

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

AUGUST 14, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

Dubuque County Conservation Board meeting was called to order by Chair, George Davis at 4:01 P.M. In person meeting at the Swiss Valley Nature Center with a Zoom link, <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87271882614?pwd=SK9ukGmDsHjVLWj3gKTaymGARFBGLp.1>
Meeting ID: 872 7188 2614 Passcode: 335869

ROLL CALL:

Board Members Present: George Davis, Mark Wagner, Stacy Conforti and Jim Pfeiler (4:02).

Absent: Sue Miller.

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

PUBLIC INPUT:

John Hanson ED.D. Founder of Ursus and Camille Eastburn, Co-founder and Chad DeBoer, Director of Sales for Kay Park Manufacturing in Janesville, WI. Ursus's mission is to support legalization of the Black Bear through education, scientific research and support making black bears a game animal in Iowa. Kay Park through Ursus would like to donate a bear resistant trash receptacle to the Dubuque County Conservation Board to be used at Finley's Landing Park and Campground.

Harry Miller, 38183 HWY 52, Bellevue, IA 52031, expressed concern about the public boat ramp at Massey Marina. He suggested extending the rock jetty to slow the current at the boat ramp. He asked the Conservation Board to take a good look at what they could do about making the boat ramp safer.

Michael Zelinskas, 1211 Deer Creek Ridge, Dubuque, IA 52003, member of the Walleye Club and would like to second the comments made by Miller. Zelinskas said he's had to call a wrecker before, because his boat trailer slid to the side trying to trailer his boat at the boat ramp. He suggested possibly looking at lengthening the boat ramp.

Tim Fiedler, 15696 Woodmoor Dr., Dubuque, IA 52002, he tried to use the boat ramp in July and could not have his wife get in the boat. They ended up going over to the gas dock for her to get on the boat. He would ask that something be done about this boat ramp as well.

Harold Nachtman, 1756 Plymouth Ct., Dubuque, IA 52003, agreed with previous comments. He felt the float itself was too short. If it was longer there would be more protection from the current. When the water rises a little the current just increases. The average boat is at least 20 feet long and that current at the end of dock swings your boat around.

Dave Ahmann, 3014 Treeco Ln., Bellevue, IA 52031, said two years ago rock was added, which helped. Ahmann would like to see more rock added to make the jetty longer and higher.

Sam Willett, 2290 Shiras Ave., Dubuque, IA 52001, said getting the Army Corps of Engineers, DNR and the US Fish and Wildlife out to see the ramp and what is happening would be beneficial. He asked if other options have been looked at. Using more of the parking lot or the grass area to the north side of the parking lot would be an alternative.

Preston said the last rock dam took three years to get approved. We lease this land from the Army Corps of Engineers. We are also limited to what we can do in a floodplain. Preston encouraged that as soon as a drop off by the ramp is noticed, call the office. The sooner we are made aware of a problem the sooner it will be addressed.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

A motion to approve the July 17, 2025, meeting minutes was made by Conforti and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 4-0.

PRESENTATION BY DUBUQUE AREA LAND AND WATER LEGACY:

Chuck Isenhardt, 1665 Kaufmann Ave., Dubuque, IA 52001, one of the directors for the Dubuque Area Land and Water Legacy. The Dubuque Area Land and Water Legacy is a grassroots community-based organization supporting research, education, advocacy and coalition-building to protect, conserve, enhance and enjoy our natural resources. Legacy sponsors a charitable fund at the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque to raise money and invest in land and water projects of non-profit organizations and public agencies that promote wildlife habitat. Ways to stay connected on the Facebook page, Habitat fund and being an ally. The City of Dubuque is working on a master plan for their Parks and Recreation Department. Isenhardt would like to see more collaboration between the City and the County on recreation development. This is an introduction to jointly work on common goals and advocate publicly for state and federal policies that support parks, recreation, wildlife and a master plan.

SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION:

Northeast Iowa Scouting America, Scouts BSA Camporee, October 24th -26th at New Wine Park. Youth and adults from several troops come together and have a camping event. Preston recommends approval for this event. A motion to approve the special event application for Northeast Iowa Scouting America at New Wine Park was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried 4-0.

BIDS FOR HERITAGE TRAIL DURANGO ACCESS CMP CULVERT REPLACEMENT:

Preston opened 6 bids on Tuesday, August 12th at 1:00 P.M. The apparent low bid is Connolly Construction Inc. for \$17,334.00. The other bids received were as follows; Connolly Excavating Inc. for \$17,999.91, Adam Laubenthal from Bradgate, IA for \$21,749.64, Ardo Schmidt Construction Inc. from Preston, IA for \$22,725.00, Eastern Iowa Excavating & Concrete for \$29,888.40 and Steger Construction Inc. for \$37,618.00. This culvert replacement is just west of Bridge 6 on the Heritage Trail by Durango. Preston recommends Connolly Construction Inc. A motion to award the Heritage Trail Durango Access CMP Culvert Replacement Project to Connolly Construction Inc. for \$17,334.00 was made by Davis and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried 4-0.

