

May 1, 2024

Call to Order

The Tama County Conservation Board met in regular session on Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at the Tama County Nature Center. The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by Vice-chair, Adolphs.

Board Members present: Adolphs, Allen, Kenkel, and Wacha.

Staff Members present: Conrad, Genaw, Behrens, Horne.

Public present: Delania Halter

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the April 2024 meeting were reviewed. It was moved by Kenkel, seconded by Wacha, to approve the minutes as recorded, carried, all voting aye.

Approval of Bills

Bills were presented for April 2024 totaling \$30,128.01. Deposits were made totaling \$

It was moved by Kenkel, seconded by Wacha, to approve payment of the bills, all voting aye.

Public Comment

Behrens presented reimbursement forms for each board member to be reimbursed for mileage travelling to board meetings. All members in attendance were given a form to fill out.

Reports & Updates

Environmental Education Report: Genaw carried out 17 programs in April with a total attendance of 278. Visited special ed class at South Tama Elementary, Miss Lacy's Preschool, Birkwood Village, Westbrook Acres, MICA center, Girl Scouts, Garwin Library, and Chelsea Library. Assisted 4-H with a rock engraving workshop. Did a pollinator talk for Women, Land, and Legacy. Led Homeschool Adventures birdwatching program. Sent out monthly newsletter. Secured additional speakers for IAN conference that will be in Tama County in November and worked on workshop planning. Attended IAN/NAI conference in Omaha. Hosted Bob Etzel as April OWLS speaker. Taught WHEP. Led Earth Day hike at Otter Creek. Purchased supplies for summer camps. Planned field trip with North Tama 3rd grade. Attended Project Wild Climate Change & Flying Wild training. Attended first aid training at nature center. Interviewed candidate for seasonal naturalist position.

Maintenance report: Picked up remaining fun night donations. Built temporary dam at culvert at OCLAP. Fixed water line at west side of OCLAP. Mowed fire brakes at Columbia and OCLAP. Flagged trees at OCLAP and Clark's for removal for chainsaw class. Worked on getting shower house ready for season. Assisted Terry Brown with diorama work. Sprayed food plot. Removed playground at Clark's Park. Burned Parcel B, Nature Center prairie, and Columbia. Cleaned nature center for fun night. Explored vegetation at Oxbow bottoms, flagged prairie crab apple and Hawthorne trees. Attended safety meeting and first aid training.

Park Officer's Report: Checked out parks and boat ramps for trash. Burned Parcel B, Nature Center prairie, and Columbia. Cleaned up erosion on roads. Picked up fun night donations. Mowed burn brakes. Built silt pond dam. Washed vehicles. Cleaned nature center for fun night. Explored vegetation at Oxbow bottoms, flagged prairie crab apple and Hawthorne trees. Trail maintenance. Attended safety meeting and first aid training. Have had 3 campers at OCLAP and a few campers at Clark's. Started mowing everywhere except public hunting areas. Seeded bare spot at Clark's. Cleaned shop. Reset phone and computer for emails. Worked on opening shower house. Worked on food plots for seeding. Got call from Sheriff Dennis about 28-E agreement.

Director's Report: Did Ike's passes, nature center rentals. Set up registration system on my county parks website. Set up seasonals with HR. Presented for government day. Did fun night prep with DNR. First aid training & safety training. Sat in on Americorps interview and chatted with Americorps staff. Did prep for USDA Outdoor Classroom. Met with rent fund for possible kayak rental. Got hitch for SUV. Met with Bob Etzel for program prep for OWLS. Met with Terry Brown for diorama upkeep. Burned acreage with other staff. Workshopped a retaining wall for the OCLAP playground. Got extension for fish habitat grant for pond at OCLAP, awaiting paperwork for finalization of grant. Got computers set up with email for self and seasonals. Coordinated with South Tama for Otter Creek service project. Planned for nature center office changes and reorganization. Chatted with state investigator. Ordered soil testing for OCLAP spoil sites; soil has toxic levels of phosphorus. Ordered clover and legume seed to attempt to remedy issue. Took walks at Clark's Park, Oxbow Bottoms, Columbia, and Heritage Wetlands to get acquainted with wildlife areas. Discovered rare crabapple species at Oxbow Bottoms.

Old Business

Culvert Repair: Culvert repair is finished and seems to be holding. DenCo got project done with \$4,000 to spare from original budget.

Fun Night: Had 60 folks in attendance. Made \$8,000 throughout the night before subtracting dinner cost. Adolphs suggested having date earlier next year. Wacha and Halter discussed ways to get a more accurate head count prior to the event.

Playground Updates: Equipment for playground has arrived. Construction at OCLAP will start on the 7th, and installation at Clark's Park will follow.

New Business

Nature Center upkeep: Repurposing front desk area and moving bulk of environmental education operation downstairs was discussed. Adding a service window for front desk and moving files to reception area was also discussed. Desire for office assistant was also discussed, with board members supporting the idea.

Erosion control at new beach parking lot: Staff noticed a significant erosion issue by the beach parking lot at OCLAP. Behrens and Horne have reached out for a sand-block retaining wall quote.

Campground Ideas: Behrens is looking into self-service kayak & SUP rental through Rent.Fun. There would be an upfront cost of approx. 30 thousand dollars, with cost recovery projected in 5 years through a revenue-share program. It was motioned by Wacha to pursue the kayak rental, seconded by Kenkel, all voting aye.

Behrens suggested moving campsite at TF Clark's Park to area across from playground. Board expressed support for the idea. Possible need for spraying the roads to prevent dust was discussed, as well as desire for a decent bathroom.

Floor Discussion

N/A

Adjourn

With no further discussion items, it was motioned by Adolphs, seconded by Wacha, to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m., all voting aye.

Board Chair

Tama County Conservation Board