

January 2023 Minutes of the Allamakee County Conservation Board

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session at 1:00 P.M. Tuesday January 3, 2023 in the Board Office located at 1944 Columbus Rd. Lansing, Iowa. Board members present were as follows: Jeanie Carroll, Marilyn Clark, Jesse Delaney, Dennis Koenig, and Steve Weymiller. Attending from the public was Jack Knight. Conservation Board staff members attending was Erin Cubbon, Ross Geerdes, and James Janet.

The Meeting was called to order at 1:00 P.M. and the agenda and minutes from the previous meeting were approved upon a motion by Clark, second Weymiller, all in favor, motion carried.

There were no public comments.

Claims, revenues, and fiscal year balances and budget summaries were reviewed and approved by the Board upon a motion by Koenig, second Clark, all in favor, motion carried.

The Director informed the Board reimbursements had been received and deposited totaling \$39,496.00 for the Garrett Property Fish Habitat Grant and will be included in the upcoming budget amendment. The Fish Habitat Grant submitted for the Upper Iowa Fishing Access secured \$10,909.00 of the \$22,000.00 acquisition cost. The Board discussed funds that could be used to make up the \$11,000.00 difference. The Director was instructed to contact the owner regarding any possible price adjustments. The following amendment items were presented to the Board: IDNR Fish Habitat (County Home) \$19,507.00, MRAC Grant (Red Bud Landing) \$28,778.00, IDNR Fish Habitat (Garrett Clear Creek) \$38,067.44, MRAC (Kayak/Canoe Launch) \$15,165.00. Total Grant reimbursements to be amended \$101,517.44

Updates on personnel matters were provided to the Board. Applications for the Director position were reviewed by the Board. The Board scheduled a special meeting for Tuesday January 10, 2023 at the Board office to conduct interviews. The Director informed the Board he had not set a retirement date and would stay with the Conservation Board during the transition of hiring and training the new Director.

Informational items discussed by the Board included the status of the aquarium purchase, the Foundation has secured \$75,000.00 of the \$85,000.00 for the project. An anticipated delivery and installation time of the aquarium is February or March. The Board discussed the black mold growing on some of the masonry of the Ed. Center, the Director will check on possible options for removing the mold.

The next regular monthly Board meeting will be at 1:00 P.M. Tuesday February 7, 2023.

There being no additional business a motion was made by Koenig to adjourn the meeting, second Clark, all in favor, motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 P.M.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes February , 7 2023

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

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

During public comment Dennis Blocker gave an update on the Allamakee ATV/UTV Club and its efforts to purchase a property in Allamakee County for an ATV/UTV park. Blocker stated that the deal the club had been working on previously was no longer possible.

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

Updates on the dry hydrant at Volney Park were given to the Board. No representative of the Monona Fire District, where the dry hydrant would be installed, or 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. A draft of memorandum of understanding to be entered into with the ACCB and the Monona Rural Fire District was presented to the board.

The board received information on upcoming budget amendments for the FY22/23 budget. These amendments are results of money that was received from grants that were awarded to the ACCB. The grants included Iowa DNR Fish habitat grants for the Garret Streambank project and the County Home Park pond improvement project. Also included in the amendment is money received for the Red Bud Canoe Landing project and the handicapped accessible kayak launch at Village Creek Boat Landing. These grants were from the Water Recreation and Access Cost-share Program. A motion was made by Clark and seconded by Weymiller to approve the budget amendments. All were in favor.

Information and job descriptions for the two open positions at the ACCB were given to the board members. The positions are vacant from Assistant Director Jarrod Olson leaving the Conservation Board to the Sherriff's office and Naturalist Ross Geerdes moving to the Director position upon the retirement of Janett. The positions will be open beginning February 8, 2023 with a closing of March 6, 2023. The board will review applications of all candidates at the March 7, 2023 board meeting. A motion to approve the job descriptions and the timeline for hiring was made by Clark and seconded by Carrol. All were in favor.

