

March 2021

The Tama County Conservation Board met in regular session on Wednesday, March 3rd, 2021 at the Tama County Nature Center. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chair, Atchison. Members present were: Adolphs, Atchison, Keenan, Wacha and Wrage. Also present: Wise (Staff) also present Mayne.

Minutes from the February 2021 regular meeting were reviewed. It was moved by Adolphs, seconded by Wrage to approve the minutes as recorded, carried, all voting aye.

Bills were presented to be paid from the month of February 2021. It was moved by Wrage, seconded by Keenan to approve bills, carried, all voting aye.

Staff Reports

Staff reports for Maintenance work completed during the month of February were read. Work included repairs to vehicles, cleaning and rearranging of the nature center basement, putting up storage shelves, repairs to well house furnace and broken water lines, clearing snow, staining signs and reviewing Forest Reserve applications. Due to COVID-19, Environmental Education events in person are not happening, but reports were shared on virtual programming. Scheduling and planning for 2021 are in progress. The traveling snake exhibit has been moved on to Linn County.

Lake Restoration Project

Reports on the lake restoration update. FYRA presented a reduction in silt removal of approximately 45,000 CY in an attempt to reduce LRP costs. The DNR is in agreement with this reduction. The DNR has been billed by the Conservation Board for their portion of the phase 2 work completed to date. This is a 75% cost share.

COVID-19 Response

The board discussed staff and operations changes due to COVID-19. The nature center offices have reopened. Masks will still be required for entry. Nature center rentals are available beginning April 1st but will be limited to 50 persons until further notice. All rentals must provide their own masks and masks must be worn by all visitors while in the building.

FEMA Update

Wise reported that the 2019 DHS final payment has been received. We are awaiting finalization on the 2020 Derecho applications.

Director Position The board discussed the hiring of the new director. The interview committee selected Stephen Mayne as the new director.

Columbia Wildlife The crop lease has expired for Columbia Wildlife Area. Options were discussed and the board agrees that the best option is to plant the 6 acres into a Bee & Butterfly Pollinator mix to increase habitat and help with the declining bee and butterfly populations.

Camping Fees Camping fees for the 2021 season were discussed. The new rates will be \$20 for all units on the east side of the lake and the west side will be \$10 for tents and \$20 for Fold-downs, Truck campers and Mini camping trailers. 7-day coupons will be available for \$120. Motion by Wacha, second by Keenan to approve the new camping fees, carried, all voting aye.

OPDMD The board received a request from a person with a mobility disability to operate a golf cart during 2021 at Otter Creek Lake for fishing access. It has been agreed to approve the request as per the OPDMD policy, providing that all rules and guidelines are followed.

With no further discussion items, it was motioned by Keenan, seconded by Adolphs to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.
