

February 7, 2024

Call to Order

The Tama County Conservation Board met in regular session on Wednesday, February 7, 2024 at the Tama County Nature Center. The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by Chair, Keenan.

Board Members present: Adolphs, Allen, Wacha, Kenkel, and Keenan.

Staff Members present: Conrad, Genaw, Behrens, Horne.

Public present: Soren Peterson with the Tama-Toledo Chronicle, Delania Halter

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the January 2024 meeting were reviewed. It was moved by Adolphs, seconded by Kenkel, to approve the minutes as recorded, carried, all voting aye.

Approval of Bills

Bills were presented for February 2024 totaling \$9,156.42. Deposits were made totaling \$3,184.30. It was moved by Wacha, seconded by Adolphs, to approve payment of the bills, all voting aye.

Public Comment

N/A

Reports & Updates

Environmental Education Report: Genaw carried out 11 programs in January with a total attendance of 200. January's programs included archery coaching for South Tama, monthly WHEP meeting, Knee-High Naturalist, monthly visit to Sunny Hill Care Center, a winter bird presentation at the Traer Library, monthly visit to Ms. Lacy's Preschool, nature club at G-R elementary, and Ice Camp with 4-H. January's OWLS program was cancelled due to the snowstorm and the papermaking class planned for January was cancelled due to low registration. Attended Winterfest with the rest of the staff. Wrote an article on Olive the hedgehog that was posted on the county website and re-posted in the newspaper. Also wrote an article about how animals survive winter in Iowa. Took hedgehog to the vet to follow up on mite treatment. She is healthy and her mite issue is clearing up nicely. Made poster for Fun Night and posted it online. Contacted local nursing homes and assisted living facilities to provide programming. Already visited Birkwood Village, will be visiting Westbrook Acres and Premier Estates of Toledo this month. Will be visiting Birkwood and Sunny Hill each month. Have been organizing lots of activities for summer reading programs in Tama County and planning for upcoming summer camps with 4-H. Posted jobs for seasonals on the county website, the chamber of commerce website, and conservation job board.

Finalized contract with Americorps for the seasonal environmental educator. Sent out monthly newsletter. Reported on charitable gambling permit.

Maintenance report: Moved snow, went to Winterfest, did Ike's refresher course. New tires on 2012 truck, burned brush piles, have been cutting cottonwood trees in Parcel C, attended S 130 fire refresher course. Met with DNR engineer about BMP 5.

Park Officer's Report: Cut and move brush along the road by big shelter. Cut thorny locust in tree planting, picked up and put in a pile. Checked trash at Ike's and Reining. Got new tires put on 2012 chevy. Pushed, blew, shoveled, and salted roads and NC entrance. Worked on S-130 Training. Fixed snowblower breakdowns. Kept all trucks operating. Got replacement parts for snowblowers. Cleaned up interior of shop. Performed maintenance on all large equipment. Burned most of our brush piles. Presented rules at Ike's training night. Put new lock and camera at Ike's. Took old printer out of office. Picked up trash at boat ramps. Attended Winterfest. Got seed drill quotes. Started moving brush pile at picnic point. Did RT-130 Fire refresher. Met with DNR engineer about BMP 5.

Director's Report: Went to Winterfest. Worked on budget. Went to district meeting in Polk County. Prepped for Ike's training. Got padlock installed at Ike's Range. Met at TF Clark with group that wants to do a Civil War Reenactment in Fall. Met with Mel Bro with USDA to discuss annual 5th grade field trip. Seasonal jobs were posted. Arlo and Josey may return as Conservation Aides. Adolphs inquired as to whether or not the seasonal jobs will be full-time, as she knows an interested party. Behrens responded, saying that full-time is strongly preferred and a full application would be necessary. Went to safety meeting about first aid and insurance. Met with many DNR folks including Paul Sleeper, fisheries biologist, to discuss next steps for the lake. Has sold many Ike's passes. Had a lot of sales meetings with vendors. Went to fire refresher with other staff. Keenan inquired what the vendors have been trying to sell. Behrens responded that somebody came into the office to discuss selling a skid steer and a Cintas representative wanted to sell first aid supplies. Behrens met with auditor to discuss budget. Has been looking at purchasing an SUV with state bids. Process is taking awhile. Wacha suggests that buying a truck first and later pursuing an SUV may be ideal. Behrens agreed with this sentiment. Behrens hopes to present vehicle quotes at next month's meeting.