The board was updated on the aquarium project that is being completed at the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. Perry Novak with Novak electric has completed the installation of the electrical and the plumbing needed for the project. The area in the basement of the center is ready for installation of the aquarium. Greg from Under the Sea, the contractor installing the aquarium has been in contact with Geerdes and all is on schedule to install the aquarium during February.

Informational items presented to the board included an update on the acquisition of the property along the Upper Iowa River. The acquisition has been approved by the Board of Supervisors. An abstract is being prepared by Palmer Abstract and a Warranty Deed is being prepared by the County Attorney. Janett has spoken with Rusty Berger regarding the molding on the limestone pillars of the Driftless Center. Berger advised to use a mild detergent that can be found at any hardware store for removing mold from rock and a pressure washer. The security system at the Driftless Center has been malfunctioning. Janett has been working with Wright Way Computers to find a solution to the problem. Corey Snitker with the Allamakee County Emergency Management installed a new panic button on the computer of the office manager. Currently the computer has to be turned on in order to use the button. Snitker is looking into options that do not need the computer to be turned on.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for March 7,2023 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 2:30 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Carrol to adjourn. All in favor.

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.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes April, 4 2023

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session April 4, 2023 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jesse Delaney, Jeanie Carrol, Marilyn Clark, Dennis Koenig and Steve Weymiller. Attending from the public was Mark Reiser. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Jim Janett, Ross Geerdes and Erin Cubbon.

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

During public comment time Mark Reiser commented that the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors has passed amendment to limit county employees from taking a county owned vehicle home unless an emergency call out is imminent. Jim Janett thanked the Board for their service during his time with the county and after 34 years April 6, 2023 is his final working day for the Allamakee County Conservation Board.

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

Director Geerdes gave an update to the board on the Volney park shelter project. Kelly concrete has been contacted to complete the concrete portion of the job. They had previously submitted a bid, but it was anticipated that the bid would need to be adjusted. Ashbachers Building Supply has a materials list and is still figuring an updated price for the material. No action was taken.

Brody VanderKolk has been offered the position of Operations Supervisor to begin on April 10, 2023 and Erin Cubbon has been offered the Naturalist position to start immediately. A motion was made by Clark and a second by Carrol to hire VanderKolk and Cubbon for their respective positions. All in favor

With the hiring of Cubbon as the Naturalist the office manager position is vacant for the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center. Director Geerdes has modified the job description to include Assistant Naturalist in the job description with the hope of building on the regularly scheduled programming that can occur at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center as well as helping with field trips. The Office Manager/Assistant Naturalist position will be open until the close of business on April 21, 2023. A motion was made to set the salary position at \$34, 920 by Carrol and a seconded by Clark. All in favor.

The board was made aware that the security camera system had been installed by Wrightway Computers and all cameras were working at the time of the install.

Informational items presented to the board included the fish aquarium has been installed and is ready to receive fish. Jim Janett's retirement party planning is ongoing with a date of April 14, 2023 from 2 p.m.-5p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center. The Village Creek ADA accessible docks have been received from Coulee Region Docks. The Director has updated the Iowa DNR lands inventory. All ACCB managed lands can be found on an interactive map within the DNR's website. The board was notified that the center will be closed for the upcoming Easter weekend. The Director has been approached by River City Paving to place a construction trailer in the Rossville Park area. The trailer will connect into the power supply at the park with RCP paying for the increase in power use during their

time. RCP will also add additional rock to the parking lot and provide pit latrines for employees. The director informed the board that the July meeting will be moved from July 4, 2023 to July 11, 2023

The time and date for the next meeting was set for May 2 ,2023 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center. This will be a joint meeting with the Allamakee County Conservation Foundation, the Allamakee County Conservation Board, and the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:45 p.m. with a motion by Koenig and seconded by Clark to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes May, 2 2023

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session May 2, 2023 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jesse Delaney, Jeanie Carrol, Marilyn Clark, Dennis Koenig and Steve Weymiller. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Erin Cubbon, Brody VanderKolk. Members of the Allamakee County Conservation Foundation were also present during the meeting including Dennis Blocker, Jens Kallevang, Dave Dunklee, and Jim Kerndt.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the agenda and minutes from the April 4, 2023 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Clark and a second by Koenig with all members in favor.

