

Wapello County Conservation Board
Regular Meeting Notice
Monday 9th , 2026
5:30 PM Meeting
Pioneer Ridge Nature Center (1339 HWY 63, Bloomfield)
Agenda

Call to Order:

Aaron Ruff called the meeting to order at 5:30PM

Roll Call:

Jeff Layton, Beth Doggett, John Henscheid, Sophie Rotole, and Aaron Ruff

Staff Present:

Richard Tebbs, John Scott, Paul Totten, Amanda Jones, Mike McCall, and Sara Dowdall

Approval of Agenda:

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

Approval of Previous Monthly Meeting Minutes:

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

Recognition of Guests:

None

Claims:

- **Conservation**

Claims were discussed. Large claims included a \$5k down payment for barn at Eddyville and the installation of the security pole and tornado siren. Jeff moved to approve the conservation claims, John seconded, approved.

- **American Gothic House Center (AGHC)**

Jeff moved to approve the AGHC claims, Sophie seconded, approved.

Old Business:

- **26/27 Fiscal Year Budget Conservation**

Rick spoke with the board about the budget process this year, and what the budget process should look like according to state code. The board discussed the proposed budget cuts by the supervisors. Jeff and Beth will speak to the supervisors on behalf of the conservation board regarding the budget process, the 26/27 budget, and employee job title changes.

- **26/27 Fiscal Year Budget AGHC**

Cari spoke with the board about the proposed budget cuts for the 26/27 year for the AGHC. The proposed cuts would make her day to day operation at her current level extremely difficult. Jeff and Beth will speak to the supervisors on behalf of the conservation board regarding the budget process, and the 26/27 budget.

- **Barn at Eddyville Dunes Update**

The contractor required a \$5k down payment to get started on the barn rebuild in Eddyville. We are now on his list for projects.

New Business:

- Sub-committee to meet with Supervisors

Beth and Jeff will go speak with the supervisors regarding 26/27 budget and employee job titles.

- Solar at Pioneer Ridge Nature Area Campground (Location/Contract)

Red Lion spoke with Rick about pursuing solar at the Pioneer Ridge Nature Area Campground. Board discussion followed. The contract would follow similar parameters to that of the solar energy system at the nature center. John moved to allow Rick to move forward with communication with Red Lion about solar at the Pioneer Ridge Nature Area Campground, Sophie seconded, approved.

Aaron still would like TV to show the solar usage and its benefits. Rick will mention this again to Red Lion.

- County Issued Credit Cards

The county has issued county credit cards to employees. The county does not yet have any rules or policies associated with the credit cards. Rick would like the board's permission to write a policy for the credit cards as they relate to the conservation department. John moved to allow Rick to move forward with creating a credit card policy for the county issued credit cards, Sophie seconded, approved.

American Gothic Board Updates

Zach Nuun and his office will be at the AGHC February 20th to award the grant for the AGHC classroom addition. His office did ask for a space that could fit 100 people, but unfortunately the AGHC does not have a space like that. The board discussed possible alternatives. Cari will be in touch with Zach's office.

Cari would like to implement a \$25 minimum for consignments to save money on writing and sending checks to sellers for small amounts.

Cari received the lifetime achievement award from IAN.

Staff Reports and Comments:

Rick informed the board that it had recently been discovered that one of the contractors hired to work at Pioneer Ridge failed to identify himself as a registered sex offender. As soon as staff became aware they brought it to the director's attention and the appropriate action is being taken. The contractor will not be allowed back or granted work again.

Beth will also speak to the about county policy for volunteers.

Sara updated the board about youth conservation board applicants.

Sara spoke about the possible role of the fundraising committee for nature center displays. Discussion included where the money would be held, trust fund vs heritage committee.

Conservation Board Comments:

Rick informed the board that he is still working on the annual conference with Mahaska County's director.

Adjournment:

John moved to adjourn the meeting, Sophie seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 6:19PM.