

The Tama County Conservation Board met in regular session on Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup> at the Tama County Nature Center, Otter Creek Lake and Park. The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm. Members present were: Adolphs, Atchison, Keenan, Wacha and Wrage. Also present were: Logan Roberts (Staff), Dan Anderson (Board of Supervisors), Kendall Jordan (Board of Supervisors), and Larry Vest (Board of Supervisors).

Minutes from the August 14<sup>th</sup> 2019 meeting were reviewed. It was moved by Wacha, seconded by Atchison, to approve the minutes as presented, carried.

Bills were presented to be paid in the month of September 2019. It was moved by Adolphs, seconded by Wacha, to approve the minutes as presented, carried.

### **Staff Reports**

Staff reports for work completed during the month of August were shared. Roberts, Director, worked on current projects, campground paperwork, area assessments, hosting a District I County Conservation meeting, and beginning planning for the Fall Festival. Kelly's Environmental Education Report was presented, including programming at daycares, nursing homes, libraries, to Genesis Development, Kiwanis Club and a public campfire program. Program Planning for the 2020 season was started. Horne's Maintenance Report was presented, including work on park roads, cleaning pits at the shower house, seeding grass at the new South Loop campsites, work on playgrounds, mowing firebreaks, mowing Wolf Creek Trail, spraying parking lots at Heritage Wetlands, Columbia Wildlife Area, and Otter Creek Park, cleaning fire rings and grills, and clearing invasive species along the roadways at Otter Creek Park.

### **Meetings Attended/Upcoming Meetings**

Roberts reported that Tama County hosted the District I County Conservation meeting the second week of August. The meeting was well-attended and guest speakers gave very quality presentations. All Tama County Conservation daytime staff attended. During the third week of August Roberts attended ISAC/CCDA (Iowa State Association of Counties and County Conservation Directors Association) meeting in Des Moines. Roberts will be attending the ICCS Conference in Muscatine if time allows in the month of September.

### **Lake Restoration Update**

Roberts updated the board about the lake restoration project and will continue to work with the DNR on creating an RFP for the project and exploring fundraising options

### **FEMA 2019 Disaster Applicant Update**

Roberts reported that the work on the boat ramps is completed and paperwork will be completed soon. The work on replacing culverts/crossing that were silted in and washed out will be completed as weather allows.

## **Oxbow Bottoms Wildlife Area**

Roberts updated the board that the public hearing for the ROW Easements at Oxbow Bottoms Wildlife Area is set for Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9:30 a.m. with the Board of Supervisors.

## **Transition to New Director**

The Conservation Board and Board of Supervisors discussed the residence at Otter Creek Lake & Park. The boards discussed parts of the home that are in disrepair or non-operable, including the electrical, septic, plumbing, heating and air conditioning, exterior coverings, interior coverings (doors, windows, stairs, floors, walls), structural supports, leaking foundation, and multiple locations with black mold. At current state, the residence is not structurally sound or up to code. Renovation options and costs were discussed, totaling over \$150,000 before inclusion of bringing plumbing, heating and electrical up to code, nearing the cost of new construction. The Conservation Board expressed concern in putting funds into a structure that is a 40+ year-old pre-fab modular home and would continue to require ongoing maintenance. Past maintenance costs and utility averages were again shared with both boards. The Conservation Board shared points previously brought up in their discussion weighing the benefit of a staff member residing in the home compared to the cost of renovation and ongoing maintenance costs. The Conservation Board expressed that there are not enough funds currently available to renovate the house and also prioritize important projects that will benefit the entire county and its citizens and wildlife, such as lake restoration at Otter Creek Lake and campground, facility and habitat improvements. The Conservation Board expressed that at this time they do not plan to renovate nor rebuild the residence structure and discussed future alternatives for security and staff availability. They would like to salvage the existing foundation as a storage structure to avoid taking more material to the landfill. Job description, job posting and housing policy that were part of director hiring process were presented to the Board. The Board discussed fair compensation to Roberts to replace the benefit of a provided residence and utilities that was included at hire. It was moved by Wacha, seconded by Adolphs, to increase Roberts' base salary by \$1,000 a month (\$12,000 per year), back-paying to date that Roberts was to take residence at the park (August 1), all carried. The Board of Supervisors indicated that they will consider and make decision on approving of removal of park residence from the county premises at Monday, September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **Fall Festival**

Roberts updated the board on planning for the annual Fall Festival event, to be held on Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup>. The event will include a guest speaker program on Bobcats of Iowa, bowfishing demonstrations, crafts, and horse-drawn wagon rides. The board discussed helping with archery, obtaining apples for the cider press, and getting information out to vendors that may be interested in selling goods at the event.

## **New Business**

The DNR was just in contact to let staff know they will be stocking the lake and pond with channel catfish in the next week.

With no other new business, it was motioned by Atchison, seconded by Wacha to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m., all carried.