There was no public comment.

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

Director Geerdes gave an update to the board on Mississippi river Flooding. The ACCB has several areas that are currently being impacted. The staff was able to secure infrastructure in place or move it above the level of the river. Damage is expected to be limited to debris and sediment, but will need to be evaluated after and as the river levels recede.

The Director has made contact with 4 potential candidates for the Office Manager/Assistant Naturalist position with two interviews taking place on May 2 and the remaining two interviews taking place on May 4. A job offer is expected to be made to the selected candidate by May 10, 2023.

A material list and cost estimate was reviewed for the Voney Park shelter and concrete. A motion was made by Weymiller and a second was made by Koenig to accept a bid for material cost of \$10,980 from Ashbacher Building Supply and \$5868 for the pouring of the concrete pad by Kelly Concrete. All in favor.

Erin Cubbon, Naturalist informed the board she has begun scheduling programs and field trips as the Naturalist. Her and Director Geerdes are still working together to transition roles. Brody VanderKolk, Operations Supervisor, informed the board that he has been familiarizing himself with all of the parks and has begun mowing for the season.

Informational items presented to the board included: the 2024 membership with the Iowa County Conservation System is due by August 1, 2023 with a cost of \$1,500, Dave Ashe forester with the Iowa DNR has contacted the ACCB about potential timber stand improvement projects at Waterville Pines Park. Information was given to the board on the County vehicle policy. The director reminded the board that the July meeting will be moved from July 4, 2023 to July 11, 2023 because of the county holiday.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for June 6, 2023 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:53 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Koenig to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes June 6, 2023

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session June 6, 2023 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jesse Delaney, Jeanie Carrol, Marilyn Clark, Dennis Koenig and Steve Weymiller. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes. Attending 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 May 2, 2023 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Clark and a second by Carrol 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 Carrol. All in favor.

The board discussed the membership dues for the Iowa County Conservation System. The dues are currently at \$1,500 which is based on the level of taxpayer support that is received by the county. Benefits of being a member of the ICCS include continuing education for all employees in the system, access to the mcountyparks.com website, job recruitment and file sharing among ICCS members. A motion was made by Clark and seconded by Carrol to approve the ICCS dues for FY2024. All in favor.

ACCB president Jesse Delaney spoke on a proposed letter to the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors expressing the concern members of the Allamakee County Conservation Board have with maintaining an open and active relationship between the members of the ACCB and the Board of Supervisors. The importance of honesty and integrity between both boards was brought up. Board of Supervisors Liaison Mark Reiser expressed his concern with the ACCB maintaining a budget within the County's means and areas that he thought the Conservation Board could improve on. No action was taken on a letter to the board at this time.

The board approved Ross Geerdes, Director of the Allamakee County Conservation Board to sit on the Allamakee County Conservation Foundation as a voting member. A motion was made by Clark and seconded by Carrol. All in favor.

The board approved Emma Jacobs as the hire for the Office Manager/Assistant Naturalist position. A motion was made by Koenig and a second by Weymiller. All in favor.

The board approved the hiring of seasonal employees Jesse Troendle and Lucas Byrnes. A motion was made by Weymiller and a second was made by Clark. All in favor.

Director Geerdes updated the board on the flood and the flood cleanup. All areas are clean and back in service. Nobles Island Boat Access still has debris at this time in the low lying areas where the ground is still wet. The amount of debris in the pit latrines at parks throughout the county was brought up as latrines at Nobles Island and Village Creek Boat Landing had to be pumped empty after the flooding.

June 30 is the last day of the fiscal year for fy22/23. Overall the board is under budget at this time. Bills for materials for a shelter at Volney Park and the McDowell Property acquisition are pending at this time and will be completed before the end of the budget cycle.

