

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes March, 7 2023

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session March 7, 2023 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jeanie Carrol, Marilyn Clark, Dennis Koenig and Steve Weymiller. Board member who was absent was Jesse DeLaney. Attending from the public was Dennis Blocker, Mark Reiser, Dave Smith, and Jordan Bacon. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes and Erin Cubbon.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the agenda and minutes from the February 7, 2023 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Carrol and a second by Clark with all members in favor.

There was no public comment.

The Board reviewed and approved claims and revenues with a motion by Koenig and a second by Weymiller. All in favor.

Updates on the dry hydrant at Volney Park were given to the Board. Dave Smith of the Monona Fire District, where the dry hydrant would be installed and Jordan Bacon of the Luana Fire Department were present. It was stated that Janett and Geerdes had met with the Allamakee County Supervisors, the County Engineer and Jordan Bacon about the dry hydrant installation at Volney Park. The Board was presented a memorandum of understanding to be entered into with the ACCB and the Monona Rural Fire District. The director stated the board's history with dry hydrants on other rivers including the Mississippi River and the Upper Iowa River and how they continually need to be cleaned out after high water events. A motion was made by Weymiller to approve the memorandum of understanding between the Allamakee County Conservation Board and the Monona Fire District and a second was made by Koenig on the contingency of the agreement of the site placement of the dry hydrant, access road to the dry hydrant, and the bedrock was suitable for digging to the proper depth for placement of the hydrant. All in favor.

Approval to purchase building materials for a shelter house from Ashbachers Building Supply at Volney Park was tabled until the April meeting because an up to date price quote for the material had not been received at the time of the meeting.

Resumes and applications from the candidates for the Operations Supervisor and the Naturalist position were reviewed. There were 8 applicants in each pool with several local and out of state qualified candidates. The Board agreed to interview four applicants for each of the positions narrowing it down to two applicants after the first round of interviews.

The Board approved the Salaries for the newly hired director as well as the Naturalist and Operations Supervisor upon their hire. The Directors salary is currently set at \$56,833 as had been budgeted for the fy22/23. The current budget for the Naturalist is \$40,177 and the Operations Supervisor is set at \$46,360. Discussion was had about adjusting the Naturalist and the Operations Supervisor to the same starting wage for the new candidates upon their starting date. The starting salary for the positions was recommended to be \$43,268.50 for the new hires. This would adjust the salaries for the two positions,

but would not increase or decrease the overall budget. A motion was made by Clark and seconded by Carrol to approve Director Geerdes' salary at \$56,833 and to set the Operations Supervisor and the Naturalist at \$43,268.50 annually. All in favor.

The board reviewed a price quote and information from Wrightway Computers in Decorah to purchase and install a new DVR system for the security cameras at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center. Options presented to the board were to replace the existing system with a similar size DVR which was thought to be 4TB, to upgrade the current system to a larger size of 8TB, and a third option of a new DVR system and camera upgrades was also included. The storage capacity and the usage of the DVR system was discussed with it being determined that the storage capacity of the current, nonworking system was sufficient. The option of purchasing additional cameras was discussed and determined that with either of the new DVR systems the existing cameras could be used or new, higher resolution cameras could be added at any time as a package or individually where the board sees fit. A motion was made by Weymiller to purchase the DVR system similar in size to the current system from Wrightway Computers. A second was made by Carrol. All in favor.

The board reviewed a contract for an Iowa DNR Fish Habitat stamp in the amount of \$10,909 to be used towards the purchase of the McDowell Upper Iowa property. A motion was made by Clark and seconded by Carrol to approve the contract with the Iowa DNR for the Fish Habitat Grant. All in favor.

Informational items presented to the board included an update on the acquisition of the property along the Upper Iowa River. The abstract was finished at Palmer Abstract and the County Attorney is still working on the Warranty Deed. Director Geerdes had been asked to write a letter of support for the Lansing Great Places Campaign showing the partnership the city of Lansing and the Allamakee County Conservation Board has had on projects such as the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center, Clear Creek Park, Village Creek Boat Landing and the Garret Greenbelt.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for April 4, 2023 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 2:38 p.m. with a motion by Koenig and seconded by Clark to adjourn. All in favor.