

September 4, 2024

Call to Order

The Tama County Conservation Board met in regular session on Wednesday, September 4, 2024 at the Tama County Nature Center. The meeting was called to order at 6:41 pm by Vice-Chair, Wacha.

Board Members present: Kenkel, Allen, Wacha, Dunning. Keenan was present at beginning of meeting but left due to illness.

Staff Members present: Conrad, Genaw, Behrens.

Public present: None.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

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

Approval of Bills

Bills were presented for August 2024 totaling \$15,882.01. Deposits were made totaling \$4,625.00. It was moved by Kenkel, seconded by Wacha, to approve payment of the bills, all voting aye.

Public Comment

N/A

Reports & Updates

Environmental Education Report: Carried out 11 programs in August with a total attendance of 311. Helped STC summer school students fish at Pilgrim Heights, hosted Wildthunder Wildlife & Animal Rescue for OWLS, led homeschool program with Olive the Hedgehog in Poweshiek County, helped run DNR archery range at state fair for 2 days, dropped off bows for repairs, attended back to school night at Chelsea library, did talk on turtles at Westbrook Acres, did a fungal foray with AmeriCorps seasonal at Pilgrim Heights, had insect homeschool program, did end-of-term paperwork for AmeriCorps, and did lots of Fall Fest preparations. Coordinated star-watching night with Steven Spangler and crew. Sent out lots of rental information. Started scheduling programs for next year. Have been doing lots of educational posts on Facebook, plus posts about Fall Fest.

Took Olive the hedgehog to vet due to suspected UTI, gave her antibiotics for 10 days, returned and took her in for a medically necessary spay due to suspected uterine infection or tumor. Olive unfortunately did not wake up from anesthesia after her surgery. She had two tumors on her uterus, and one was

about the size of a grape. Her system likely struggled with both the anesthetic and the substantial surgery.

Maintenance report: Horne was not present, but performed the following activities as reported by Conrad: Blade roads. Lots and lots of mowing, mowed burn breaks, OCLAP, T.F. Clark's Park, all boat ramps, all public hunting areas, Ike's, Reinig, and new parking lot for fall festival. Brush blade small trees along park Road and in front of NC. Start brush blading autumn olive bushes out of Parcel C. Spray brush along lake shore and boat ramp. Sidearm mow along lakeshore trail. Do work at Ike's. Cut seed heads off Frag in prairie. Spray black locust trees. Attend safety meeting. Clean bathrooms, NC, and shelter houses. Weed eat whole park. Trim weeds along lakeshore. Fix transmission cooler in 4030. Seasonals explored Columbia Wildlife Area pond and found lots of green sunfish.

Park Officer's Report: Conrad reported that he did the following: Patrol Campgrounds, boat ramps, and other outparks. Collect camping Fees and submit payment forms to Curtis (134 camping nights (CN) at OCLAP, 15 CN at Clarks). Answer questions in person and via phone from the public. Register for CCPOA fall training. Check Fishing licenses. One motorist assist call. Go to district meeting in story county. Blade roads. Lots and lots of mowing, mowed burn breaks, OCLAP, T.F. Clark's Park, all boat ramps, all public hunting areas, Ike's, Reinig, and new parking lot for fall festival. Brush blade small trees along park Road and in front of NC. Start brush blading autumn olive bushes out of Parcel C. Spray brush along lake shore and boat ramp. Sidearm mow along lakeshore trail. Do work at Ike's. Cut seed heads off Frag in prairie. Spray black locust trees. Attend safety meeting. Clean bathrooms, NC, and shelter houses. Weed eat whole park. Trim weeds along lakeshore. Fix transmission cooler in 4030.

Director's Report: Behrens took care of phone calls, NC reservations and tours, and Ike's passes. Has been assisting with Fall Fest planning. Worked on payroll. Had various budget and auditor meetings and safety training. Did some weed spraying at OCLAP and Oxbow. Took pictures of various properties with drone and added to county website. Working with website developer to add videos as well for various properties. Hoping to get brochures and trail maps made for various properties. AllTrails was mentioned as a way to make trails and properties more accessible to visitors. Interviewed for another seasonal. Did NC planting upkeep. Working on wildlife area management plans. Talked with neighbor to West about mowing dispute.

Old Business

Skid steer and Budget: Behrens ordered a skid steer, which is sitting at John Deere. Had issue with auditor in getting funds. Had various meetings with auditor's department and board of supervisors to resolve. Due to misunderstanding/clerical errors, we have about 160k less in our budget than initially thought. Skid steer is still within budget.

Fall Fest Planning Updates: 34 vendors are currently arranged for Fall Fest, and others are still contacting Genaw to inquire about vending. Behrens has been figuring out parking. Staff has mowed area in public hunting area to serve as parking lot for the event. Adding a railing or steps at the small trail connecting the NC area and parking area was discussed. Volunteers were also discussed.

New Business

New Board Member introduction: New board member Danielle Dunning was introduced.

Starting Management Plans: Behrens has been working on plans for all wildlife areas.

Website and Map updates: Discussed in director's update.

Floor Discussion

November board meeting has been moved to Oct 30th to accommodate Fall IAN Conference.

A seasonal was hired for this winter to assist with forestry management.

Adjourn

With no further discussion items, it was motioned by Wacha, seconded by Dunning, to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m., all voting aye.

Board Chair

Tama County Conservation Board