

June 5, 2024

Call to Order

The Tama County Conservation Board met in regular session on Wednesday, June 5, 2024 at the Tama County Nature Center. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chair, Keenan.

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

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

Public present: N/A

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the May 2024 meeting were reviewed. It was moved by Adolphs, seconded by Kenkel, to approve the minutes with revision that Kenkel was present at last meeting, all voting aye.

Approval of Bills

Bills were presented for May 2024 totaling \$78,890.47. Deposits were made totaling \$10,773.59. It was moved by Kenkel, seconded by Adolphs, to approve payment of the bills, all voting aye.

Public Comment

Reports & Updates

Environmental Education Report: Carried out 14 programs in May with a total attendance of 207. Programs included Knee-High Naturalist, WHEP, Outdoor Classroom with USDA, Girl Scouts, G-R's School of the Wild, North Tama's 3rd grade field trip, Homeschool Adventures, a Sunny Hill visit, Ms. Lacy's Preschool visit, Birkwood Village visit, Cicada presentation at the Traer Library, and dinosaur program at the Garwin Library. Hosted Ms. Lacy's Preschool for a field trip day. WHEP team went to state competition, won senior division, and will be moving on to nationals. Sent out monthly newsletter. Did AmeriCorps supervisor training. AmeriCorps member started on June 3rd. Planned for fall IAN conference. Prepared for summer camps.

Maintenance report: Serviced ranger truck. Got shower house in working order. Got food plot seed from Theisen's. Bladed roads in park. Got dirt for seed bombs. Took playground to Clarks Park, waiting for ADA ramps. Set up for 5th grade field day. Cut up and moved trees at Clark's Park from saw class. Installed landscape fabric, border, and wood chips for playgrounds and Clarks and OCLAP. Took loads of trash to the landfill. Gathered and put back fire extinguishers for their inspection. Moved downed tree at heritage wetland. Diagnosed clogged wetland control structure at heritage wetland. Raked up sticks from saw class. Weed ate campgrounds at OCLAP. Seeded bare spots on campers hill. Ordered and

brought rock to campers hill and under Nature Center. Checked areas for flood damage. Mowed Ike's, Reining, Clarks Park, OCLAP. Planted dove food plot. Fixed floating pit toilet. Fixed electrical issues in campground. Cleaned NC. Got trash and weed ate at Ike's and Reining. Mowed pheasants forever seeding and helped out with tree planting and seed bombs. Fixed blown hydraulic line on Kubota tractor.

Park Officer's Report: Serviced ranger truck. Got shower house in working order. Got food plot seed from Theisen's. Bladed roads in park. Got dirt for seed bombs. Took playground to Clarks Park, waiting for ADA ramps. Set up for 5th grade field day. Organized desk and truck/ wash and clean desk and truck. Cut up and moved trees at Clark's Park from saw class. Installed landscape fabric, border, and wood chips for playgrounds and Clarks and OCLAP. Took loads of trash to the landfill. Gathered and put back fire extinguishers for their inspection. Moved downed tree at heritage wetland. Diagnosed clogged wetland control structure at heritage wetland. Raked up sticks from saw class. Weed ate campgrounds at OCLAP. Seeded bare spots on campers hill. Brought rock to campers hill. Checked areas for flood damage. Mowed Ikes, Reining, Clarks Park, OCLAP. Planted dove food plot. Fixed floating pit toilet. Fixed electrical issues in campground. Cleaned NC. Got trash and weed ate at Ike's and Reining. Mowed pheasants forever seeding and helped out with tree planting and seed bombs. Fixed blown hydraulic line on Kubota tractor. Attended insurance benefits meeting. Collected camping fees. Patrolled campgrounds and Ike's. Gathered information on MACH and Tracs and CAD-5. Installed computer mount in truck. Talked with camper at Clark's about barking dogs. Had them leave before memorial day weekend due to prolonged stay over 14 days, multiple complaints about barking dogs, and dogs living in unsanitary conditions. Pulled dead deer off Hwy 30. Responded to call for hit eagle, couldn't find it. DNR later picked up the eagle.

