



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

JULY 28, 2022 MEETING MINUTES

ROLL CALL: Meeting was called to order by Pat Rea at 4:00 P.M.

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

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86224093485?pwd=Lzl6RmZWZjd6Z1FYU2JjZXhvbTIRQT09>

Meeting ID: 862 2409 3485 Passcode: 266862

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

Staff Members Present: Brian Preston, Nate Sisler, Megan Willenbring, Ryan Petty and Lisa Schroeder.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Motion to approve the June 16, 2022 meeting minutes as presented was made by Wickham and seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

DUBUQUE AREA TRIATHLON CLUB:

Curt Ehlinger, 2504 Hilton Springs Dr., Dubuque, IA 52002, President of the Dubuque Area Triathlon Club, spoke about the need for an open body of water in the county to practice swimming. Open water swimming is very different than swimming in a pool. They are a paid membership club and have insurance. He explained that any swimmer would be required to have a spotter and attached buoy. Heritage Pond would provide the ideal place for them to practice. They would practice weekly thru the summer months. Their general scheduled times are Monday evenings between 5-7 PM and Thursday mornings 5-7 AM. Preston said he spoke with O'Connor & English Insurance and they approved the insurance that was provided by the Dubuque Area Triathlon Club. Wickham asked that they differentiate themselves from just someone swimming. Do to the fact that we do not allow swimming at the Heritage Pond. Proper etiquette would need to be followed out of respect for anyone fishing and using the pond as well. Motion to approve the Dubuque Area Triathlon Club to practice swimming at the Heritage Pond during designated times was made by Wickham and seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

ADOPTION OF DUBUQUE COUNTY PROCUREMENT POLICY EFFECTIVE JULY 5, 2022:

This policy was approved by the Dubuque County Supervisors and went into effect July 5, 2022. It's customary the Conservation Board is aware of these policies and updates. The addition to this policy was for sole source purchases being allowed only when the award of a contract is not feasible through a competitive process. Wickham said this was a good tool for the purchasing departments to have. Motion to accept the adoption of the Dubuque County procurement policy was made by Davis and seconded by Kehr. Motion carried.

ADOPTION OF DUBUQUE COUNTY ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE:

Each of us should be able to work in a happy and satisfying environment free of discrimination, and free of any form of harassment. Training will be scheduled for all county employees and elected officials. All staff will be required to sign that they have read the policy. Motion to accept the adoption of the Dubuque County anti-harassment policy and complaint procedure was made by Davis and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried.

PERMISSION TO REPLACE PARKING LOT STRIPER:

The current striper is very old and losing pressure. We were able to get two quotes for a gas motor walk behind striper. Sherwin-Williams \$4,909.19 and PPG \$4,998.79. We inquired about battery operated and there is a 6-8 month wait. Wickham asked about contracting out the parking lot striping. Preston said we are fortunate to have Del Bischoff on staff, he used to strip parking lots in previous employment. With most of the parking lots being small we can easily have them all done in a day and we use this on the Heritage Trail as well. Motion to approve replacing the parking lot striper for \$4,909.19 thru Sherwin-Williams was made by Davis and seconded by Rea. Motion carried.

PERMISSION TO SOLICIT BIDS FOR HERITAGE TRAIL BANK STABILIZATION WEST OF PERU RD:

400 foot section along the Heritage Trail west of Peru Rd. Wickham suggested adding fence removal to the bid specifications as well. Motion to approve soliciting bids for Heritage trail bank stabilization west of Peru Rd and fence removal was made by Conforti and seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

HERITAGE TRAIL-HIGHWAY 3-SOIL SAMPLING:

Application and agreement to preform work within state highway right-of way. Terracon Consultants, Inc. will be performing 8 borings along Highway IA 3 between Durango Rd. and Whispering Hills Dr. They will refill the holes when finished. There will be 4 on the Dubuque County property along Heritage Trail. Motion to approve Terracon to preform soil sampling was made by Wickham and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried.

