

**Wapello County Conservation Board**  
**Regular Meeting Notice**  
**Monday, September 11th , 2023**  
**5:30 PM Meeting**  
**Pioneer Ridge Nature Center (1339 HWY 63, Bloomfield)**

**Call to Order:**

Beth Doggett called the meeting to order at 5:33PM.

**Roll Call:**

Marsha Parker(Phone), Beth Doggett, Aaron Ruff, and Jeff Layton **Absent:** John Henscheid

**Staff Present:**

Rick Tebbs, Amanda Jones, Sara Runyan, Austin Roe, Mike McCall, Paul Totten

**Approval of Agenda:**

Jeff moved to approve the agenda, Aaron seconded, approved

**Approval of Previous Monthly Meeting Minutes:**

Marsha moved to approve the previous monthly meeting minutes, Beth seconded, approved

**Guests:**

Brian Morgan, Darren Batterson

**Claims:**

- WCCB claims for the month of August were submitted for approval.

Aaron moved to approve the claims, Jeff seconded, approved

- The American Gothic House Center claims for the month of August were submitted for approval.

Jeff moved to approve the claims, Aaron seconded, approved

**Old Business:**

- **Employee Cell Phones**

Rick emailed the board various different phone plans that were possible for the staff. Each plan consisted of 5 new smart phones. Discussion was had over how other departments in the county were handling employee cell phones. Staff took turns stating if they would like a company phone and if they would benefit from it. Benefits included the public not having personal cell phone information, better promotional capabilities, reaching other staff members when in field, etc.

Pros and cons were discussed on employee cell phones vs paying part of personal bill.

Aaron moved to proceed with the plan of getting 5 smart phones, one for each employee on the basic plan and changing the on call phone to a smart phone, Jeff seconded, approved.

**New Business:**

- **Approve employee move from salary to hourly**

All salaried employees aside from the Director within the conservation department are being moved to hourly in December. Jeff moved to approve moving Sara Runyan, Paul Totten, Austin Roe, and Mike McCall to hourly employees in December 2023, Aaron seconded, approved.

- **Approve By- Laws**

The board was given by laws for 2023 to be reviewed and signed. Aaron moved to accept the by laws, but remove the need to post meeting agendas at the Wapello building, Jeff seconded, roll call vote Aaron- Aye, Jeff- Aye, Marsha- Aye, Beth- Aye, John Henscheid- Absent

- **Using county REAP funds for regional assembly**

Ottumwa will be hosting the REAP regionally assembly to work on the 5 year plan for the DNR, the assembly will take place September 25<sup>th</sup> from 4PM-6PM at eh Knights of Columbus. Aaron moved to allow the use of county REAP funds to pay for food at the assembly, Jeff seconded, approved.

- **Annual report approval**

The board was given the 2022-2023 FY annual report to review. Jeff moved to approve the 2022-2023 FY annual report, Aaron seconded, approved.

- **Approval of deer stand bids**

Deer stand auction has been extended through September 16<sup>th</sup> at 4PM, Aaron moved to table, Jeff seconded, tabled

- **Cabin rental group dates**

The board was presented with the idea of grouping weekend and holiday dates for the cabins. The cabins must manually be blocked when booked over weekends or holidays because there are no staff members available to clean the cabins upon move out. Discussion followed over pricing and cleaning.

Aaron moved for the 2024 pricing to be \$85 during week, \$125 Friday/Saturday, \$62.50 for Sunday with weekend and holidays grouped, Jeff seconded, approved.

- **October meeting date**

The October meeting date was set for October 9<sup>th</sup>, but due to scheduling conflict may need to be moved. Aaron moved to move the October meeting to October 16<sup>th</sup>, Jeff seconded, approved.

- **Halloween Hike updates**

Staff and board discussed updates with the Halloween Hike including, parking, volunteers, people hauler driver needed, and online reservations.

- **Purchase of Garrison Rock property**

Discussion continued over the purchase of the addition to the Garrison Rock property. Pros and cons of the addition were discussed as well as budget and other ongoing projects. Aaron moved to not move forward with the purchase, Jeff seconded, approved.

## **American Gothic Board Updates**

Cari updated the board on events including the Gate Race, wreath building, and murder mystery as well as the new disc gold course.

## **Staff Reports and Comments:**

Rick informed the board that the aerator pump for the multiflow system at the nature center broke and was fixed this week. The shower house was also vandalized and the handle was broken off in the wall. He also reminded the board that annual conference will be next week.

Sara spoke to the board about upgrading the current Canva account to Canva Pro to allow better use of the site and more access. The cost would be \$300. No issues were brought forward with the purchase. She also informed the board of the upcoming partner program with the CVB, to highlight the nature of Wapello County as well as eagles. The event will be February 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Conservation Board Comments:**

Marsha asked staff for clarification on staff reports.

**Adjournment:**

Aaron moved to adjourn the meeting, Jeff seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 7:08PM.