BIDS FOR ENGINEERING PROPOSALS FOR THE HERITAGE TRAIL HARD SURFACING PROJECT:

Preston stated three proposals were received. Origin Design proposed design development \$69,000.00 and services during construction \$82,600.00, WHKS proposed an asphalt trail for \$88,800.00, concrete trail \$81,630.00 or roller-compacted concrete trail \$85,830.00 and Endeavor Civil Engineering proposed \$99,720.00. After discussion it was decided that more review is needed for each proposal. Motion to take no action and hold a special meeting next week to award the engineering proposal for the Heritage Trail Hard Surfacing Project was made by Davis and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried 4-0.

FILLMORE FAIRWAY REPLACEMENT MOWER:

Martin explained that golf equipment is very specialized, and each dealer has their own district. This makes getting three quotes that are comparable a challenge. John Deere is offering a demo 2024 John Deere 7500A PrecisionCut Fairway Mower with 31 hours at a discounted rate of \$77,974.00, a new John Deere 7500A PrecisionCut Fairway Mower for \$90,100.00, Toro Reelmaster 5510-D for \$89,434.02 and Toro Reelmaster hybrid cut for \$86,000.00. Martin is requesting the fairway mower replacement a year early due to the poor condition the current fairway mower and the additional cost to repair it is substantial and the discount on the demo mower only runs until the middle of September. There is money from the Fillmore timber harvest that we will request to use towards this purchase. Motion to approve the purchase of the 2024 John Deere 7500A PrecisionCut Fairway Mower for \$77,974.00 was made by Conforti and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried 4-0.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None

STAFF REPORTS:

DIRECTOR REPORT: Preston reported last Sunday, August 10, 2025, we had a significant rain event at Swiss Valley, total of 6 inches of rain in a 2-hour period. There was extensive damage at the nature preserve with two bridges being completely washed out, three suspension bridges were damaged, the bridge farthest up in the preserve will not be able to be replaced until this fall. A lot of washouts on trails. Swiss Valley Park and Campground were opened back up today. There was a lot of damage at the creek crossing in the park, few truck loads of rock were hauled out of the crossing, Secondary Roads Department sent a tandem axle truck to help us haul all the rock out. We lost 30 foot of sidewalk in front of the bridge, the old sunken concrete was removed and patched will repour the concrete this fall. We had 54 campers in the campground Saturday night, August 9, 2025; we talked to them about the flash flood warning only one camper took on water Sunday morning. Tuesday night, August 12, 2025, the rain pushed the Little Maquoketa out of its banks which caused floodgates to be reset along Heritage Trail. Number of trees down at Proving Grounds which will be taken care of tomorrow. Contracts complete for the Bankston and New Wine projects. Bad water test at Swiss Valley campground, shocking the well with chorine, new sample will be taken Monday. There were ants inside the well casing which will cause the test to show positive for coliform. The groundwater itself is not bad it's surface contamination. Finishing up with FEMA funding agreement is on a resolution for the Board of Supervisor's meeting. Trail crew is finished and seasonals are wrapping up this year. Nate is on vacation this week and next week. Extremely light on staff this week and next. An enormous cottonwood tree came down at Graf and took out power lines, the information kiosk and a bench. Secondary Road Department was able to bring a truck, skid steer with grapple bucket to help us remove the 10 loads of debris. A month ago the Secondary Roads Department shop was destroyed in Bernard. The Board of Supervisors has reached out about putting up a new County shop at Fillmore. They are pursuing all opportunities and inquired if we are interested. We will need a new shop at Fillmore within the next 5 years.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR REPORT: None

GREEN SUPERINTENDENT REPORT: Martin thanked the board for approving the new fairway mower. Martin expressed concern for traffic and other equipment on the road if a secondary roads shop was built at Fillmore. Martin is excited about the Board Tour and what improvements have been made at Fillmore.

NATURALIST REPORT: Schaefer's reported seasonal environmental staff are also wrapping up for the summer. Highlights for environmental education for July 2025, participants of 1,123 and 47 programs. A few less programs but higher participation in July. Past programs included Summer Camps, St. Mark's programs, NICC Kids on Campus, Library programs, Paddling programs and Bat mist netting. Upcoming programs include birding hikes, fall field trips, Forest School, annual Harvest Dinner and Hunter Education classes.

OLD BUSINESS:

Davis gave an update on the Lake in Cascade. The titling and boundary lines are being cleaned up before final transfer to the county. Preston reported that the Strathman real estate property transaction is closed, and he is finishing up removal of a few personal items.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

A motion to approve the August 2025 payables, current Visa Procurement Card and July 2025 Procurement Mastercard Cards was made by Conforti and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 4-0.

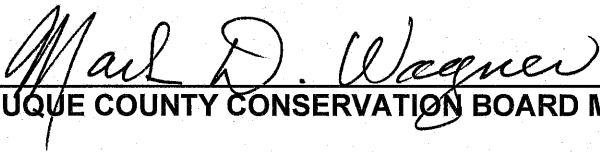
NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, August 19, 2025, at 1:00 P.M., Swiss Valley Nature Center.

Thursday, September 18, 2025, at 8:00 A.M., EB Lyons Auditorium.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried 4-0 and the meeting adjourned at 5:42 P.M.



DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBER



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