner family is in agreement. Trustees will secure bids from 3 tree removal contractors. Rodney will contact the Dickens fire department to see if they would be available to help with fire containment along Section 3. Allen said the DNR recommended burning as late in the season as possible, and suggested early May. There is PVC tile, which needs to be kept in mind if any burning is going to be done.

It was reiterated that the Trustees' desire is to work with each landowner along the creek bank to determine the best way of handling that section, with the goal of removing problem trees or those that have the potential to be problematic.

Allen pointed out that sometime before the first of June the board needs to work with the county to make an assessment for what has been paid on behalf of the drainage district to date.

It was agreed that monthly meetings are desirable for the foreseeable future. Allen will schedule a meeting for March.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Swan, Clerk DD#37