Informational items presented to the board included: IPTV has begun filming a new show to air in the summer of 2024 titled "Iowa Roadtrips" The Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center will be featured in their first show. The initial filming was completed in May but more footage will be filmed in the future. A group of individuals from the Harpers Ferry area would like to fundraise for a courtesy dock to be used at the Harpers Ferry Boat landing.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for July 11, 2023 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center. This meeting has been moved back 1 week from the traditional first Tuesday of the month in observance of the July 4 Holiday. The regular meetings will continue to be held on the first Tuesday of each month after July.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 2:25 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Carrol to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes July 11, 2023

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session June 1, 2023 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jesse Delaney, Marilyn Clark, and Dennis Koenig. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Erin Cubbon, and Emma Jacobs. Attending 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 June 6, 2023 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Clark and a second by Carrol with all members in favor. During public comment Mark Reiser reported on emergency services from within Allamakee County responding to paddlers in distress along the rivers in the Allamakee County and the need for education for inexperienced kayakers on the dangers and logistics involved with river travel.

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

A review of the 2022/2023 fiscal year budget was conducted. The fiscal year was ended 2.2% under budget with most of that being from various job vacancies throughout the year. The need for looking at each line item before the next budget was discussed with waste disposal being a concern. It was suggested that Town and Country Sanitation be contacted about dumpster rates for the Harpers Ferry location.

Wages for seasonal employees was reviewed. Currently the seasonal employees are at \$12 per hour. It was recommended that Jesse Troendle and Lucas Byrnes receive a \$.50 per hour increase for the remainder of their season and if they choose to return for the 2024 summer season receive an additional \$.50 per hour raise at that time. It was also recommended that Gary Krapfl receive a \$1.00 per hour raise to \$13.00. A motion was made by Clark and seconded by Koenig for the seasonal employee hourly rate changes. All in favor.

A letter from the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation asking for an annual membership for \$100 was reviewed. A motion was made by Koenig and seconded by Clark to not purchase an annual membership with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation. All in favor.

Informational items presented to the board included: An update on the Volney Park Shelter with the concrete and upright supports being completed. All of the material has been delivered by Ashbachers Building Supply and construction will continue. Several individuals have inquired about using the boat landing areas for constructing personal docks. It was recommended to write a policy to review at the August meeting. The McDowell Property purchase has been completed and the staff will begin to clear the area for public use. EMC insurance representatives visited the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. Upon their visit it was recommended that the curb outside the building be painted yellow, the sprinkler system be inspected, and boaters safety be taken by anyone who operates the county boat. Timber Stand Improvement will begin in July at Waterville Pines Park. Barbary will be sprayed in July and undesired trees will be cut and removed in October leaving Oak, Walnut, and native white pine trees.

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

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:50 p.m. with a motion by Koenig and seconded by Clark to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes August 1, 2023

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session August 1, 2023 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jesse Delaney, Marilyn Clark, Jeanie Carroll and Dennis Koenig. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Erin Cubbon, and Emma Jacobs. Attending 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 July 11, 2023 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Koenig 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 Clark and a second by Carroll. All in favor.

A resolution was drafted to prohibit construction of private infrastructure on public property owned or managed by the county. A motion was made by Carroll and a second by Koenig to submit a draft of the rule to the Allamakee County Attorney for review. All in favor.

An update on the recommendations put forth by EMC insurance during their site visit of the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. During the site visit the representative recommended a sprinkler system inspection, painting the curb outside the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center to prevent tripping and a boaters safety course for all employees who may be operating the county boat. Geerdes informed the board that the material has been bought to complete the curb painting and a sprinkler inspection has been scheduled with Elite Sprinklers.

Changing of contractors for the dumpster in Harpers Ferry was discussed. Currently the dumpster is serviced by Waste Management as on call dumpster for \$82 per dump for a 2-yard dumpster. Town and Country Sanitation will provide a 2-yard dumpster with dumping 2 times per month for \$90. The board advised the director to use his discretion on changing the dumpster service for Harpers Ferry.

Staff members Erin Cubbon and Emma Jacobs updated the board on projects they have been working on. Erin Cubbon has held several public programs throughout July and has plans for a public program during the Lansing Fish Days weekend. Emma Jacobs is continuing to adjust to the office manager and assistant naturalist roles.

In informational items and old business Director Geerdes asked the board to clarify from a previous meeting the seasonal fencing at the Morgan Bridge Park. Director Geerdes will work with the adjoining landowner to meet the needs of the county and the landowner. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service has asked if the board will be willing to take over the informational kiosks they currently have at some of the Mississippi River landings in the county. The ACCB could do with the kiosks what they wish and use them for their own signage. Sealing the cement relief cuts at the Village Creek Boat Landing was discussed. Delaney suggested that the state of Iowa should have sealed the cracks when the cement was poured. Director Geerdes will reach out to the Iowa DNR to see about sealing the cement relief cuts to prevent damage to the concrete from the roots of the weeds.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for September 5, 2023 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:44 p.m. with a motion by Koenig and seconded by Clark to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes September 5, 2023

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session September 5, 2023 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, Steve Weymiller and Dennis Koenig. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Erin Cubbon, and Emma Jacobs. Attending from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser. Absent from the Allamakee County Conservation Board was Jesse Delaney.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the agenda and minutes from the August 3, 2023 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Koenig and a second by Carroll with all members in favor.

There was no public comment.

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

An appraisal for the McDowell Upper Iowa property was presented to the board. The appraisal was completed by Ed Gage Appraisal Services and is being submitted to the DNR for final approval. The appraisal was requested by the Iowa DNR per terms with the Iowa Fish Habitat Grant that was used to partially fund the purchase of the property.

A resolution drafted and approved at the August meeting contingent upon approval by the county attorney prohibiting construction of private infrastructure such as docks and boat houses at ACCB owned or managed property was approved by the county attorney. The resolution shall be published and posted according to Iowa Code section 350.5.

An update on the recommendations put forth by EMC insurance during their site visit of the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. During the site visit the representative recommended a sprinkler system inspection, painting the curb outside the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center to prevent tripping and a boaters safety course for all employees who may be operating the county boat. Geerdes informed the board that the material has been bought to complete the curb painting, staff has been completing their boaters safety courses online through the Iowa DNR website and a sprinkler inspection was complete with Elite Sprinklers. All county Department heads also attended a fleet training session with EMC insurance representatives where the importance of logging fleet maintenance records and checking to insure county employees are licensed to drive county owned vehicles was discussed.

The board was updated on the timber stand improvement project at Waterville Pines area. The spraying for invasive species has been completed and an initial bill to be paid by the Iowa DNR has been submitted by Brown Timber Services. The goal of the project is to promote the growth of existing white pine which is estimated between 125-150 years old.

In informational items and old business Director Geerdes updated the board on the Village Creek Boat Landing dock project stating it was nearly completed except for backfilling around the sidewalk area. Naturalist Erin Cubbon has been working with the Harpers Ferry Women's Auxiliary to install a life jacket loaner station at the Harpers Ferry Boat Landing. Director Geerdes will be attending the ICCS Fall Conference in Harrison and Pottawattamie Counties September 19-22, 2023. Three separate landowners have inquired with the board on their interest for acquiring properties around the county.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for October 3, 2023 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:44 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Weymiller to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes October 3, 2023

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session October 3, 2023 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, and Jesse Delaney. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Erin Cubbon, Emma Jacobs, and Brody Vanderkolk. Present from the public were Dave Dunckley, Jens Callavang, and Dennis Blocker. Absent were members of the ACCB Steve Weymiller and Dennis Koenig.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the agenda and minutes from the September 5, 2023 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 reviewed and approved claims and revenues with a motion by Clark and a second by Carroll. All in favor.

The Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center was notified by Elite Sprinklers that a backflow valve has failed on the sprinkler system at the center. The cost for repair is estimated at \$585. A motion was made by Carroll and seconded by Clark to move forward with the repair. All in favor.

Management agreement contracts with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources were discussed. Management agreements at the Harpers Ferry Boat Landing and Shop, Nobles Island, Harpers Slough, and Heytman's Landing are set to expire on December 31, 2023. An agreement is in place with Village Creek Boat Landing through 2042. The benefits of the management agreements were discussed including the use of the shop at Harpers Ferry as well as tools and money that is available for maintenance of the areas that would not be possible without the management agreements. The Harpers Ferry location has a house that is currently used and managed by the Iowa DNR Law Enforcement Bureau, but the state is considering terminating state owned housing. The board discussed the options for the house if the state were to abandon it and the possibility of the board retaking control of the house when the state does so. Possible uses for the house were discussed including using it for possible seasonal employee living quarters and as a short-term rental. The status of the EMC insurance recommendations was given. All recommended actions have been completed except for the marking of the curb. Several options have been discussed. Director Geerdes has arranged for a visit with Safe-Fast to get an estimate on the cost of using an adhesive reflective tape on the top of curb. Jesse Delaney also suggested contacting a service to inquire about the possibility of having the curb painted at the same time as the parking spaces.

The 2024 appointment of ACCB members was discussed. Steve Weymiller's term will expire on December 31. Weymiller has been encouraged by the staff and the board to consider reappointment to the board. If he chooses to do so his paperwork must be filed with the county auditor in December 2023. Board members are appointed to five-year terms. The county auditor will advertise for any open board positions as the terms expire and the board members will be appointed at the first Board of

Supervisors meeting in January 2024.

The Director recently returned from the 2023 Iowa County Conservation System Fall Conference. It was hosted by the Pottawattamie County and Harrison County Conservation Boards. The conference included staff, board members and board of supervisors from many of the counties in Iowa. The 2024 Fall conference will be hosted by the Winneshiek and Fayette County Conservation Boards. Director Geerdes encouraged board members, staff, and the Board of Supervisors to attend to further learn about the county conservation system statewide. More information will be made available as the date gets nearer.

Informational items presented to the board included the REAP meeting being held in Calmar on October 26 from 6-8p.m. The staff has begun 2024/2025 budget work and will be communicating with the board during upcoming meetings to finalize the budget. Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area has invited the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center to join their membership. Benefits of membership include promotion in the other recognized centers, grants, and consultation on development of programs and displays.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for November 7, 2023 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:46 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Carrol to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes November 7, 2023

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session November 7, 2023 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, and Jesse Delaney. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Erin Cubbon, and Emma Jacobs. 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 October 7, 2023 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Carroll 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 Clark and a second by Carroll. All in favor.

The upcoming budget for fiscal year 2024/2025 was discussed. Director Geerdes stated that the staff has been having work sessions regarding the upcoming budget process. Potential projects and equipment purchases have been discussed with some of the ideas including repair of a kiosk at the New Albin Roadside Park, the purchase of a new three-point post hole digger for the John Deere tractor, a laminating machine for the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center and completing signage at all of the areas to be uniform. In further discussion the need for maintaining the aging vehicle fleet was discussed with both the county owned mini van and one of the light duty pickups needing to be replaced in the coming year. The Director thought it to be best to keep ahead of the needs in order to get the best trade in value and limit costly repairs on the aging vehicles. The need for requesting the addition of another full-time position was discussed. Director Geerdes noted that all of the staff is having to work multiple weekends in a month along with their regular work. The need for a staff person who is able to help in the field as well as with education was discussed. Naturalist Cubbon noted that the education programs are continuing to grow with both in-school programming, field trips and public programs. The possibility of a permanent part time employee was discussed as a possibility.

Management agreement contracts with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources were discussed. Management agreements at the Harpers Ferry Boat Landing and Shop, Nobles Island, Harpers Slough, and Heytman's Landing are set to expire on December 31, 2023. An agreement is in place with Village Creek Boat Landing through 2042. The benefits of the management agreements were discussed including the use of the shop at Harpers Ferry as well as tools and money that is available for maintenance of the areas that would not be possible without the management agreements. The Harpers Ferry location has a house that is currently used and managed by the Iowa DNR Law Enforcement Bureau, but the state is terminating state owned housing and will be a part of the management agreement. Board President Delaney requested Director Geerdes to invite a representative from the Iowa Department of the Natural Resources to the next scheduled meeting to address concerns with the contract agreements. Supervisor Reiser inquired about himself and the other Board of Supervisor members touring the areas and the infrastructure that is included in the management agreements.

The 2024 appointment of ACCB members was discussed. Steve Weymiller's term will expire on December 31, 2023. Weymiller has been encouraged by the staff and the board to consider reappointment to the board. Weymiller has expressed his interest in being reappointed to the board and his paperwork will be filed with the county auditor prior to the deadline in December 2023. Board members are appointed to five-year terms. The county auditor will advertise for any open board positions as the terms expire and the board members will be appointed at the first Board of Supervisors meeting in January 2024.

Education, Operations, and Visitor updates were given by the staff. Office Manager/Assistant Naturalist noted that visitation was up in October as the highest October visitation since the opening of the Driftless Center. Naturalist Cubbon has hosted several field trips and has made visits to all of the elementary schools in Allamakee County. She is planning a Fall Driftless Birding Festival for Saturday, November 18, 2023 to include a speaker from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and self-guided field trips to area birding locations. The shelter house at Volney park has seen progress. Staff has the roof trusses in place and is working completing the installation of the metal roof.

In informational items the status of the EMC insurance recommendations was given and have been completed at this time. Director Geerdes attended the REAP Assembly in Calmar on October 26 and has been selected as the REAP delegate for the county. He will represent the county in Des Moines in January of 2024. The Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center will be closed on November 10 for the county's observance of Veteran's Day, as well as November 23-26 for the Thanksgiving weekend and December 24 and 25 for Christmas.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for December 5, 2023 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:46 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Carrol to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes December 5, 2023

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session December 5, 2023 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, Dennis Koenig and Jesse Delaney. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Erin Cubbon, Emma Jacobs, and Brody VanderKolk. Present from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser. Attending from the Iowa Department Of Natural Resources was Eric Johnston, Brian Roffman, Nathan Schmitz, Detra Dettman, Kevin Hansen, and Randy Schultz. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the agenda and minutes from the November 7, 2023 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Carroll and a second by Clark with all members in favor.

There was no public comment.

With the members of the Iowa DNR the board discussed the management agreements for the Harpers Slough Area, Nobles Island Boat Access, Heytman's Landing, and the Harpers Ferry Boat Landing and Shops. Director Geerdes gave an overview of the history of the management contracts between the ACCB and the IADNR. Nathan Schmitz, Right of Way specialist with IA DNR noted that there are 368 agreements between the Iowa DNR and other governmental agencies including Cities and Counties. Most of the contracts are very similar to the ones being considered for renewal. Delaney asked about the length of the contracts and if the contracts were all or nothing. Schmitz noted that the length of the contract is flexible, but most were for the 25-year length. It is possible for either party to terminate the contract at either time with a written notice. He also stated that the contracts could be changed as needed if the board would like a shorter contract. Johnston talked about the work that was done to the house after the ACCB stopped using it as their headquarters in 2017. An evidence storage facility was placed in the basement and the upstairs was remodeled into a residence to hold seasonal staff. Director Geerdes asked what the ACCB would be able to use the house for if they were to retake possession of the house. Schmitz noted that the seasonal housing and cabin style renting that is increasing with County Conservation Boards would be permitted, however long-term rentals would not be permitted. Koenig spoke to the length of the contract noting that a lot of things could change in 25 years. He suggested a shorter contract for 5 years that would be renewed and reviewed by both parties at that time. Delaney asked about the chain of command regarding any needed repairs, maintenance, or concerns with the areas under the management agreement. IADNR staff advised the ACCB to contact their local staff and they will follow up with the appropriate action to proceed. Geerdes commented that in the past Karen Osterkamp from the Guttenburg Fisheries Station was their point of contact with these properties. A motion was made by Carroll to extend the existing contracts past December 31, 2023 while a new contract for 5 years is being finalized. A second motion was made by Koenig. All were in favor.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for January 2, 2024 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:58 p.m. with a motion by Koenig and seconded by Carroll to adjourn. All in favor.