

DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD
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Brian Preston, Director
Board Members:
George Davis
Mark Wagner
Jim Pfeiler
Stacy Conforti
Sue Miller

November 21, 2024 MEETING MINUTES

Dubuque County Conservation Board 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/87173004201?pwd=89pPjEpBjuv7v1g2jXpqf2d5S8TJVI.1>
Meeting ID: 871 7300 4201 Passcode: 273218

ROLL CALL:

Board Members Present: George Davis, Mark Wagner, Stacy Conforti and Susan Miller. Jim Pfeiler arrived at 4:05 P.M.

Staff Members Present: Brian Preston, Nate Sisler, Ray Martin, Taylor Schaefer and Lisa Schroeder.

PUBLIC HEARING ON PLANS, SPECIFICATIONS, FORM OF CONTRACT, AND ESTIMATED COST FOR THE DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD, NEW WINE CAMPGROUND ELECTRICAL UPGRADE:

Motion to open the public hearing on plans, specifications, form of contract, and estimated cost for the New Wine Campground electrical upgrade was made by Davis and seconded by Miller. Motion carried 4-0.

Public hearing opened at 4:01 P.M. No public comment was made.

Motion to close the public hearing on plans, specifications, form of contract, and estimated cost for the New Wine Campground electrical upgrade was made by Davis and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried 4-0.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Motion to approve the October 17, 2024, meeting minutes was made by Miller and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 4-0.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT PROPOSALS:

Payton Poster, 6312 Kiowa Ct., Dubuque, IA 52002, Troop 51. Proposed removal of Honeysuckle at the Swiss Valley Nature Preserve. In total a 7-acre area, October – November, 3-4 weekend days for 2-4 hours a day, 2-4 groups of 3 people per day. Motion to approve Payton Poster Eagle Scout Project to remove Honeysuckle at the Swiss Valley Nature Preserve was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried 5-0.

Jack Poster, 6312 Kiowa Ct., Dubuque, IA 52002, Troop 51. Proposed planting oak trees at Finley's Landing. A 7-acre area with little to no trees. This area was the last known area for Ruffed Grouse in Dubuque County. Planting will consist of approximately 21 bushels of acorns on 3 of the acres and the other 4-acres for other types of habitats. The gathering of the acorns will begin in September and planting in late October. Motion to approve Jack Poster Eagle Scout Project for planting oak trees at Finley's Landing was made by Conforti and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 5-0.

SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATIONS:

Tristate Mountain Bike Riders, Heritage Trail and Durango parking lot, January 18, 2025. Triple D Event with all proceeds to benefit non-profit organizations. Preston recommended approval. Motion to approve Special Event Application for Tristate Mountain Bike Riders, Triple D Event at the Heritage Trail on January 18, 2025, was made by Conforti and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried 5-0.

Live Like Mark Memorial Run, Heritage Trail and Heritage Pond, May 3, 2025. Fun run walk honoring the life of former police chief Mark Dalsing. Preston recommended approval. Motion to approve Special Event Application for Live Like Mark Memorial Run at the Heritage Trail on May 3, 2025, was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 5-0.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #2024-1121, STATE FISH HABITAT GRANT APPLICATION:

Dubuque County Conservation Board is interested in acquiring and developing Fish Habitat at Macomber Rd., along the North Fork of the Maquoketa River and Fish Habitat funds are required for the project. Motion to approve resolution #2024-1121, State Fish Habitat Grant Application was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried 5-0.

AWARD BID FOR HERITAGE TRAIL EMBANKMENT REPAIR:

We received 7 bids for the Heritage Trail bank stabilization, project CON-28801 W-FY25. Top Grade Excavating Inc for \$17,853.00, Offset Construction LLC for \$28,208.40, Gansen Excavating Inc for \$19,520.00, McDermott Excavating for \$36,014.00, Connolly Construction Inc for \$23,370.44, Eastern Iowa Excavating for \$22,477.30 and Connolly Excavating Inc for \$51,759.80. Motion to award the bid for Heritage Trail embankment repair to Top Grade Excavating Inc. for \$17,853.00 was made by Conforti and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried 5-0.

AWARD BID FOR NEW WINE ELECTRICAL UPGRADE:

Maquoketa Valley Electric relooked at the plans and recommended changes to the specifications. Preston recommend that we do not move forward and reject all bids without opening. Changes may require bidders to re-evaluate their proposals, potentially affecting their pricing or project schedule. Motion to reject all bids without opening for the New Wine electrical upgrade was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 5-0.

AWARD BID FOR SWISS VALLEY NATURE CENTER PRESERVE FISH HABITAT PROJECT:

Preston opened three bids: Top Grade Excavating for \$27,250.00, Gansen Excavating Inc for \$22,650.00 and Connolly Construction Inc for \$23,635.00. Motion to award the bid for Swiss Valley Nature Center Preserve Fish Habitat Project to Gansen Excavating Inc for \$22,650.00 was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried 5-0.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Preston went over the highlights of the annual report. The Board appreciated the pictures, time and extra work on the report. Motion to approve the annual report for the Board of Supervisors was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 5-0.

SET USER FEES FOR 2025:

Preston recommended keeping fees the same except for the Green Ash Pavilion. Green Ash Pavilion currently rents for \$120.00 a day and would increase to \$140.00 a day. Schroeder reported that camping fees are in line with surrounding counties. Motion to keep user fees for 2025 the same except for the Green Ash Pavilion was made by Wagner and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried 5-0.

PERMISSION FOR STAFF TO ATTEND THE 2025 WINTERFEST CONFERENCE IN JANUARY:

Preston said this is a great opportunity for staff education, networking and team building. He would like to offer this opportunity to any member of staff that wishes to attend. Motion to approve staff to attend Winterfest was made by Conforti and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried 5-0.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None

STAFF REPORTS:

DIRECTOR REPORT: Preston reported on the limestone resurfacing on Heritage Trail is complete. Army Corp of Engineer has approved the sub lease with Dockside and the kayak rental at Mud Lake. Rangers have completed hazards material training. Preconstruction meeting at Massey with S2 Construction tomorrow. Schwartz is very happy with the new gator at New Wine. The Conservation operating budget will be due December 20th and capital projects due January 10th. We will need to set a date for a work session before the next regular board meeting.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR REPORT: Sisler reported winterizing complete, new signs up at McCarthy and Ringneck, New Wine well house insulated, woodpecker holes repaired at EB Lyons, bridge mats in place along the Heritage Trail for snowmobilers, gas and fishing docks moved into the harbor for winter, firebreaks mowed for next season and illegal dumping clean up.

GREENS SUPERINTENDENT REPORT: Martin reported top dressed greens, mower maintenance, big thankyou to Timberline for letting us use one of their mowers. One of the busiest years for play this season. Martin said he felt the greens fees were on the low side and he would like the board to take that into consideration. He would also like to hire one full-time and one part-time seasonal for next year.

NATURALIST REPORT: Schaefer reported Environmental highlights for October; 45 programs, 1768 participants, Western Dubuque Service Day, Halloween Hike, Senior High School outdoor Ecology class, Spanish speaking kayaking, 3rd grade Outdoor Adventures, bird banding with Loras, bat box workshop and 8th grade career presentation. Upcoming programs include 2nd grade Outdoor Adventures, illuminate the night hike, forest school painting with natural pigments, winter tree ID hike, Sunnycrest Prairie Restoration Day and updating displays. Jaquelyn Horchrein worked over the summer as seasonal help at Fillmore and she is now with us through Green Iowa Americorps position and Julia Rodewald was seasonal and Green Iowa Americorps with us and has accepted a full time Naturalist position with Jackson County.

OLD BUSINESS:

Davis would like to see us hire someone to put drone footage of the Heritage Trail together as a video and cleaning up all the old projects we have budgeted before June 2025. Prioritize the FY2025 list of projects totaling \$460,000.00.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion to approve the November 2024 payables was made by Wagner and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried 5-0.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at 1:00 P.M. work session, Swiss Valley Nature Center.

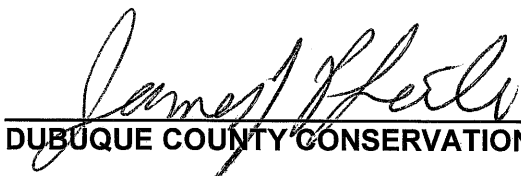
Thursday, December 19, 2024, at 4:00 P.M regular board meeting, Swiss Valley Nature Center.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn was made by Davis and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried 5-0 and the meeting adjourned at 5:52 P.M.



DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBER



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