PROPOSED PARKING LOT AT IPC:

Preston was working with the former county engineer. Origin is not able to design at this time and WHKS is interested but we have not heard anything back yet. Looking at other professional engineers in the area. RDG might be an option. Wickham suggested FEH Design or Delta 3 Engineering Inc. both local companies in Dubuque with professional engineers. Permeable pavers verses hard surface parking lot. Preston explained the long term maintenance issues with permeable pavers at the Swiss Valley Nature Center. His recommendation was hard surface designed to reduce run off and swale with native plants. Estimated to have a minimum of 15 parking spots with an entrance and an exit. Wickham and Conforti both expressed having a full design with the parking lot to include a pavilion, pit latrine and changing area. Even if we only have the parking lot budgeted we have a future plan. This would also aide in public comment. IPC parking lot will be on the August agenda.

BANKSTON POND PROPOSAL:

WHKS has visited the site. We are waiting for them to submit the proposal. Kehr said it is very important to have public information sessions on this project.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None

STAFF REPORTS:

DIRECTOR REPORT: Carsen Bellis was hired for the resident ranger at Swiss Valley. He will attend the law enforcement academy in January 2023. The Trail Crew and Blue Crew wrapped up today. The Friends group sponsored a lunch on July 25th to thank both crews for their hard work. Bowstring creek project is complete and the trailer has been removed. Secondary roads will be helping with a parking lot at Bowstring. Traffic counters have arrived and will be set up by next meeting. Massey upper harbor dredging is complete and they will be dredging the opening of the lower harbor entrance. This will add a little extra but save on transportation cost. Swiss Valley Nature Center had another bad water test. If we get a third strike that would require continuous chlorination. Schuster pump will go over the system and the DNR will have an inspection as well. Low on staff, Kurt Kramer is off for an estimated three months for surgery and we are short one conservation aide that we were unable to fill for the summer. Struggling to keep up on maintenance and additional projects. New ATV/UTV laws went into effect. So they will be able to use ATV/UTV in parks and campgrounds where vehicles are allowed to go. The operator has to be 18 years or old, the ATV/UTV must be registered and insured. Golf play at Fillmore continues to be strong.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR REPORT: Cutting trees, helped with Hunters Safety camp, storm damage clean up, moved docks at Massey, Heritage Trail and road sides mowed.

NATURALIST REPORT: Megan Willenbring gave an update on summer camps and programs. June; 1,190, July; 1,561 and expected for August; 760. Summer camps are being held at Swiss Valley and EB Lyons. Live animal programs at the campgrounds, summer camps, partnering with the girl scouts, Whitewater Canyon guided hike, kayaking programs on the Mississippi River with NICC and the Multicultural Family Center.

PARK RANGER REPORT: Ryan Petty, Resident Park Ranger at Finley's Landing. Gave updates on the number of calls the rangers responded to in the last month. The rangers helped patrol the river over the July 3rd fireworks show. They assisted in the drowning north of Finley's Landing. They will be planning to work the Field of Dreams in a few weeks. Finley's Landing beach is repeat offenders. Write them a ticket and there back the next day. Rangers trying to make more or a presence. Wickham thanked Petty and all the Rangers for their service. Kehr asked if Petty felt supported and was getting the support he needed. Conforti thanked Petty for additional information and services.

OLD BUSINESS:

Wickham said there is about 2 million left to disburse of the American Rescue Plan funds. He doubted that any of the Conservation application requests would be granted. Preston said body cameras would be in soon and next month he will introduce the new ranger. Wickham said that Swiss Valley looks very nice. Preston would like to bid out phase 2 and RDG was working on the documents. Celebration or ribbon cutting ceremony of some type at Swiss Valley would be nice. Conference Planning is gearing up as we get closer to September. Mowing to Monarch applications are live.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion to approve the July 2022 payables was made by Wickham and seconded by Davis. Kehr abstained from voting due to not having a copy of the July payables. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, August 18, 2022 at 4:00 P.M.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn was made by Wickham and seconded by Davis. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 5:41 P.M.

DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBER