

DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

13606 Swiss Valley Road
Peosta, IA 52068
563.556.6745
www.dubuquecountyia.gov

Brian Preston, Director

Board Members:

George Davis
Mark Wagner
Jim Pfeiler
Sue Miller
Stacy Conforti

JULY 17, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

Dubuque County Conservation Board meeting was called to order by Chair, 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/88417395438?pwd=BgU0OHfUmpzOpgNYjoG9a0RRNgAM9b.1>
Meeting ID: 884 1739 5438 Passcode: 723662

ROLL CALL:

Board Members Present: George Davis, Mark Wagner, and Stacy Conforti. Absent: Jim Pfeiler and Sue Miller.
Staff Members Present: Brian Preston, Nate Sisler, Ray Martin, Jason Denlinger and Lisa Schroeder.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

A motion to approve the June 18, 2025, meeting minutes was made by Conforti and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 3-0.

PUBLIC HEARING ON PLANS, SPECIFICATIONS, FORM OF CONTRACT, AND ESTIMATED COST FOR THE DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD, NEW WINE HMA SURFACING PROJECT:

A motion to open the public hearing for New Wine HMA Surfacing Project was made by Wagner and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried 3-0. Public hearing opened at 4:02 P.M. Preston stated plans include an overlay of asphalt from the gate through the picnic area at New Wine Park. This project also includes replacement of a failing culvert, repair of erosion along the roadway and ADA accessibility to the pavilion. No public comment was made. A motion to close the public hearing for New Wine HMA Surfacing Project was made by Conforti and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 3-0 and the public hearing closed at 4:04 P.M.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT PROPOSAL:

Troop 51, Ian Sindt, 12252 N. Cascade Rd., Dubuque, IA 52003. Proposed an Eagle Scout Project for Interstate Power Company Forest Preserve (IPC). Sindt would like to build a handicap accessible covered picnic table like the one at Proving Grounds. IPC has no sitting area around the parking lot. The proposed location is beside the restrooms at the west end of the parking lot. The total approximate cost is \$800. Sindt plans to seek donations and additional fundraising if necessary. A motion to approve Eagle Scout Project for Ian Sindt at Interstate Power Company Forest Preserve for a handicap accessible covered picnic table was made by Conforti and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 3-0.

REQUEST BY KLAUER TO ALLOW CONSTRUCTION IN A C-1 CONSERVANCY:

The property is located at 12206 RTE 3, Dubuque, IA 52002. Preston stated that Jim Klauer would like to add solar for their cabin. Preston recommends approval if it meets the setback requirements and per the layout it appears to meet the setback requirements. A motion to recommend to the Zoning Board approval for Klauer to add solar panels in a C-1 Conservancy was made by Wagner and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried 3-0.

BIDS FOR NEW WINE PARK HOT MIX ASPHALT (HMA) SURFACING PROJECT:

Preston stated four bids were received. Kluesner Construction for \$127,230.00, Eastern Iowa Excavating & Concrete LLC for \$130,748.55, Pirc-Tobin for \$129,600.00 and Connolly Construction Inc. for \$126,912.45. Connolly Construction Inc. is the low bid at \$126,912.45. Preston recommends Connolly Construction Inc. A motion to award the New Wine Park HMA Surfacing Project to Connolly Construction Inc. for \$126,912.45 was made by Conforti and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 3-0.

BIDS FOR BANKSTON PARK POND RESTORATION AND AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) LOOP:

Preston stated two bids were received. Connolly Construction Inc. \$150,432.33 and Tschiggfrie Excavating Co. \$225,181.22. Preston recommended Connolly Construction with the low bid. A motion to award the Bankston Park Pond Restoration and ADA loop to Connolly Construction Inc. for \$150,432.33 was made by Wagner and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried 3-0.

PERMISSION TO SOLICIT BIDS FOR THE HERITAGE TRAIL HARD SURFACING PROJECT:

The Heritage Trail Hard Surfacing Project will start at the Dyersville Trail head and continue East. Troy Schroeder with the Iowa Department of Transportation has been assigned to work with us on this project. Mick Michels, City of Dyersville helped draw up some specifications for what we're looking for from engineering design and construction supervision. Michels recommend soliciting bids for qualified proposals. Preston said were looking for permission to solicit bids for Engineering Services for this project. A motion to approve soliciting bids for the Engineering Services for the Heritage Trail Hard Surfacing Project was made by Wagner and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried 3-0.

PERMISSION TO SOLICIT BIDS FOR HERITAGE TRAIL DURANGO ACCESS CMP CULVERT REPLACEMENT:

Preston stated on the Heritage Trail just west of Bridge 6 by Durango that a culvert is failing. This embankment is very deep and a challenging repair. The scope of the project is beyond our equipment. This project needs immediate repair and is not a budgeted project. Davis asked if we had an estimate for the project. Preston said the Engineer's estimate is \$12,000.00. A motion to approve soliciting bids for the Heritage Trail Durango Access CMP Culvert Replacement Project was made by Conforti and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 3-0.

MUD LAKE CONCESSION AGREEMENT:

Renew sub lease at Mud Lake with WW Corporation. This lease is similar to the lease agreement with Massey Marina. The Army Corps of Engineers has approved an increase in the annual rent from \$2,000.00 a year to \$2,500.00 a year. They also requested we move away from an annual lease to a longer lease. This lease would be for 10 years. A motion to approve the Mud Lake Concession Agreement with WW Corporation was made by Conforti and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION NO. 25-0618 IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR IOWA STATE RECREATIONAL TRAIL FUNDING:

Heritage Trail Bridge 30 replacement. Last month the Conservation Board approved applying for the State Recreational Trail Fund for Bridge 30 replacement. Bridge 30 has less than a two-year life expectancy remaining. The project would replace a timber pile bridge with a prestressed concrete beam bridge. The estimated amount to replace the bridge is \$227,000.00. State Trail Funds would assist with this cost and the Dubuque County Conservation Board will provide the 25 percent local match for \$56,750.00. A motion to approve Resolution No. 25-0618 with the Iowa Department of

Transportation for Iowa State Recreational Trail funding was made by Wagner and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried 3-0.

CAMPING COUPONS:

We currently offer a camping coupon book with seven nights of camping for the price of six nights. These may only be used in the first come first serve sites. They are very popular and have become burdensome to sell during our busy time. We propose selling the coupons books from November 1st through May 1st and adjusting the expiration from one year to two years. A motion to approve the changes for selling camping coupons and the extending of the expiration date was made by Wagner and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried 3-0.

TRAINING REQUEST 2025 IOWA'S COUNTY CONSERVATION SYSTEM (ICCS) FALL CONFERENCE:

The annual Fall Conference for 2025 will be hosted by Clay and Dickinson Counties at Lake Okoboji Conference Center. The conference dates run September 16th through September 18th. All Board members and staff are welcome to attend. This conference was in Decorah last year. This conference offers good training opportunities. A motion to approve attendance for Conservation Staff and Board Members to attend the 2025 ICCS Fall Conference was made by Conforti and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 3-0.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None

STAFF REPORTS:

DIRECTOR REPORT: Preston reported part of the John Deere trail connector was poured today. Last Friday there was a lot of storm damage throughout our parks. Fillmore, Whitewater Canyon and Bowstring were hit the heaviest. Ray Martin, Matt Nauman and Bruce Smith did an amazing job cleaning up with the help of volunteers on Saturday. Crews working clean up on the Heritage Trail, cleaning out culverts, limestone resurfacing where water was over the trail should all be wrapped up by the end of the week. Big thank you to all the staff the came in over the weekend and helped with the storm clean-up Nate, Nick, Emily, Seasonal Staff. Blue Crew continued clean-up Monday at Fillmore. Repaired 2 ft deep ruts at Proving Grounds. All boat slips have been rented at Massey Marina Lisa played a big part in that. We will have a display at the Dubuque County Fair next week, Iowa Department of Natural Resources on home energy conservation with staff and volunteers. Mud Lake will host the second in the series of Bluegrass music on Sunday.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR REPORT: Sisler reported a lot of time spent on the Mississippi River clearing log jams. Completed a new covered shelter on the Heritage Trail by Split Rock. Replaced an electrical and water line at camping site at Mud Lake, water leak at Massey repaired. Cleaning up after storms, we also had the kayak launch at Heritage Trail, come up off two of the pilings and get lodged up in the air. We set that back in place. Mud cleanup around Heritage Pond. Banks and culverts at the entrance to the park were full of debris that had been cleared out. Prairie plugs at Miller continued to water as needed. Nick has been working on spraying and mowing knotweed and also spraying poison hemlock in several areas. McCarthy Wildlife Area, all the problematic weeds have been spot mowed, so that prairie is coming in nicely right now. Just a lot of mowing and patrol. Split duct air system at Massey has been installed, and they're very thankful. They're able to stay open when it's been real hot.

GREEN SUPERINTENDENT REPORT: Martin reported it's been an incredibly eventful last two months at Fillmore. Lots of storm damage and equipment breakdowns. A massive thank you to our two part-time employees, Bruce and Matt. Especially, Matt, he puts in a pile of hours that go unnoticed. Can't stress enough how much Matt does for us. Also, a big thank you to the Blue Crew and Trail Crew for what they did it for us, cleaning up storm damage. That saved us 3 weeks of work. Having 15 kids for 2 straight days, all with garden rakes made a massive difference cleaning up for us. Without them, it would have taken us days to get the course even back open. It would have been weeks before it was enjoyable to play. With all the storm damage we had, we have lost a pile of trees at the golf course and we need to do something about replanting these

trees. I do have a contact person in Cascade that might donate some trees to us. I am waiting to hear back from them, that would save us a lot of money. We are currently budgeting for a fairway mower. Yesterday, I found a way that we could save about \$22,000.00 on our new fairway mower. New fairway mowers costs around \$90,000.00. We have some money set aside from the timber harvest at Fillmore. We have demoed a fairway mower just this past week from John Deere. That they're going to sell as a demo unit. After talking to our salesman about this, if that piece of equipment is bought this fall, which is ahead of our budget schedule the price goes down to \$77,970.00. If we don't purchase a new fairway mower this fall, we will still have expensive repairs to the current fairway mower for lift arms, wheel bearings, front tires, hydraulic cylinders, connecting yoke pins and seals and a new wiring harness due to mice damage. So, between the discount of \$12,126.00 and if I would have to spend \$10,000.00 on repairs. We potentially save \$22,000.00. The course is in very good shape and people are giving us tons of compliments.

NATURALIST REPORT: Denlinger reported environmental education highlights for June 2025. We had 771 participants and 33 programs. Past programs included Bioblitz surveys, summer camps, childcare visits, youth backpacking and canoe trips, Family Friday's, ecosystems and She Unites public paddles. Upcoming programs include summer camps, Family Friday's, Blue Crew, library programs, bat mist netting and kayaking.

OLD BUSINESS:

Property along Heritage Trail by Twin Springs was donated to the Conservation. Preston said we closed on the property that was donated, but the previous owner is still removing some things off the property. Davis recalled a dog park being mentioned. Preston said the restrictions were to be left in a natural state, but a dog park was an approved item in the conditions. Davis said he would be interested in pursuing that. Cascade Lake is drawing attention to people fishing there daily. Ownership has not transferred yet but hope to finalize this fall.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

A motion to approve the July 2025 payables, Visa Procurement Card and June 2025 Procurement Card was made by Conforti and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 3-0.

NEXT MEETING:

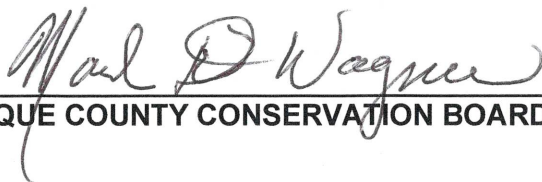
Thursday, August 14, 2025, at 4:00 P.M, Swiss Valley Nature Center.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn was made by Davis and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 3-0 and the meeting adjourned at 5:05 P.M.



DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBER



DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBER