

Wapello County Conservation Board
Regular Meeting Notice
Monday April 14th 2025
5:30 PM Meeting
Pioneer Ridge Nature Center (1339 HWY 63, Bloomfield)
Agenda

Call to Order:

Jeff called meeting to order at 5:33PM

Roll Call:

John Henscheid, Jeff Layton (Chair), Aaron Ruff (Vice Chair), Sophie Rotole and Beth Doggett

Staff Present: Rick Tebbs, Paul Totten, Amanda Jones, Cari Nicely, John Scott, Sara Runyan, and RoseMary Miller

Approval of Agenda:

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

Approval of Previous Monthly Meeting Minutes:

Beth moved to approve the previous month's meeting minutes, John seconded, approved.

Recognition of Guests:

None

Claims:

- **Conservation**

John moved to approve the conservation claims for the month of March, Aaron seconded, approved.

- **Gothic House**

John moved to approve the American Gothic House Center's claims and revenue for the month of March, Beth seconded, approved.

Old Business:

- **Campground Update**

The contractors are finishing up with construction at the campground. The third reimbursement was approved, Bolten and Menk is coming down for a walk through this week, and staff is finishing up tree planting. Staff discussed waiting to open the campground until the grass seed has been established. If weather permits, an opening date of June 20th would give the grass time to establish before welcoming campers. The board discussed the opening date of June 20th, and agreed it was a good time.

Amanda will have the campsites go live on mycountyparks.com and let the campground hosts know the opening date.

The campground hosts inquired about the department providing a golf cart or gator for their use while working. It would be used to transport tools, clean fireplaces, carry firewood, etc. Discussion followed. Rick will check into prices and discuss at the next meeting.

New Business:

- Special Use Permit

A special use permit was submitted for a bouncy house and water slide at a birthday party to be held at the Red Haybarn. Discussion followed. The board decided the water slide would not be allowed due to possible damage to the grass. The bouncy house would require proof of liability insurance and to be kept off of the grass.

Aaron moved to approve the bouncy house part of the special use permit with proof of \$1million liability insurance and agreement to keep it on the grass, John seconded, approved.

- Campground request

A member of the Sherriff's department was inquiring if it would be possible for him to leave his camper at the campground for longer than the two week minimum and in exchange help if some law enforcement duties were needed. He would also pay for the site. Discussion followed. The board decided that it would not be fair to the public and at this time it is not something they would allow. If they would like to take over campground host duties when the main hosts for the summer leave in September, that could be discussed.

- Approval of New Hire

RoseMary Miller was recommended for hire to fill the conservation technician vacancy. She has passed her background check, physical and was approved by the board of supervisors. Aaron moved to approve RoseMary Miller for hire, Beth seconded, approved.

- Power Shut Off to Nature Center

Rick informed the board that Southern Iowa Electric would be shutting off the power to the nature center for 2-3 days while they replace a transformer. Because of this, some staff members would not be able to complete their day to day tasks. He let the board know that some of the employees would be working from home those days. The board approved of that decision.

American Gothic Board Updates

Cari spoke to the board about her upcoming events including the blacklight egg hunt, speakers, art contest, 5k race and Porchfest. The American Gothic House Center will be closed May 18th due to graduation.

The American Gothic House Center needs an updated security system. Cari is working to accomplish this. The cost could be upwards of \$2200. The board will table this item until next board meeting for approval.

Staff Reports and Comments:

INHF closed on the land acquisition purchase for the Garrison Rock addition. Rick is currently looking into pond grants for Pearson Park and Pioneer Ridge. The insurance adjuster came to look at the storm damage and the barn at Eddyville will likely need replaced. Employee health insurance will be increasing for both individuals and families.

The Halloween Hike will be held on October 17th and 18th. On the 18th the 5k will be held, as well as a cook off and vendors.

Conservation Board Comments:

Adjournment:

Aaron moved to adjourn, John seconded, the meeting adjourned at 6:21PM