



DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD
13606 Swiss Valley Road
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Brian Preston, Director
Board Members:
George Davis
Mark Wagner
Jim Pfeiler
Stacy Conforti
Nick Callahan

JANUARY 15, 2026 MEETING MINUTES

Dubuque County Conservation Board meeting was called to order by Chair George Davis at 4:00 P.M. In person meeting held at the Swiss Valley Nature Center with a Zoom link, <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86291625973?pwd=u9cs3YLrHajDc2riz5pJ9F7VZjaLHG.1>
Meeting ID: 862 9162 5973 Passcode: 954370

ROLL CALL:

Board Members Present: George Davis, Mark Wagner, Jim Pfeiler, and Nick Callahan. Absent: Stacy Conforti.

Staff Members Present: Nate Sisler, Ray Martin, Addy Schober and Lisa Schroeder. Zoom: Brian Preston

PUBLIC INPUT:

None

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Motion to approve the December 18, 2025, meeting minutes was made by Callahan and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried 4-0.

ELECTION FOR THE 2026 CONSERVATION BOARD OFFICERS:

Preston stated a nomination is made and if accepted then a motion is made for approval. Davis stated he would be willing to continue as Chair. Pfeiler stated a nomination to continue with the same Officers as last year.

Motion to elect George Davis as Chair, Mark Wagner as Vice-Chair and Jim Pfeiler as Secretary for the 2026 Conservation Board Officers was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Davis.

Motion carried 4-0.

AWARD BID FOR A NEW MOWER:

Sisler opened two bids for a 72 in. four-wheel drive, front deck with side discharge mower.

- Roeder Outdoor Power: Kubota F3710, Total Bid Price \$27,658.17
- Bodensteiner Implement: John Deere 1570, Total Bid Price \$24,584.00

Motion to award the bid to Bodensteiner Implement for \$24,584.00 for a new John Deere 1570 out-front mower was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 4-0.

REAR MOUNT FLAIL MOWER:

Sisler explained this is a specialized piece of equipment used mainly on the Heritage Trail. Sisler contacted three companies for bids but only two offered the mower with a 6-foot deck and a 3-point hitch.

- Bodensteiner Implement: John Deere 1272S Flail mower for \$9,989.00
- Diamond Mower: RSF075-C Rear Swing Flail mower \$20,450.00
- Mid Country Machinery: John Deere 5510 rear Flail mower \$21,788.66

Motion to approve the purchase with Bodensteiner Implement for a John Deere 1272S Flail mower for \$9,989.00 was made by Callahan and seconded by Wagner. Motion carried 4-0.

SOLICIT BIDS FOR SWISS VALLEY ELECTRICAL UPGRADE:

Sisler presented specifications for the Swiss Valley Park electrical upgrade. The project includes:

- Installation of 25 campsites to complete the 50-amp upgrade
- Replacement of water lines in conjunction with electrical trenching
- Installation of individual ground rods at each pedestal
- Mounting the main service on the shower house
- Retaining the current transformer location outside the floodplain

Motion to approve soliciting bids for Swiss Valley Electrical Upgrade was made by Callahan and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried 4-0.

HERITAGE TRAIL BRIDGE NO. 30 REPLACEMENT:

Sisler presented a professional services agreement with Origin Design for Heritage Trail Bridge No. 30 replacement. Estimated design and construction oversight cost approximately \$53,000.00.

- The project will be funded through a State Recreational Trail Grant totaling \$177,000.00, with a \$50,000.00 budgeted local match.

Motion to approve professional services agreement with Origin Design for Heritage Trail Bridge No. 30 replacement was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Callahan. Motion carried 4-0.

IOWA FOREST RESILIENCY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (IFRPP) GRANT:

Sisler presented a Notice of Intent to Award from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources in the amount of \$128,858.00, subject to approval by the Natural Resource Commission.

- A 25% match (approximately \$32,000.00) is required. Matching funds will come from timber harvest revenue and other eligible funds.

Motion to approve acceptance of the Iowa Forest Resiliency Partnership Program Grant was made by Wagner and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried 4-0.

TRAINING REQUEST FOR STAFF – IOWA STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES (ISAC):

The ISAC Spring Conference will be held March 11–13 in Des Moines. Registration cost is \$220 per person (excluding lodging). The conference includes breakout sessions for conservation directors and board members. Requesting up to two staff members for attendance.

Motion to approve staff attendance for the 2026 ISAC Spring Conference was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Callahan. Motion carried 4-0.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None

STAFF REPORTS:

Staff members provided updates on various projects and activities.

DIRECTOR REPORT: Preston reported:

- Attended Open Meetings training; new state law requires appointed board members after July 1, 2025, to complete training within 90 days.
- Staff met with RDg regarding long-range planning.
- A board work session and public open houses for Cascade, Dyersville, and Dubuque are being scheduled for the long-range plan input.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR REPORT: Sisler reported:

- Completed insulation work in the silo roof at the Swiss Valley Nature Center.
- Replaced loader tracks on equipment.
- Conducted prescribed burn at Pohlman Prairie.
- Continued tree pruning, invasive species removal, timber stand improvement, and hazard tree removal.
- Wood duck box checks indicate approximately 50% success rate.
- Installed new signage at Swiss Valley Nature Center, Massey Marina, and Fillmore Clubhouse.

GREENS SUPERINTENDENT REPORT: Martin reported:

- Approximately 30 - 35 stumps burned, reducing removal cost
- Timber area burned in preparation for prairie seeding.
- 13 remaining ash trees to be removed before spring.
- Equipment maintenance and chemical planning underway.

NATURALIST REPORT: Schober reported:

- December participation: 728 attendees.
- Programs included preschool Outdoor Adventures, seed starting workshop, Illuminate the Night hikes, basket weaving, chronic wasting disease program, birding hike, and recycled papermaking.
- Upcoming programs include school field trips, first grade Outdoor Adventures, winter ecology hikes, restoration events, and educational presentations.

No formal action was taken; reports were informational.

OLD BUSINESS:

Promotional Video

- Drone footage has been received and is being compiled into a promotional video highlighting parks and conservation efforts.

Locher Lake Property Acquisition

- Property valued at approximately \$2 million; purchase price \$500,000.
- Grants secured totaling approximately \$240,000.
- Additional funding sources include \$75,000 DNR grant and \$25,000 Friends contribution.
- Approximately \$200,000 net investment is anticipated.
- Closing expected in late January or early February pending budget amendment adjustments.

Dorothy Kloft Estate

- Approximately 165-acre property subject to trust litigation.
- Conservation Board named as beneficiary under amended trust.
- Discussion held regarding legal representation to protect Board interest.
- County Attorney to be contacted; outside counsel may be retained if necessary.

Heritage Trail Property Donation Strathman

- Approximately 55 acres along the Heritage Trail near Twin Springs.
- Forest Resiliency grant includes reforestation components for the property.
- Donor recognition opportunity through Governor's event under consideration.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion to approve the January 2026 payables and December 2025 Procurement Cards was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Callahan. Motion carried 4-0.

NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, February 19, 2026, at 4:00 P.M., Swiss Valley Nature Center, 13606 Swiss Valley Rd. Peosta, Iowa 52058.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn was made by Callahan and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried 4-0 and the meeting adjourned at 5:01 P.M.



DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBER



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