

April 2021

Call to Order

The Tama County Conservation Board met in regular session on Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at the Tama County Nature Center. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chair, Atchison.

Board Members present: Adolphs, Atchison, Wacha, and Wrage.

Staff Members present: Mayne, Wise, and Kelly.

Public present: Halter

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the March 2021 regular meeting were reviewed. It was moved by Wacha, seconded by Wrage to approve the minutes as recorded, carried, all voting aye.

Approval of Bills

Bills were presented to be paid from the month of March 2021. It was moved by Wacha, seconded by Wrage to approve bills, carried, all voting aye.

Reports & Updates

Public Comment: Delania Halter, Site Administration & Training with Alliant Energy was present and discussed grants offered by Alliant Energy for large environmental impact grants and small annual grants. She felt the lake restoration project would fit well into the criteria needed for the larger grants allocated by Alliant Energy. She offered assistance in the effort to review and apply for a grant related to the Lake Restoration Project.

Maintenance Report: Wise's report included; repaired picnic tables, made new signs, cut and cleared limbs at Wolf Creek Trail, smoothed out stump holes, trim trees, move brush piles at Otter Creek Lake & Park, cut trees in preparation for the lake restoration project at BMP sites, replace Nature Center toilet paper and paper towel racks, continued to clean the Nature Center basement, replaced the maintenance shop lights with new LED lights, replaced broken posts and fire rings, fixed the merry-go-round, and added two more camp sites 9 & 10 at T.F. Clark Park.

Environmental Education Report: Kelly's report included; field trip schedules & planning, public program advertising and preparation, classroom programming planning, summer day camp planning, live animal care, Nature Center Basement renovation planning, live animal display designing for Nature Center Basement. Kelly provided a tour of the Nature Center's Basement to show the Board of what he is planning for the first phase of the live animal display. Kelly mentioned that he hosted and participated in 6 public events in the month of March.

Meetings Attended: Mayne's report included; CCDA Meeting with all Conservation Directors in the State of Iowa, the Tama County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, Iowa DNR & Fyra Public Planning Meeting, and FEMA & Insurance Meeting to review with all County department heads who had damage from the 2020 Derecho Storm.

Old Business

Lake Restoration Project: Mayne & Wise attended the March 29 Board of Supervisors Meeting for the approval of depositing the Iowa's DNR checks of \$255,564.29 and \$3,323.61 into the LAD fund for the cost share of the Lake Restoration Project. The Iowa DNR & Fyra provided a tentative shutdown

procedure of Otter Creek Lake & Park which includes; post notifications of park closure on June 1st, removal of floating dock on July 6th, closure of boat dock following a 2' drawdown, closure of beach front and removal of beach swimming ropes, closure to west side camping on August 16th, closure of all Otter Creek Lake & Park Public Hunting Grounds on August 16th. The Public Meeting for the Lake Restoration is scheduled to be held on April 13th at 6:00pm via Zoom. Public handouts will be available for pick-up at the front entrance to the Nature Center and will have poster boards on display to help educate the general public about the Lake Restoration Project.

COVID-19 Response: Mayne reported that since the announcement of opening the Nature Center have had an influx of rental bookings. Mayne also mentioned that since the State of Iowa announced that 1/3 of Iowans have been vaccinated, would like to increase the maximum occupancy of the Nature Center from 50 to 100 people. Mayne also mentioned that all rentals must provide their own masks and masks must be worn by all visitors while in the building. Adolphs made the motion to increase the total occupancy to 100 people, seconded by Wacha, motioned carried, all voting aye.

FEMA Update: Mayne and Wise attended the FEMA and Insurance Meeting with all County Department Head Officials on Thursday, March 25 at 1:30pm located at the County's Engineering Building. During that meeting Wise was told that whatever our insurance won't cover, FEMA may reimburse the County for. We are currently waiting for approval from FEMA for reimbursement including; time, labor and equipment for debris, tree cleanup, etc. Wise mentioned that insurance will only cover \$2,531 for the purchase of a new dock. The current dock we are currently looking to purchase is approximately \$11,000. It was mentioned that he will contact the manufacturer to see if we can purchase the dock now and install it following the Lake Restoration Project. Wise also mentioned that he would like to combine the Boat House and the Hog House together and construct a new larger storage building that will cost approximately \$30,000. He was asked to collect quotes on the cost for a concrete floor.

New Business

Seasonal Jobs: Mayne mentioned that we interviewed and hired 4 new seasonal staff that includes; 2 Conservation Aides and 2 Park Ranger Interns.

Federal Work-Study Program: Mayne mentioned that he has been in contact with the Iowa Valley Community College System and has shown interest to advertise the position of Administrative Assistant & Naturalist Aide. The position is paid and covered by insurance through the Student Aid Office at Iowa Valley Community College. Mayne mentioned since this is a new position to the Conservation Board needs to be voted on. Wrage made the motion to create the new position of Administrative Assistant & Naturalist Aide, seconded by Adolphs, motion carried, all voting aye.

Campgrounds Reopening: Wise mentioned at T.F. Clark Park is now opened and plans to open the East Campgrounds at Otter Creek Lake & Park by April 16th. Wise mentioned that due to extensive cleanup work following the Derecho Storm, plan to open the West Campgrounds later in the month or early in May.

Utilizing the Mobile Home for Seasonal Staff: Mayne mentioned that he would like to create incentives to attract qualified and talented Seasonal Staff from local Community Colleges and Universities to work for the Tama County Conservation Board. Mayne mentioned that it is hard to find decent temporary housing in the local area, especially for potential seasonal interns who may not be from the area. Mayne

thought it would be a great incentive to utilize the Mobile Home for Seasonal Staff during the summer camping season while employed with the Tama County Conservation Board. Wacha mentioned that if we move forward with this plan, should create a Temporary Housing Policy for Seasonal Staff to be brought back to the Board for review.

Adjourn

With no further discussion items, it was motioned by Wrage, seconded by Wacha to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Board Chair
Tama County Conservation Board