

## **Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes February 2024**

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session February 6, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Marilyn Clark, Jeanie Carroll, Jesse Delaney and Steve Weymiller. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Emma Jacobs, and Brody VanderKolk Present from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the agenda and minutes from the February 6, 2024 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Clark and a second by Carroll with all members in favor.

There was no public comment.

The board approved claims and revenues from January 2024 with a motion by Clark and a second by Weymiller. All in favor.

The Board moved into a discussion about the geothermal system at the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. Director Geerdes informed the board of the timeline leading up to and after the failure of the geothermal system. It has been determined by Winona Controls and Shawver Well that the injection well which returns water back to the aquifer had mineralized shut. Shawver Well performed air lifting and a chemical injection into the well to reopen the injection well. After the procedures it was determined the well was able to handle nearly 110 gallons per minute of water which was the volume when the well was originally drilled in 2016. Director Geerdes has reached out to Laurie Moody, the Allamakee County Environmental Engineer and others to further learn why this event happened. Moody has suggested to test the water on both sides of the geothermal heat pumps and exchangers to see if there is a change in the water composition. The board discussed the possibility of having to install equipment to prevent a similar malfunction from happening in the future. Director Geerdes will continue to work with the resources available to learn more on causation of the mineralization and prevention in the future.

The Board moved onto discussion and consideration of the management agreement with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources at the Harpers Ferry Boat landing and shops, Heytman's Landing, The Harpers Slough Fishing Access and Nobles Island Boat Landing. The agreements were reviewed at the January 2024 meeting with the board asking the DNR to amend the contracts to allow for commercial use of the house and the possibility for short term rentals. With the amended agreements allowing the short-term rental of the house a discussion was had with possible uses. Director Geerdes noted that the DNR Law enforcement Bureau is interested in renting the basement which they had remodeled into a meeting area and secure evidence storage. A separate contract would need to be entered into with the DNR Law Enforcement with the parameters of that agreement for the rental of the basement. Further discussion was had on the rental of the living quarters of the house with two viable options. One option would be to rent the house to seasonal staff at a discounted rate as an incentive to work seasonally for the ACCB. The option of a short-term rental style was also discussed. A motion was made by Clark and seconded by Carroll to renew the Iowa Department of Natural Resources management agreements for the Heytman's Landing, Harpers Ferry Boat Landing, shops and house, the Harpers Slough Fishing Access and Nobles Island Boat Landing. All in Favor.

In Informational items and old business Supervisor Reiser gave an update on the county budget process. The Supervisors have been meeting regularly and are nearing the completion of the budget review for each department. Office Manager Emma Jacobs encouraged the board to sign up for the quarterly newsletter that she started with the first edition being in January 2024. Anyone interested in receiving the newsletter electronically

can visit our website.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for March 5, 2024 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:59 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Carroll to adjourn. All in favor.