



DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

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Brian Preston, Director

Board Members:

Stacy Conforti
George Davis
Jackie Kehr
Mark Wagner
Jim Pfeiler

JANUARY 17, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Dubuque County Conservation regular monthly meeting was called to order by Brian Preston at 4:01 P.M. In person meeting at the Swiss Valley Nature Center with a Zoom link,
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82299912059?pwd=NE1PSWg3RjF1aFRPdUZwZkNFK0htUT09>
Meeting ID: 822 9991 2059; Passcode: 314922

ROLL CALL:

Board Members Present: Stacy Conforti, Jackie Kehr, George Davis, Mark Wagner and Jim Pfeiler.
Staff Members Present: Brian Preston, Nate Sisler, Taylor Schaefer and Lisa Schroeder.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Jared McGovern, 12451 Oak Brook Pl, Dubuque, IA 52001. McGovern spoke in support for the proposed conservation budget. He sees the need to continue growing, preserving, improving and maintaining the public outdoor spaces. The areas managed by the conservation are tools, assets and a service to residents and visitors of Dubuque County. Outdoor recreation is key to attracting and maintaining a qualified workforce. McGovern also suggested looking for ways to partner with the City of Dubuque and other organizations to allow for additional access to public areas.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Kehr requested we attach the approved user fee schedule with the minutes. Motion to approve the December 20, 2022 meeting minutes with the user fee schedule attached was made by Davis and seconded by Kehr. Motion carried.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Preston opened the floor for nominations for officers.

Motion to nominate Stacy Conforti as Chair was made by Davis and seconded by Kehr.

Motion to nominate George Davis as Vice-Chair was made by Kehr and seconded by Conforti.

Motion to nominate Jackie Kehr as Secretary was made by Davis and seconded by Conforti.

Motion to close nominations and approve slate of officers nominated was made by Davis and seconded by Kehr. Motion carried.

AWARD BID FOR IPC TRAILHEAD:

Preston read WHKS letter of recommendation for IPC Trailhead. WHKS recommends the Dubuque County Conservation Board accept the bid of \$99,434.82 as the lowest bidder and award the construction contract to Gansen Excavating, Inc. Travis Freese, Project Manager for WHKS was at the meeting for questions. Preston also recommend the board award the project to Gansen Excavating, Inc. Motion to accept the bid of \$99,434.82 and award the construction contract to Gansen Excavating, Inc. was made by Davis and seconded by Kehr. Motion carried.

TRAINING REQUEST FOR STAFF:

Preston asked approval for seven staff members to attend Winterfest Training in Coralville, IA. There is a great line up of sessions for additional education and networking. Motion to approve seven staff members to attending Winterfest was made by Wagner and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

Preston requested approval for himself and Sisler to attend the Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) Annual Conference in March. The conference is held in Des Moines, IA. The Director workshop touches on current issues and ongoing policies. Motion to approve the Director and Deputy Director to attend ISAC annual conference was made by Kehr and seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

PERMISSION TO SOLICIT BIDS FOR A HEAVY DUTY PULL TYPE FLATBED TRAILER:

Trailer is budgeted for FY2023 for \$15,000.00. The current trailer has no brakes and will be traded in on the new trailer. Motion to approve soliciting bids for a heavy duty pull type flatbed trailer was made by Davis and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

PERMISSION TO ADVERTISE FOR SEASONAL EMPLOYEES:

These positions have been budgeted for FY2023. Nine Conservation Aides and three Grounds Maintenance positions. Conservation Aides usual work 40 hours per week and Grounds Maintenance 24 hours per week. There is a request with the Human Resources Director to increase the hourly wage. Surrounding counties have already started to advertise for seasonal positions. Motion to approve advertising for seasonal employees was made by Kehr and seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

MASSEY MARINA CONCESSION AGREEMENT:

Rivers Massey Marina LLC, Jody Lovett and Shawn Kelly would like to continue being the concessionaire at Massey Marina. We have had good feedback from patrons. The concession agreement would run January 17, 2023 thru January 17, 2024, the insurance company requested the agreement run a full year and include schedule A. Motion to approve the Director to execute the Massey Marina Concession Agreement with Rivers Massey Marina was made by Wagner and seconded by Kehr. Motion carried.

FILLMORE RECREATION AREA CONCESSION AGREEMENT:

Divot's Golf Shop, Jeff Morriem would like to continue being the concessionaire at Fillmore Recreation area. The concession agreement would run January 17, 2023 thru January 17, 2024, the insurance company requested the agreement run a full year and include schedule A. Motion to approve the Director to execute the Fillmore Recreation Area Concession Agreement with Divot's Golf Shop was made by Davis and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None

STAFF REPORTS:

DIRECTOR REPORT: Naturalist interviews will be finished up this week. Bankston Pond preliminary plans will be finished soon. Working on applications and permits for the Bankston Pond project. We shouldn't have to dredge the entire pond which will help with the overall cost. Will work on setting up a public meeting in February for the Bankston Pond. Tentative construction to start this spring on the pond. The trailers have been removed from McCarthy Wildlife Area and a donation is being made to complete the parking lot and add an informational kiosk. Still waiting on the design of the wetland for McCarthy. Park Ranger position will be posted this week. Will conduct interviews as a team, worked well for the Naturalist position. Carsen Bellis is at the law enforcement academy for the next couple of months.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR REPORT: Finished the cleanup at McCarthy after the trailers were removed. Building the new dock boxes and staging them at Massey Marina. Cleared snow at Ringneck Ridge and removed the damaged snow fence and replaced with a new snow fence. Split wood, replaced a part of metal on the roof at EB Lyons interpretive center, pruning trees, and removed woody species from prairie.

GREEN SUPERINTENDENT REPORT: None

NATURALIST REPORT: Schaefer reported 28 different programs with 732 participants. Highlights were winter break camps, preschool Outdoor Adventures focused on worms, 8 J-Term programs between colleges and high schools, after school programs. New is a virtual Driftless Area Program, we had people join from outside of Dubuque County as well. Upcoming programs include new story trail, night hikes, and some weekend programs.

OLD BUSINESS:

Kehr suggested changing, adding or combining the reports to include a Heritage Trail Report, highlighted Area report, Greens Report to quarterly and a ranger's report quarterly. Looking to see the data in number format would be helpful. Davis would like a position added to help with expanding technology, fundraising, writing grants, and promote the areas managed by Dubuque County Conservation. Wagner said hunters will reach out and look for public hunting areas. Educating public and private landowners is key. Kehr asked where we were with E-bikes on the Heritage Trail. Preston said they changed the definition of a bike to include class one limited to 20 MPH. So the only way to enforce the speed would be a radar gun and the rangers are working to see if the hand held radar guns will work before ordering additional equipment. Looking into grazing on public land in identified areas to help control invasive species.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion to approve the January 2023 payables was made by Davis and seconded by Kehr. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, February 16, 2023 at 4:00 P.M., Swiss Valley Nature Center

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn was made by Kehr and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 5:50 P.M.

 2/23/23
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