



DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

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Brian Preston, Director

Board Members:

Cindy Gotto
Pat Rea
Jay Wickham
Stacy Conforti
George Davis

JUNE 17, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

ROLL CALL: Meeting was called to order by Cindy Gotto at 4:00 P.M.

In person meeting at the Swiss Valley Nature Center with a Zoom link,

<https://zoom.us/j/93500240332?pwd=V28wb2RQY0U4WDNCTWFHbUVzQy9BUT09>

Meeting ID: 935 0024 0332

Board Members Present: Cindy Gotto, Pat Rea, Jay Wickham, Stacy Conforti and George Davis.

Staff Members Present: Brian Preston, Nate Sisler, Kaytlan Moeller and Lisa Schroeder

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Approval of the May 20, 2021 meeting minutes and the May approved bills. Motion to approve the minutes and bills as presented was made by Wickham and seconded by Rea. Motion carried.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT PROPOSAL:

Mason Caldwell, 1616 Rafor Rd., Dubuque, IA 52002, Troop 51. Remove invasive species from the Woodland Ecology Trail at Swiss Valley Nature Center. Motion to approve Mason Caldwell's Eagle Scout Project was made by Wickham and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING – ELEMENTARY SCIENCE WITH DUBUQUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT:

Partnership to successfully implement and sustain the Outdoor Adventures Science Program. The MOU will run from July 1, 2021 thru June 30, 2026. DCSD will provide yearly payment to the DCCB towards employment of Dubuque County Conservation Naturalist in the amount of approximately 50% of the salary and benefits. Motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding – Elementary Science with Dubuque Community School District was made by Conforti and seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

BODY CAMERA POLICY:

Provide standard guidelines and procedures for the use of body worn camera equipment including the use and storage of all recorded video CD/DVDs used or produced with this equipment. This would apply to all sworn personnel of the Dubuque County Conservation. Motion to approve the Body Camera Policy was made by Rea and seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

PERMISSION TO ADVERTISE FOR NATURALIST POSITION:

Naturalist Position is responsible for conducting the conservation departments education programs by explaining the ecosystems represented in the Dubuque County Conservation areas to the people of Dubuque County. Kaytlan Moeller thanked the Conservation Board for her opportunities while employed with Dubuque County. The board expressed their gratitude and wished Kaytlan good luck in her future endeavors. Motion to approve permission to advertise for the Naturalist Position was made by Wickham and seconded by Rea. Motion carried.

REQUEST FOR PERMANENT PART-TIME OUTREACH COORDINATOR:

Outreach Coordinator Position is responsible for promoting and increasing the reach of Dubuque County Conservation. Increasing awareness and carrying forward volunteer coordination for natural resources in the Dubuque County area. This position will be a maximum of 16 hours working remotely or at any of the Dubuque County Conservation properties. Preston stated we currently have 300 volunteers and we want to continue to grow that number. Public input was stated that it's important to keep good employees. Motion to approve request for a permanent part-time Outreach Coordinator position was made by Conforti and seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

SAGEVILLE LAND ACQUISITION:

Dubuque County Conservation currently leases two parcels of land from the City of Sageville. The two parcels of land; 17899 Sageville Rd, 1003252002, 4.2 acres and 11420 Rupp Hollow Rd., 1003253001, 5.4 acres of land. These two

parcels were FEMA buyouts so there are limitations on who the land maybe sold to. RDG's long-term plan shows a growing need to connect the trail at Heritage Pond. Sageville has always been a good partner with Dubuque County. Dubuque County Conservation has developed the Heritage Pond Campground on these parcels of land and would like to make improvements. For example additional parking, a shower house and possibly add playground equipment. The City of Sageville is looking to sell these two parcels totaling 9.6 acres. If Dubuque County Conservation wants to make improvements on this land it would benefit the County to own the land. The City of Sageville has made a selling offer of \$45,570.00 for these two parcels of land. Motion to purchase these two parcels' from the City of Sageville for \$45,570.00 was made my Davis and seconded by Wickham. Motion carried.

DUBUQUE COUNTY LAND AND WATER LEGACY:

To support the development, maintenance and enhancement of our environmental assets and public lands and waters, a group of community members are coming together to promote a ballot referendum to raise funds to invest in quality-of-life improvements for ourselves. Art Roche, 5451 Meadow Ct, Dubuque, IA 52002 spoke on behalf of the formation of the Dubuque County Land and Water Legacy coalition. Roche requested the Dubuque County Conservation Board to petition the Dubuque County Supervisors to set an election for the bond referendum to raise up to \$40 million to invest in our land and water, environment, natural resources and outdoor recreation amenities. There was discussion on when would be the right time to put the bond referendum on a ballot. Preston is in support of the bond referendum but feels we need more time to educate. Preston stated that we have money in the budget for a consultant's feasibility study. This is an important step in the education process. Rea and Davis both agreed we should not rush this, we want it to pass the first time. Conforti was concerned where the balance would be to move forward in a timely matter. Roche reported November, 2016 Linn County was able to pass \$40 million, November 2012 Polk County was able to pass \$50 million and this fall they are looking at another \$65 million, November 2008 Johnson County was able to pass \$20 million. Davis would like to table this until the next conservation board meeting to allow Preston to gather additional information especially on where we would use this money. Wickham ties this request into serving it up to the public. Gotto doesn't want this rushed but feels we need to keep moving. Motion was made by Davis to table this until the next board meeting and seconded by Rea. Gotto – Nay, Wickham – Nay, Rea – Aye, Davis – Aye, Conforti – Nay. Motion failed. Another motion was made by Conforti to petition the Dubuque County Supervisors to have this on a ballot within the next 12 months and seconded by Wickham. Davis – abstained, Rea – Nay, Gotto – Aye, Conforti – Aye, Wickham – Aye. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

E. B. Lyons is still in the process and slowly moving forward. Davis is very happy to be meeting in person

PUBLIC INPUT:

James Roling, 102 Dubildchen Dr. N, St. Donatus, IA 52071, brought in signed petitions with 169 signatures in support of slowing or redirecting of the river current at the Massey Marina public boat ramp. The river current is so strong it is slamming boats into the dock at the boat ramp. Boaters struggle with getting in and out of their boats and getting their boats on and off the boat trailers. The DNR is also aware of this problem and working on writing a permit. The Army Corps of Engineers has to approve as well. The board thanked Roling and others for their time.

STAFF REPORTS:

DIRECTOR REPORT: The drop-off was fixed today at the Massey boat ramp. We will continue to monitor as the water conditions change. Problems with shallow water have affect a few of our areas. Will be meeting with a contractor at Finley's to discussion options for dredging the boat slip area. Falcons have been banded, three females. District 6 meeting was hosted in Dubuque County on June 16th. Twelve counties out of fifteen attended, great turn out for the busy time of the year. Great program, presenters were Kaytlan Moeller, Naturalist DCCB on Mowing to Monarchs, Andrew Keil, Conservation Officer IDNR on Timer Theft and Eric Schmeckell, Dubuque County Watershed Coordinator on Watershed Initiative.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR REPORT: Fixed drainage issues at New Wine Park and a camping pedestal at Massey. Food pots planted, hydroseeding at Swiss Valley, tent plat forms along Heritage Trail at the Twin Springs access. Watering trees daily, little mowing, and patrolling.

NATURALIST REPORT: Kaytlan commented she will continue quarterly reports.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion to approve the June bills was made by Rea and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING:

Scheduled for Thursday, July 15, 2021 at 4:00 P.M.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn was made by Wickham and seconded by Davis. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 6:07 P.M.

DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBER