

**Wapello County Conservation Board**  
**Regular Meeting Notice**  
**Monday, July 8th, 2024**  
**5:30 PM Meeting**  
**Pioneer Ridge Nature Center (1339 HWY 63, Bloomfield)**

**Call to Order:**

John Henscheid called the meeting to order at 5:32PM

**Roll Call:**

Marsha Parker, Beth Doggett, and John Henscheid

**Staff Present:**

Rick Tebbs, Amanda Jones, Sara Runyan, Mike McCall, Cari Nicely, Paul Totten, John Scott, and Faith Poole

**Approval of Agenda:**

Marsha moved to approve the agenda, Beth seconded, approved.

**Approval of Previous Monthly Meeting Minutes:**

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

**Guests:**

Darren Batterson, Emily Naylor

**Claims:**

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

Marsha moved to approve the WCCB claims for the month of June, Beth seconded, approved.

- The American Gothic House Center (AGHC) claims for the month of June were submitted for approval.

Marsha moved to approve the AGHC claims for the month of June, Beth seconded, approved.

59K for the year in revenue

**Old Business:**

**New Business:**

- **Replacing Concrete on Nature's Way Trail**

The dam work around the pond south of the nature center is complete. Rick informed the board that the concrete will need to be replaced, but it is best to wait until spring due to settling. In the meantime, fine gravel will be laid and packed to allow the public to continue to use the trail and allow for increased accessibility.

- **Dress Code Policy**

The conservation board received a proposed dress code policy from the director. The dress code was requested county wide by the board of supervisors. The board reviewed the policy and different aspects were discussed by the staff and board. Amendments and language of the policy were discussed. Marsha moved to approve the policy with the amendments 1) Safety shoes must be worn by the field staff while working on projects. 2) The board must pay for safety water shoes for the naturalist, office manager, and any other staff in need of them. Beth seconded. The policy was approved.

- **Run for the Ridge 2024**

The Run for the Ridge is tentatively scheduled for September 28<sup>th</sup>. Amanda and Mike are putting together advertisements. Fund raising and schedules were discussed by staff and board. The board received a sample flyer.

- **End of 23/24 Fiscal Year**

Rick discussed the budget for the end of the 23/24 fiscal year. Overall the WCC had over 100k of amendments, but gave back the county roughly \$86K. Meaning the originally budget was only exceeded by \$14K only ended up going over budget by 14k. The AGHC gave back roughly \$11k to the county.

- **Bolton and Menk Contract**

Emily Naylor from Bolton and Menk joined the meeting via zoom to discuss contract amendments with Bolton and Menk. During the construction phase services a 120 hourly cap was placed in the contract. To date there has been 178 hours. An amendment is needed to move forward with oversight from Bolton and Menk. Moving forward the services will be charged hourly and will not exceed \$15k. Emily is hopeful that this will cover the final two months of the project. She will update the board and staff on the hours being used during the next phase.

Marsha moved to approve the contract amendment for Bolton and Menk for up to \$15k and billed monthly, Beth seconded, approved.

- **Host 2027 Fall Conference**

Rick discussed hosting the 2027 fall conference with a neighboring county, Jefferson or Mahaska. Discussion followed over the planning and benefits of hosting the conference. Marsha moved to pursue hosting the 2027 fall conference with Mahaska County, Beth seconded, approved.

### **American Gothic Board Updates:**

Cari updated the board over Porchfest, new displays at the center, and RAGBRAI. Cari will need all staff at the Gothic House Center during the event to help. She will have entertainment during the event, and the center will be closed. She has heard no update from Zach Nuun's office and has applied for a Legacy Foundation Grant to help with the cost of the expansion process.

### **Staff Reports and Comments:**

Rick recently met with the Iowa Prairie Network over improvements they would like to see at the Eddyville Dunes. They discussed different things they would like to see improved. A large topic of discussion was the fence surrounding the dunes. Rick and staff looked into replacing the fence and the cost of materials alone was over \$60k. There is still paperwork that needs to be reviewed to establish whose responsibility is to maintain sections of the sand dunes prairie. Another topic of discussion was the maple trees on the property. IPN would like to see them cleared and the Iowa DNR forester for our area could review that property for estimates on trees. Rick will continue looking into the improvements for the Eddyville Sand Dunes Prairie.

Marsha and staff discussed bringing in the forestry agent to review all properties for improvements.

Marsha asked questions over staff reports including Sara's program numbers, Rick temporarily overseeing roadside management in the absence of a county engineer, and wild parsnip at Sycamore.

Marsha volunteered to work the back to school event for WCCB. Sara will reach out to Kolby and forward the information on to Marsha.

**Conservation Board Comments:**

**Adjournment:**

Beth moved to adjourn the meeting, Marsha seconded, meeting adjourned at 6:48PM.