Director's Report: Attended department head meeting. Met with HR and auditor to set up timesheet program for seasonals. Taught at Outdoor Classroom. NC railing was installed. Investigated water leak at OCLAP and found leaking pipe. Helped with fishing Homeschool Adventures program. Met with kayak rental service as discussed last meeting. Hosted 4-H volunteer program. Did rental and shelter reservations. Helped spread mulch and install border at playgrounds. Worked on NC landscape with South Tama highschoolers. Worked on scanner and IT issues.

Old Business

Playground Updates: Mulch is done, border is done at OCLAP. Mulch is done at Clark's Park. Waiting for contractors to install swing set at Clark's Park. Have had lots of traffic at new beach playground at OCLAP and new playground at TF Clark's Park.

Lake Levels and Fish: Lake has risen quite a bit. Catfish were just stocked by DNR, as well as bluegill and bass back in April. Crappies will be stocked in October.

Nature Center Updates: Gravel has been added below to construct a driveway for canoe and truck storage. Naturalist and intern office has been moved downstairs. Railing for deck has been installed. Working on getting retaining walls built.

New Business

Nature Center/Lake Landscaping: See director's report.

Shelter Reservations: Behrens has had many calls asking to use shelters at OCLAP and Clark's Park and suggests charging a small fee for use. Board members expressed support, suggesting having a small non-refundable fee for shelter reservations. It was motioned by Allen, seconded by Kenkel, to charge \$10 for reservation of the shelter at Clark's Park and \$20 for reservation of shelters at OCLAP starting on July 1st, all voting aye.

Water Line Leak: See director's report.

Culvert Repairs needed at West Lobe of Lake: The water control structure at the culvert has a hole surrounding it and has a significant amount of lost soil surrounding it, which will eventually destabilize the road.

Ranger House Future Use: Behrens has accepted offer to sell his house and is planning to move in the next few months. After moving, he will no longer need to use the ranger house. Behrens suggested creating a future plan for use of the ranger house, whether it be using it for housing seasonals, getting rid of it, or another option. Board members suggested not putting any additional money into it due to existing issues and potentially using saved funds for cabins as a distant future project.

Seasonal Positions for 2024-25: Two seasonals have had unforeseen circumstances and will be either leaving their position or adjusting their schedule. Staff suggested leaving one of the positions vacant and saving the funds to hire an intern for the fall/winter months and hiring one part-time intern.

Campground Fire Wood: Now that TCCB has a wood splitter, Behrens inquired about fire wood sale, with board members expressing support for selling fire wood in the campground. Staff suggested testing fire wood sales near one of the staff buildings at OCLAP and adding a camera to monitor visitor use. Board members suggested for money collected from fire wood sales to be put into the Nature Center Trust Fund, campground improvements, or future cabin construction.

End-of-Year Budget and Savings: Behrens presented a document showing remaining funds for this fiscal year in various accounts. He suggested purchasing trailers to hold water for controlled burns, with board expressing support.

Floor Discussion

Behrens and Genaw discussed funding for the Tama County WHEP team to go to the national contest in Brownwood, Texas. Genaw has been greatly involved in coaching the WHEP team and expressed that the program will prepare the participating youth to be responsible landowners or successful conservationists in the future. It was motioned by Kenkel, seconded by Adolphs, to fund the WHEP program in an amount not to exceed \$2,000, all voting aye.

Adolphs has chosen to resign after her 28 years of service to the conservation board, hoping that somebody younger with new ideas will be able to fill her place. All in attendance expressed that they would miss her.

Adjourn

With no further discussion items, it was motioned by Kenkel, seconded by Allen, to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m., all voting aye.

Board Chair

Tama County Conservation Board