



DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD
13606 Swiss Valley Road
Peosta, IA 52068
563.556.6745
www.dubuqu countyiowa.gov

Brian Preston, Director
Board Members:
Stacy Conforti
George Davis
Jackie Kehr
Mark Wagner
Jim Pfeiler

NOVEMBER 16, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Dubuque County Conservation Board regular monthly meeting was called to order by George Davis at 4:00 P.M. In person meeting at the Swiss Valley Nature Center with a Zoom link, <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85737876335?pwd=Xh0geVjUHMHO0hy3hO2H4H3lobGVri.1>
Meeting ID: 857 3787 6335 Passcode: 870863

ROLL CALL:

Board Members Present: George Davis, Jackie Kehr, Mark Wagner, and Jim Pfeiler. Zoom: Stacy Conforti

Staff Members Present: Brian Preston, Nate Sisler, Johnny Norwood and Lisa Schroeder.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Mary L Johnson, 432 Lezlie Dr., Peosta, IA 52068. Owns agricultural land at 1871 Asbury Rd. and shared concerns of the planned water trail in that area. She feels the depth of the water in the stream is too low to support kayaking and would force people to trespass on the neighboring land. Johnson also said this area is used by ducks and geese for nesting. Additional traffic from kayakers would disrupt their habitat. She would like the board to revise the water trail plan before it's implemented.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Motion to approve the October 19, 2023 meeting minutes was made by Wagner and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT PROPOSAL PROVING GROUNDS:

Nathan Chappell, 6105 Forrest Hills Dr., Asbury, IA 52002, Troop 28. Would like to construct a small, covered picnic table at Proving Grounds. This would be like the one that was just replaced at the Heritage Pond. Project would be completed before December 13th. Motion to approve Nathan Chappell, Eagle Scout project for a covered picnic table at Proving Grounds was made by Wagner and seconded by Kehr. Motion carried.

SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATIONS FOR HERITAGE TRAIL:

Tristate Mountain Bike Riders, January 13, 2024 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Heritage Trail & Durango Parking Lot. Triple D Event bicycle ride and run. They have held this event for 20 years. Motion to approve the Tristate Mountain Bike Riders special event application was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried.

Huntington's Disease Society of America (HDSA) walk, May 4, 2024 from 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM, Heritage Trail Pond location. Motion to approve the HDSA special event application was made by Wagner and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

DMATS TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM – HERITAGE TRAIL HARD SURFACING:

Dubuque Metropolitan Area Transportation Study for Heritage Trail hard surfacing. Same application just moving the location of the hard surfacing to the west end of the trail. This application is for the hard surfacing of approximately 2 miles. Estimated cost is \$625,000.00. \$500,000.00 from grant, \$125,000.00 from REAP and match from Dyersville. Preston read resolution No. 23-1116 to the board for approval. Motion to approve and adopt resolution No. 23-1116 for DMATS application for Heritage Trail hard surfacing was made by Kehr and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

APPROVAL REQUEST FOR FUNDING FISH HABITAT GRANT:

Catfish Creek Fish Habitat Improvement. This project will involve stabilization of 320 feet of actively eroding streambank. This portion of Upper Catfish Creek is a protected cold water trout stream within the 460 acre Swiss Valley Nature Preserve. Motion to approve and adopt the signing of the application for assistance for funding the Catfish Creek Fish Habitat improvement was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF LICENSE AGREEMENT FROM ALLIANT ENERGY:

License agreement for a strip of land between Burton's Furnace Rd and Clay Hill Rd for underground lines. Work to bore lines underground in conjunction with the road project and trail will be closed. Kevin Deeny with Kane Norby & Reddick reviewed the License Agreement. Motion to approve License Agreement with Alliant Energy was made by Wagner and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

BYLAWS OF THE DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD:

Preston said the County Auditor had requested the Conservation bylaws. After reviewing minutes and previous records we were unable to find them. Volunteer Mary Ann Specht reviewed other local County Conservation Board bylaws and drafted bylaws for the Dubuque County Conservation. Bylaws are good operating procedures to have in place and reviewed annually. Motion to adopt the Dubuque County Conservation bylaws was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried.

SET USER FEES FOR 2024:

Preston proposed raising online camping reservations from \$25.00 a night to \$30.00, Green Ash Pavilion rental from \$100.00 a day to \$120.00 a day, Willow pavilion at Mud Lake will be replaced this winter, raising the daily rental from \$50.00 to \$60.00 a day. Massey Marina Boat slip rental for end ties from \$455.00 to \$480.00 a season. Golf fees for 9 holes on weekdays and weekends raising by a \$1.00. Motion to adjust users fees for 2024 per Preston's recommendation was made by Wagner and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

PERMISSION TO ADVERTISE FOR SEASONAL EMPLOYEES:

Conservation Aide positions and Trail Crew positions. Last year we were unable to hire a trail crew due to lack of wages. We will try advertising earlier this year and working with Human Resources to increase wages. Motion to approve advertising for seasonal employees was made by Kehr and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

FY2025 OPERATING BUDGET:

Operating budget for FY 2025, no change. Some flexibility in line item over runs not able to overspend in grand totals. Wage increases and land acquisitions will be in capital expenditures. Unclear what the County Budget overall will be. The State laws have changed and there is a lot of uncertainty about property taxes. Supervisors are looking to keep things unchanged due to uncertainty. Motion to approve the FY2025 Operating budget as submitted was made by Kehr and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

FY2023 Annual Report will be submitted to the supervisors. The Iowa code requires us to submit a report. This is a public document we would like to also put on the Conservation website. This report should reflect goals and accomplishments for the public to see. Suggestions for next year; add Eagle Scout Projects, more pictures, pictures of seasonal help, highlights from grants and donations. Motion to approve the annual report for FY2023 was made Pfeiler and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None

STAFF REPORTS:

DIRECTOR REPORT: Preston introduced Johnny Norwood the new Park Ranger for Mud Lake. Heritage Trail limestone resurfacing is complete, concrete pad for the new pavilion at Mud Lake has been poured, Pat Rea donated the funds for the parking lot at McCarthy. FEMA recap of flood and applying to improve the partitions to a solid plastic in the shower houses at Massey and Mud Lake.

December 18, 2023 will be the operational budget meeting with the Board of Supervisors, a time has not been set yet.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR REPORT: Sisler reported water has been shut off, electric has also been turned off at Heritage Pond, well house at Mud Lake has been reinsulated, pavilion at Mud Lake has been taken down, fire breaks mowed for next year, Massey docks moved for the winter, Purple Martin pole is complete at Finley's, placement of rubber surfacing on bridges along Heritage Trail, removed unnecessary racks at the Keywest shop building for more room.

OLD BUSINESS:

Dubuque County Auditors recommendations for cleaning fees for pavilions. Davis said there will be risk with either process. Preston said we have not had a problem in the past and the new process would incur more cost to the county. Consensus is to continue the same process.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion to approve the November 2023 payables was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried.

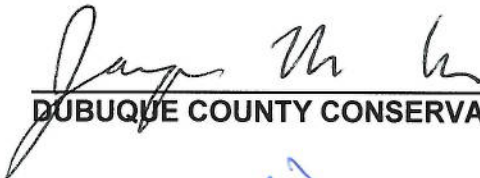
NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, November 30, 2023 at 4:00 P.M., Work Session at Swiss Valley Nature Center.

Thursday, December 21, 2023 at 4:00 P.M., Swiss Valley Nature Center.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Kehr. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 5:38 P.M.

 12/21/2023

DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBER



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