Old Business

Ike's Training: Behrens said training night went well. Behrens said that the current \$50 fee covers one year and cards reflect that, but wants to hear if any board members think it should be resumed as a 2-year fee. Allen said that the fee has always covered 2 years and we don't need the money. Allen also said that there is a statement about potentially increasing user fee next year that should be removed. Allen said that some people may not be able to pay \$50 each year. Adolphs questioned this statement. Wacha suggested that building up the funds in the Ike's account may assist with future improvement projects and most other ranges charge a lot more. Allen stated that Marshalltown's range costs \$100 per year and having our fee low may drive more business to us. Allen further stated that the money in the Ike's fund can only be used for projects at Ike's and we don't need the money. Allen asked how often Ike's Training classes occur. Behrens stated once per year. Allen commented that leaving the statement in the Ike's Training presentation is probably fine in that case. Behrens wanted ruling on whether \$50 per year is an appropriate fee to have. Wacha agreed that \$50 per year is acceptable. Allen made motion to make fee \$50 for 2 years again, no second. Wacha made motion to run the 2 year cycle again for the \$50 fee until the end of 2025, Allen seconded, all voting aye. Behrens will need to send out an email to state that the current range pass cycle will last until the end of 2025. The range passes will also need to be redone to

reflect this change. Wacha commented that having extra money in the Ike's account may aid in future repairs or projects.

Budget: Behrens presented budget near end of January to Board of Supervisors. BOS approved the budget with no changes.

Fun Night planning: Behrens invited those present to update those in attendance on Fun Night. Wacha selected some guns for the gun raffle and wishes for staff to choose one for the raffle as soon as possible. Keenan commented on potentially buying a straight-wall deer rifle for the raffle. Wacha commented that the discussed with another person about which guns are popular at raffles and suggested that getting a specialized or unique gun may generate more interest. Allen commented that 410s are very popular at the moment, with Wacha agreeing. Behrens suggested that Horne and Conrad may choose the gun to raffle out of the ones Wacha suggested. Wacha also suggested having a live- or silent-auction gun in addition to the raffle gun.

Delania Halter said that she is still working on setting up catering and getting quotes. She is currently working on a list of those to reach out to for silent auction items. Delania also stated that her family will not be able to volunteer at Fun Night this year and suggested looking for additional volunteers. Wacha stated that gathering donations for the silent auction is the biggest time commitment for Fun Night and additional help will be needed for that. Adolphs and Kenkel commented that they would be able to help. Halter brought up potentially having a memorial bench as a silent auction item. Conrad and Horne stated that the cost of a memorial bench is about five- or six-hundred dollars.

New Business

Culvert Repairs at New Silt Pond: Behrens stated that a culvert downstream of BMP 5 going under the road has water that's moving around the culvert rather than through it and has cracks. Behrens, Conrad, and Horne met with DNR folks to discuss repairing it. The DNR folks suggested injecting bentonite to seal it again. Keenan asked what bentonite is. Behrens responded that it is a particulate material that lines and seals holes at the same time, like clogging an artery. Behrens wondered if this fix would last long-term. Conrad suggested that the issue with the culvert is the cause of the lake filling up so quickly.

Floor Discussion

Keenan inquired as to how well the skirting on the mobile home has been working. Behrens has stated that it has been fairly good but didn't prevent a freeze during the big snowstorm last month.

Adjourn

With no further discussion items, it was motioned by Adolphs, seconded by Wacha, to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 p.m., all voting aye.

Board Chair

Tama County Conservation Board