



DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD
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Brian Preston, Director
Board Members:
Pat Rea
Jay Wickham
Stacy Conforti
George Davis
Jackie Kehr

MARCH 24, 2022 MEETING MINUTES

ROLL CALL: Meeting was called to order by Pat Rea at 4:01 P.M.

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

<https://zoom.us/j/91073738246?pwd=VjFDcDlXMG5Od2RiaXZhamxPMm9sQT09>,

Meeting ID: 910 7373 8246, Passcode: 370592

Board Members Present: Jay Wickham, Stacy Conforti, George Davis and Jackie Kehr. Zoom: Pat Rea

Staff Members Present: Brian Preston, Nate Sisler, Mike White, Jason Denlinger and Lisa Schroeder.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Motion to approve the February 24, 2022 meeting minutes as presented was made by Davis and seconded by Wickham. Motion carried.

HODGE REQUEST TO BUILD ADDITION TO AN EXISTING DWELLING IN C-1 CONSERVANCY:

Tim and Connie Hodge would like to add an addition to their home at 15120 Cedar Ridge Rd. The Conservation Board is an advisory body to the Zoning Board. Tim Hodge, 1050 Richards Rd., Dubuque, IA 52003. Hodge would like to make 15120 Cedar Ridge Rd. their primary residence. They have done a lot of traveling and this location is their favorite of anywhere else they have been. Kehr asked about the drainage from the driveway towards the trail and if anything would need mitigated. Preston said the setbacks meet county zoning requirements. Preston recommending approval for the addition. Motion to recommend to the Zoning Board approval for the build addition at 15120 Cedar Ridge Rd. was made by Kehr and seconded by Wickham. Motion carried.

DE MINIMIS IMPACT FINDING: HERITAGE TRAIL, IA 3 FROM SOUTH OF C9Y IN SAGEVILLE TO .7 MILE NORTH OF BOY SCOUT RD., DUBUQUE COUNTY, IA:

Preston was not comfortable with the letter or the de minimis impact findings. Closing the Heritage Trail for a year or longer would have impacts on trail users. DOT is looking at Burton Furnace Rd. as a trail detour. The detour would have to be approved by the Board of Supervisors. Blasting of the bluff at Pohlman Prairie and how they will get the equipment up to the bluff is not clear. An additional meeting with the DOT about the trail closing and Pohlman Prairie has been scheduled for March 30th at 12:00 P.M. Preston encouraged all board members to attend the meeting if schedules allowed. Motion to table signing the de minimis impact letter until the next board meeting was made by Kehr and seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROPOSED RECONSTRUCTION OF HWY 3 ALONG HERITAGE TRAIL:

Due to an additional meeting being scheduled and further questions. Motion to table signing the memorandum of understanding in connection with the proposed reconstruction of HWY 3 along Heritage Trail until the next board meeting was made by Kehr and seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

AWARD 2022 FARM LEASE FOR MCCARTHY WILDLIFE AREA:

McCarthy Wildlife Area, 79 acres, only glyphosate-ready soybeans no fall tillage or crop residue removal. Farm lease was advertised on the website and in the Telegraph Herald newspaper. Four bids were submitted: Joe and Philip Trumm \$39,895.00, Kevin Donovan \$27,650.00, Reuter Grain LLC \$32,100.00 and Wayne & Dean Bergfeld \$30,020.00. The chemicals used last year make prairie planting impossible for this year. Soybeans would be ideal for prairie planting this fall. Motion to award the 2022 farm lease for McCarthy Wildlife area to Joe and Philip Trumm for \$39,895.00 was made by Davis and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF COMMUNITY FORESTRY GRANT APPLICATION:

This is a Federal Urban Forest Resilience fund in response to the loss of ash trees due to Emerald Ash Borer. We would be requesting the purchase of 12 trees totaling \$2,843.10. If approved the grant amount would be \$1,421.00 and

matching county funds would be \$1,422.10. Swiss Valley Park has lost over 75 trees to the Emerald Ash Borer. Kehr questioned the Ohio Buckeye tree and not being a native tree. Preston explained the DNR gave us the options to choose from and by diversifying our tree species we can prevent another infestation being so devastating to our areas. Motion to approve applying for the Community Forestry grant was made by Wickham and seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

APPROVAL TO SOLICIT BIDS FOR TRUCK REPLACEMENT:

This truck replacement was approved in the FY2023 budget. We would like to solicit bids now due the wait time on trucks. This is a standard work truck for the Deputy Director. The current F-150 is not a 4-wheel drive which causes issues in the winter months. We would like to include 4-wheel drive in the bid specifications. Motion to approve soliciting bids for truck replacement was made by Conforti and seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Kehr would like to continue discussion about public engagement and feedback of the master plan. Specifically targeting key pieces and making sure the public is aware of everything we offer. Davis questioned what signature project we were looking at, utilizing other groups in the community and how to address negative responses. Wickham wants a clear objective for public engagements. Conforti felt we invested a lot of money in the comprehensive plan and this is a good plan to build from. Preston would like to start the process of selecting firms for the projects approved in the FY2023 budget. Upcoming projects include; Stream rehabilitation along Heritage Trail at Durango, Heritage Pond improvements, Bankston pond, and Finley's Landing upgrades. Look at dates for each project for public engagement at site locations and scheduling these on the calendar.

STAFF REPORTS:

DIRECTOR REPORT: Bridge #1 on the Heritage Trail is almost complete. Working with the contractor and Origin, the base on excavating the footings has changed a little. To provide a better footing additional rock was needed. Swiss Valley stream restoration is moving along the footings were poured and the wall was started on Tuesday. Closing on the Miller Cabin tomorrow. ITC has a partial release but there is an indenture that will not be released until September 15, 2022. Kevin Deeny attorney for the county said it was up to the board if we wanted to close or wait until September. The conservation board would like something in writing stating the indenture will be released in September otherwise the board said to continue with closing. Trees were removed at the Little Maquoketa River Mounds. After reviewing the property it was suggested instead of mowing turf grass, let's put in a pollinator prairie. The board members were very excited about this idea. Kehr said she would like us to look at all the areas we mow and see if we could add more pocket prairies. Forestry inspections have been completed. Starting to prepare campgrounds for the water to be turned on April 8th if weather cooperates. All of the conservation aides and grounds maintenance positions have been filled except for two.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR REPORT: Cutting up dead ash trees, producing firewood, brush piles burned, replaced tracks on the skid steer, putting up wood duck boxes at the Miller McGrath area, using up comp time. Del has been busy collecting and making maple syrup. Ryan Petty worked to replace two moldy walls in the shower house at Finley's Landing. Still on light duty and working at EB Lyons. EB Lyons had about 568 users over the last month, spring break was also going on, and about 151 users were for yoga classes.

GREEN SUPERINTENDENT REPORT: Was notified we should have the new greens mower and rough mower by the end of April. Equipment is all serviced and ready to go. School golf teams came out and started helping with clean up on the course. When the ground firms up a few ash trees will need to be removed. Estimated to open the course within the next two weeks if weather permits.

NATURALIST REPORT: Jason Denlinger gave an update on usage and programs. February 626 and March 1,156+ since March is not over yet. These numbers include school outreach, outdoor adventures, 1st grade astronomy camps. Programs; bordering landowner workshop, becoming an outdoor women (BOW), bluebird box building workshop, spring break adventure camps. Upcoming programs: Summer camps, bird banding, field trips, woodcock watch at Whitewater Canyon, spring wildflower hike, Easter egg hunt and water quality testing.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion to approve the March 2022 payables was made by Conforti and seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING:

Scheduled for Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 4:00 P.M.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn was made by Davis and seconded by Wickham. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 5:34 P.M.

DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBER
