

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes January 2024

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session January 2, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Marilyn Clark, Jeanie Carroll, Dennis Koenig and Steve Weymiller. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Erin Cubbon, Emma Jacobs, and Brody VanderKolk Present from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the agenda and minutes from the December 5, 2023 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Koenig and a second by Carroll with all members in favor.

There was no public comment.

The board approved claims and revenues from December 2023 with a motion by Clark and a second by Carroll. All in favor.

A discussion was had regarding the Iowa DNR management agreements for the Harpers Ferry Boat Landing and shops, Harpers Slough Fishing access, Nobles Island, and Heytmans Landing. The Iowa DNR has provided a revised copy of the agreements reflecting the desire to reevaluate the contracts after 5 years. After 5 years the contracts will automatically renew every 5 years. The revised contract does not allow for commercial use at the facilities. This would include renting the house at Harpers Ferry for income but would not prohibit the use of the house as seasonal staffing quarters. The board expressed interest in having the option to rent the house out for short term rentals if desired and director Geerdes will ask the DNR to revise the contract to read so and present the revised copy to the board at the February meeting.

The 2024/2025 fiscal year budget was reviewed. The proposed budget included the purchase of a 2024 Dodge Ram 1500 pickup truck from Torkelson Motors. A motion was made by Koenig and seconded by Carroll to approve the draft budget to be presented to the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors for 2024/2025. All in favor.

Informational items that were presented to the board included the reappointment of Steve Weymiller to the Conservation Board for a five-year term, January public programs at the Driftless Center and the Driftless Center being closed for Martin Luther King, Jr Day on January 15, 2024. The staff will be attending the Winterfest Annual statewide conference on January 23- January 24 in Iowa City and year end donations for the Allamakee County Conservation Foundation were also reviewed.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for February 6, 2024 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:58 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Carroll to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes February 2024

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session February 6, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Marilyn Clark, Jeanie Carroll, Jesse Delaney and Steve Weymiller. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Emma Jacobs, and Brody VanderKolk Present from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the agenda and minutes from the February 6, 2024 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Clark and a second by Carroll with all members in favor.

There was no public comment.

The board approved claims and revenues from January 2024 with a motion by Clark and a second by Weymiller. All in favor.

The Board moved into a discussion about the geothermal system at the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. Director Geerdes informed the board of the timeline leading up to and after the failure of the geothermal system. It has been determined by Winona Controls and Shawver Well that the injection well which returns water back to the aquifer had mineralized shut. Shawver Well performed air lifting and a chemical injection into the well to reopen the injection well. After the procedures it was determined the well was able to handle nearly 110 gallons per minute of water which was the volume when the well was originally drilled in 2016. Director Geerdes has reached out to Laurie Moody, the Allamakee County Environmental Engineer and others to further learn why this event happened. Moody has suggested to test the water on both sides of the geothermal heat pumps and exchangers to see if there is a change in the water composition. The board discussed the possibility of having to install equipment to prevent a similar malfunction from happening in the future. Director Geerdes will continue to work with the resources available to learn more on causation of the mineralization and prevention in the future.

The Board moved onto discussion and consideration of the management agreement with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources at the Harpers Ferry Boat landing and shops, Heytman's Landing, The Harpers Slough Fishing Access and Nobles Island Boat Landing. The agreements were reviewed at the January 2024 meeting with the board asking the DNR to amend the contracts to allow for commercial use of the house and the possibility for short term rentals. With the amended agreements allowing the short-term rental of the house a discussion was had with possible uses. Director Geerdes noted that the DNR Law enforcement Bureau is interested in renting the basement which they had remodeled into a meeting area and secure evidence storage. A separate contract would need to be entered into with the DNR Law Enforcement with the parameters of that agreement for the rental of the basement. Further discussion was had on the rental of the living quarters of the house with two viable options. One option would be to rent the house to seasonal staff at a discounted rate as an incentive to work seasonally for the ACCB. The option of a short-term rental style was also discussed. A motion was made by Clark and seconded by Carroll to renew the Iowa Department of Natural Resources management agreements for the Heytman's Landing, Harpers Ferry Boat Landing, shops and house, the Harpers Slough Fishing Access and Nobles Island Boat Landing. All in Favor.

In Informational items and old business Supervisor Reiser gave an update on the county budget process. The Supervisors have been meeting regularly and are nearing the completion of the budget review for each department. Office Manager Emma Jacobs encouraged the board to sign up for the quarterly

newsletter that she started with the first edition being in January 2024. Anyone interested in receiving the newsletter electronically can visit our website.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for March 5, 2024 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:59 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Carroll to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes March 2024

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session March 5, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Marilyn Clark, Jeanie Carroll, Jesse Delaney and Dennis Koenig. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Emma Jacobs, Erin Cubbon and Brody VanderKolk Present from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser and from the public Francis Garret. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the day's agenda and minutes from the February 6, 2024 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Clark and a second by Carroll with all members in favor.

During public comment time Francis Garret spoke about the Cecilia Sanders Garrett Greenbelt property and the work that had been done in the past and the habitat improvements that he thinks would be beneficial in the future. Garret also spoke of potential partnerships with Ducks Unlimited and other conservation organizations to obtain funding and volunteers for projects.

The board approved claims and revenues from the month of February 2024 with a motion by Koenig and a second by Clark. All in favor.

The Board moved into an update on the geothermal system at the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. Director Geerdes and members of the Allamakee County Conservation Foundation had met with the Board of Supervisors on March 4, 2024 to discuss payment of the repairs on the system. At the time of the meeting the total cost of repairs was \$19,933.75 with an additional bill expected from Winona Controls for a follow-up visit to assess the system and how it was performing after it had been operational for a period of time. Options for paying the expenses were discussed including how the foundation would contribute and using monies in the Conservation Reserve account. A need for a feasibility study by an independent mechanical engineer was discussed to determine the cause of the issues, how the issues could be prevented in the future or if a new system needed to be considered. Members of the board asked to have on the April agenda consideration to approve the use of funds from the Conservation Reserve fund for the payment.

The Board moved onto discussion and consideration of the management agreement with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources at the Harpers Ferry Boat landing and shops, Heytman's Landing, The Harpers Slough Fishing Access and Nobles Island Boat Landing. Director Geerdes informed the board he had presented the contracts to the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors at the February 12, 2024 Board of Supervisors meeting and the Supervisors asked the board to remove the Harpers Ferry House from the contracts. Geerdes asked the Iowa DNR to revise the contracts to exclude the Harpers Ferry House. The DNR had returned the updated agreement to reflect the decision of the Board of Supervisors. Koenig and Delaney spoke on the importance of the relationship between the Liaison to the Board of Supervisors, the Conservation Board, and the Board of Supervisors to ensure that what is being discussed in the meetings is accurately portrayed and approved as the Conservation Board intends as it was the intention of the Conservation Board to move forward with the agreements including the house with the option to remove at a later date if necessary.

Discussion continued with the board on what will happen to the house going forward and the possibility that the board may have to act on the sewer and the water lines for the shop if the Iowa DNR decides to sell or demolish the house. A motion was made by Koenig and seconded by Clark to table the Iowa

Department of Natural Resources management agreements until the April meeting for the Heytman's Landing, Harpers Ferry Boat Landing shops, the Harpers Slough Fishing Access and Nobles Island Boat Landing in order to better reflect the change in the contracts with the DNR excluding the house. All in Favor.

In Informational items and old business Geerdes gave an update on the Lansing Bridge and its impact on visitors and field trips at the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. Geerdes informed the board that Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative had asked the board to sign a Good Neighbor Agreement. The agreement is for the cooperative to use in securing grants for upcoming projects. Vanderkolk informed the board that he was beginning prescribed burns at areas when the conditions were right and he was going to be moving the docks into the water at Harpers Ferry Boat Landing and Nobles Island Boat Landing as people have been using the landings. Cubbon gave an update on education programs and field trips for the Spring season.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for April 2, 2024 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:59 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Carroll to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes April 2024

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session April 2, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jeanie Carroll, Jesse Delaney, Steve Weymiller and Dennis Koenig. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Erin Cubbon and Brody VanderKolk Present from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the day's agenda and minutes from the March 5, 2024 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Carroll and a second by Koenig with all members in favor.

No Public Comment

The board reviewed the claims and account balances for March 2024.

Discussion and Consideration was made on transferring money from the Conservation Reserve to the Conservation budget at the next budget amendment which is yet to be scheduled, to offset the geothermal repair expenses at the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. The cost of the repairs was \$19,933.75 and has been paid for out of the general fund. The Conservation Reserve account currently has a balance of \$90,880.16. A motion was made by Weymiller to transfer the amount of the expenses for the geothermal repairs at the next budget amendment. A second was made by Carroll. Weymiller and Carroll voted in favor. Koenig and Delaney voted opposed. The motion did not carry. The Iowa DNR Management Agreements were brought up for discussion and consideration with the board reviewing the change in the contract to reflect the house being removed from the contracts. Discussion continued with the board on what will happen to the house going forward and the possibility that the board may have to act on the sewer and the water lines for the shop if the Iowa DNR decides to sell or demolish the house. A motion was made by Koenig and seconded by Weymiller to table the Iowa Department of Natural Resources management agreements until the May meeting for the Heytman's Landing, Harpers Ferry Boat Landing shops, the Harpers Slough Fishing Access and Nobles Island Boat Landing until the DNR has a more definitive answer as to what will happen to the house at the Harpers Ferry Boat Landing. Director Geerdes will continue to seek answers from the DNR about the future of the house. All in Favor.

Seasonal staffing was discussed. The Director noted that Lucas Byrnes and Jesse Troendle who worked as seasonal staff last year were willing to return for the upcoming summer season. A motion was made to hire Lucas Byrnes and Jesse Troendle at \$13.00 per hour by Weymiller and a second motion was made by Carroll. All in favor.

In informational items and old business Director Geerdes presented the ACCB newsletter titled the Rattlesnake Buzz, that Office Manager/Assistant Naturalist Emma Jacobs has been putting together and sending out electronically. The public boat dock at Harpers Ferry has been installed and is ready for use. It was donated by the Melissa Lea Reicks Foundation and will allow for boaters to safely park their boats while visiting the businesses in Harpers Ferry. Geerdes is working on signage and a press release to acknowledge the donation. The Lansing Bridge closure continues to impact programs being offered at the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center with schools from Wisconsin being forced to cancel or reschedule field trips.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for May 5, 2024 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:59 p.m. with a motion by Koenig and seconded by Carroll to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes May 2024

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session May 7, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jeanie Carroll, Jesse Delaney, Steve Weymiller, Marilyn Clark and Dennis Koenig. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Emma Jacobs and Brody VanderKolk Present from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser and from the public was Tom Clark. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the day's agenda and minutes from the April 2, 2024 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Carroll and a second by Koenig with all members in favor.

During public comment Tom Clark introduced himself to the board and stated he was running for the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors in the 2024 election.

The board reviewed and approved the claims with a motion by Weymiller and second by Carroll. All in favor.

Director Geerdes gave an update on the geothermal system at the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. He stated that all has been running normal, with less demand on the system with the favorable Spring temperatures. Geerdes noted that the ACCB is on the schedule for a budget amendment for the geothermal system, but will not need it as they are currently running under budget for the FY 23/24.

The meeting moved to discussion on the renewal of the DNR management agreements. Director Geerdes met with representatives from the DNR on April 23 at the Harpers Ferry house. Director Geerdes spoke to the DNR on the history of the house being used by the DNR and the Conservation Board in partnership. Geerdes also made clear that the water and the sewer lines for the shop used by the ACCB goes through the house and if the house is sold or demolished the lines would need to be redone. Geerdes asked the DNR to reclassify the house from a residence to a storage and meeting space used by the DNR. Staff from the DNR that was present complimented the ACCB and the DNR for working together to use the house to its optimum capacity benefiting multiple public agencies and bureaus in the DNR. The DNR would continue to work to reclassify the house to a storage and meeting facility. A motion was made by Koenig and second motion was made by Clark to table signing the Harpers Ferry Management agreements until a final decision was made on the house. All in Favor.

The board reviewed the offer from Torkelson Motors for a 2024 Dodge Ram 1500 and whether to accept the trade in offered or the truck should be put out for sealed bid. The trade in value from Torkelson Motors for the 2013 Dodge Ram 1500 was \$4,400. A motion was made by Carroll to put the 2013 Dodge Ram 1500 out to the public for sealed bid. The bids would be due back July 1 and opened at the July 2 regular board meeting. A second was made by Clark. All in favor.

Director Geerdes asked the board to consider hiring Gary Krapfl for seasonal part time help at the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. Krapfl works an estimated 8-12 hours a week when staff is conducting field trips or cannot be at the desk. A motion was made by Clark to hire Gary Krapfl for \$13.00 per hour to work at the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. A second was made by Weymiller. All in favor.

In informational items and old business Director Geerdes notified the board a memorial at Stonebrooke Park had been vandalized and staff was working with the Horns family to reconstruct the memorial. The

auditor office notified the Director of an unemployment claim by a seasonal worker. After investigation it was found that the State had made an error and the claim was for the seasonal workers cousin with the same initials. A hearing to appeal the claim has been scheduled for May 9. Jim Kerndt has given verbal notice that he is going to change the easement the ACCB has for use of trails on his property. Mr. Kerndt will give written notice 30 days prior to the changes. The staff gave field updates on Spring activities.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for June 4, 2024 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:40 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Koenig to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes May 2024

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session June 4, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jeanie Carroll, Steve Weymiller, Marilyn Clark and Dennis Koenig. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, and Emma Jacobs. Present from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser and from the public was Tom Clark. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the day's agenda and minutes from the May 7, 2024 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Weymiller and a second by Carrol with all members in favor.

There was no public comment.

The board reviewed and approved the claims with a motion by Koenig and second by Weymiller. All in favor.

The director presented information from the Allamakee Energy District on a solar audit they had performed on the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. A rooftop mounted system could possibly produce enough energy to offset 15% of the electricity the Driftless Center uses on a monthly basis. The estimated cost to install would be around \$34,000 with a 7.75 year estimated payback. No action was taken.

The board was told of a possible easement being sought by Jason Brink across a parcel of land owned by the Conservation Board. The easement is located on Knoll Street in Lansing. The parcel of land owned by the county is .1 of an acre and is not maintained for public use. Assistant County Attorney Kistler is working on an easement and will include that the county will not be held responsible for the maintenance of the portion across their property.

The management agreements with the Iowa DNR were reviewed. The director informed the board that a final decision had not been made by the DNR on the future of the house at Harpers Ferry Boat Landing. The director explained to the board they could approve the agreements and amend the agreements at a later time as allowed by the agreements. A motion was made by Koenig and a second by Clark to table the signing of the agreements until final action was taken by the DNR regarding the house at the Harpers Ferry Boat Landing. All in favor.

In informational items and old business Director Geerdes notified the members of the board the damage from recent flooding was minimal and it was all cleaned up at this time. The appeal of the unemployment claim with the state of Iowa was successful and the director was working on finalizing three donations to the Driftless Center and for memorial benches. Emma Jacobs gave an update on visitorship at the Driftless Center and also on the field trip season that is winding down.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for July 2, 2024 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:48 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Koenig to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes July 2024

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session July 2, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jesse Delaney, Jeanie Carroll, Marilyn Clark and Dennis Koenig. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Brody VanderKolk and Emma Jacobs. Present from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the day's agenda and minutes from the June 2, 2024 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Clark and a second by Carrol with all members in favor.

There was no public comment.

The board reviewed and approved the claims with a motion by Koenig and second by Clark. All in favor.

With the beginning of FY24/25 on July 1 the Director reviewed projects that were planned for the fiscal year. These projects included updating counters and sinks at the Bluffview Park, stain shelters and kiosks at all parks, replace the vandalized memorial at Stonebrooke Park, and completing a sidewalk for the transient dock at the Harpers Ferry Boat Landing.

The Director gave an update on flooding impacts and cleanup underway after the June 21/22 events. The most significant damage was at Clear Creek Park and The Garrett Greenbelt. Both parks had culverts or bridge approaches that were washed out in addition to significant debris. Cleanup is underway but much of the areas are still too wet from the flooding to make cleanup feasible. Parks and boat landings on the Mississippi River have experienced flooding, staff has moved much of the infrastructure such as docks and picnic tables above the water level. After the river crests debris will have to be removed from the parks as the ground dries and access is possible. The latest forecast from NOAA predicts the Mississippi River will crest sometime after the July 4 holiday.

Sealed bids were opened for the 2013 Dodge Ram 1500 pickup truck. Two bids were received with Mike Manning bidding \$10,059 and Kayla VanderKolk bidding \$5,500. A motion was made by Clark and seconded by Carrol to accept the bid from Mike Manning for \$10,059.

The management agreements with the Iowa DNR were reviewed. The director informed the board that the classification of the house has been changed indefinitely to a storage facility for the use of the Iowa DNR Law Enforcement bureau and they will retain the house at the Harpers Ferry Boat Landing. The Director recommended signing the contracts for management with the Iowa DNR. A motion was made by Carrol and a second by Clark to sign the management agreements with the Iowa DNR for the Harpers Ferry Public Boat Landing, Harpers Slough Access, Nobles Island Boat Landing, and Heytman's Landing. All in favor.

In informational items and old business Director Geerdes notified the board of the upcoming Iowa County Conservation System dues. At the August meeting the director will give the board information from ICCS on the roles and responsibilities of the ICCS and the benefits to being a member. The upcoming ICCS Fall Conference will be hosted by Winneshiek and Fayette Counties in September. The director invited all staff and board members to consider attending the conference as it is a good way to network with other County Conservation members. Emma Jacobs informed the board members the new addition of the Rattlesnake Buzz Newsletter was available.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for August 6, 2024 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:44 p.m. with a motion by Koenig and seconded by Clark to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes August 2024

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session August 6, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jesse Delaney, Marilyn Clark, Steve Weymiller and Dennis Koenig. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Erin Cubbon and Emma Jacobs. Present from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser and from the public John Hanson. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the day's agenda and minutes from the July 2, 2024 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Koenig and a second by Clark with all members in favor.

During public comment Allamakee County Supervisor Mark Reiser asked about who maintains the river channel of the interior rivers including the Yellow River and the Upper Iowa River. Reiser had recently heard feedback from a resident of Allamakee County that the Yellow River from Forest Mills Road to Smithfield Road had several hazardous trees for canoers and kayakers across the channel.

The board reviewed and approved the claims with a motion by Weymiller and second by Clark. All in favor.

Dr. John Hanson with Ursus Iowa gave a presentation on the status of black bears in Iowa. Black bears are native to Iowa but have been extirpated for 150 or more years. Black bears currently have no legal status in Iowa and it is the hopes of Dr. Hanson and his nonprofit group to change that status, so they can be legally protected in Iowa. Dr. Hanson asked the board to consider supporting a county ordinance that would prohibit the harm of black bears in Allamakee County. Dr. Hanson provided a draft of a possible ordinance and Director Geerdes will add to a future agenda of the ACCB.

The Director provided information regarding the Iowa County Conservation System and the benefits of the organization. Dues for Allamakee County are \$1,500 annually. A motion was made by Koenig and second motion was made by Weymiller to pay the 2024/2025 annual dues of the ICCS. All in favor. A quote from Solutions, Inc was provided to the board for the purchase of a new laptop computer for the cost of \$1,770. A motion was made by Weymiller and a second by Koenig to purchase a new laptop. All in favor.

In informational items and old business Director Geerdes notified the board Office Manager and Assistant Naturalist Emma Jacobs has submitted her letter of resignation. The resignation is effective August 22, 2024. Director Geerdes will begin advertising for the position as soon as possible with the hopes of conducting interviews for potential candidates in September and the new employee starting in early October. Director Geerdes showed the members of the board a photograph of the retaining wall at the shop in Harpers Ferry. During recent rain storms the limestone fill behind the wall washed out and the wall is in jeopardy of collapsing. The wall measures 24' long x 4' high. Delaney suggested putting together bid specifications for contractors to submit estimates. Elite Sprinkler will be conducting the annual inspection of the sprinkler system in the coming weeks. Director Geerdes met with Dave Ashe, District Forester with the Iowa DNR at the Waterville Farm 55 park. Ashe has suggested work that can be done to improve the forest health at the area. Option A included a timber sale of maple and bitternut hickory trees to allow for Oak regeneration while Option B was to leave the shade tolerant species of trees but perform TSI work on the understory. Members of the board suggested the ACCB move forward with timber stand improvements at Waterville Farm 55 and to continue to work with Ashe as to the best course of action to take. Delaney commented on the fishing tournament that was held at Village Creek Boat Landing with 88 boats recently and also asked the Director to contact the DNR about sealing the pavement of the Village Creek Boat Landing like was originally included in the paving

project but was never completed.

The time and date for the next meeting was set for September 3, 2024 at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:58 p.m. with a motion by Koenig and seconded by Clark to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes October 2024

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session October 1, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jeanie Carroll, Jesse Delaney, Steve Weymiller, and Marilyn Clark. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes and Brody VanderKolk Present from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the day's agenda and minutes from the September 3, 2024 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Weymiller and a second by Clark with all members in favor.

No public comment.

The board reviewed and approved the claims with a motion by Clark and second by Carroll. All in favor. Director Geerdes gave an update on the Waterville Farm 55 timber stand improvement project. Dave Asche, DNR Forester has marked trees for sale at the Farm 55 site. Asche also completed a timber sale packet to be submitted to bonded timber buyers in the state of Iowa. Bids for the timber sale will be due back for the November board meeting. Geerdes, Asche, and Aaron Flickinger met October 1, 2024 to view the work at Waterville Farm 55 and the Waterville Pines area that had previously been completed. Both foresters were impressed by the work already completed and the native White Pines present on the properties. Both properties were showing signs of oak and white pine regeneration. The board approved the hiring of Becca Hefflefinger for the Office Manager/Assistant Naturalist position with a start date of October 21, 2024 with a motion by Carrol and second by Clark. All in favor

Director Geerdes told the board he had submitted a Water Recreation and Access grant for a sidewalk and attachment for the Harpers Ferry Transient Dock. The project is estimated at \$11,500 and consists of 50' of sidewalk and 2 attachment points for the dock. The two attachment points will allow the dock to be secured during different stages of river level.

Members of the board discussed a potential Iowa DNR Fish Habitat grant. The director suggested applying for a grant to construct a shoreline fishing access at Nobles Island Boat Landing by the artesian well area. This area is frequently used by shore fisherman, has been seeing erosion from recent flooding and the shoreline is filled with concrete construction debris as its current rip rap material. A motion was made by Clark to submit an Iowa DNR Fish Habitat Grand for Shoreline Fishing Access at Nobles Island Boat Landing and a second was made by Carrol. All in Favor.

The board discussed the recent action by the Board of Supervisors regarding the selling of the county boat that is used by the ACCB and the Allamakee Sheriff Department. The Sheriff's office has requested to purchase a new boat. The purchase was approved by the Board of Supervisors if the existing boat was sold. The Alumacraft boat the County currently has is titled to Allamakee County, but was paid for by grants secured by the Allamakee County Conservation Board. Mark Reiser with the Board of Supervisors suggested that Geerdes schedule an agenda item at the next Board of Supervisors October 7 to speak with them about ACCB's concerns.

In information items the board discussed the use of the Monsrud Bridge which is currently being stored at Yellow River State Forest. The DNR has expressed interest in using it for a bridge in one of their areas. The historical value of the bridge was discussed. The washing and cleaning of the windows and outside siding of the Driftless Center was discussed. Ken's Window service has been contracted previously to wash the windows but has been unable to because of the insurance the county requires. The Director

informed the board on the planning for Iowa County Conservation System District meeting which will be hosted at the Driftless Center in December.

In final action the Director asked the board to consider moving the date of the next meeting back one week. He is going to be out of town leading up to the first Tuesday of the month. A motion was made by Weymiller and second Carrol to change the date of the next board meeting to November 12, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. at The Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center. All in Favor.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:52 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Carrol to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes November 12, 2024

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session November 12, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jeanie Carroll, Marilyn Clark, and Dennis Koenig. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Brody VanderKolk, Erin Cubbon, and Becca Hefflefinger. Present from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser and Tom Clark. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the day's agenda and minutes from the October 1, 2024 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Carrol and a second by Clark with all members in favor.

During public comment Director Geerdes invited Tom Clark, newly elected Allamakee County Supervisor, for a tour of the ACCB's areas to learn more about the projects that the county has completed and has planned in the future.

The board reviewed and approved the claims with a motion by Koenig and second by Clark. All in favor.

Director Geerdes notified the board they had received one bid for the Timber Stand Improvement at the Waterville Farm 55. Dan Jones Logging was the sole bidder with a bid of \$7,520. Director Geerdes will notify the successful bidder and work with them on the terms of the agreement. The terms of the agreement sent in the bid package was for 25% of the bid to be paid within 30 days and the remainder to be paid before beginning. A motion was made by Koenig and a second motion by Clark to award the Waterville Farm 55 Timber Stand Improvement to Dan Jones Logging for \$7,520. All in favor.

Geerdes asked the board to consider a Quit Claim Deed to adjust a portion of the McDowell Upper Iowa Property. Michael and Diana Lonning, property owners on the South side of the Upper Iowa River, recently were denied a permit for construction of a new deck where they previously had a deck due to the deck extending over the property line. After investigation by the County Assessors Office it was discovered that most likely the property owned by the county was surveyed wrong at the time of the removal of the old highway bridge and that the portion of the property bordering the Lonning's was intended for them in the original deed dating back to 1981. The Assessor's office asked the Conservation Board to consider deeding a portion of the McDowell property approximately .25 acres in size that is completely submerged in water of the Upper Iowa River to the Lonning's in order to correct the original survey and deed from 1981. A motion was made by Clark and a second motion was made by Carrol to deed through a Quit Claim Deed Lot 1 in the Southeast Northeast lying North of Lot 1 of 2 Southeast Northeast in Section 2 Township 99 Range 6. All in favor.

In information items the board discussed upcoming closures for the Winter Holidays which are observed by the County. The Driftless Center will be closed on the following days: November 21, 22, 23, and 24, December 24 and 25, and January 1. The Director updated the board on the meeting he had with the County Board of Supervisors regarding the boat. No action has been taken by the Supervisors regarding the existing county boat and is not planned until the new boat is received by the Sheriff's office. A timeline was not known for the delivery of the new boat but it was not expected until Spring. The Driftless Center had experienced a power surge on October 29 during an electrical storm. Dave Cota Electric was called and asked to replace breakers that were damaged. The copy machine was also damaged and had to be repaired by TriState Business Machines. Shumacher Elevator was contacted to help with resetting the elevator over the phone. Becca Hefflefinger introduced herself to the board and the other staff members gave updates on activities they had been working on in the previous month.

The next meeting was set for December 3, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:33 p.m. with a motion by Clark and seconded by Koenig to adjourn. All in favor.

Allamakee County Conservation Board Minutes December 3, 2024

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session December 3, 2024 beginning at 1 p.m. at the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center in Lansing, Iowa. Board members who were present were: Jesse Delaney, Steve Weymiller, Jeanie Carroll, Marilyn Clark, and Dennis Koenig. Attending from the Allamakee County Conservation Board staff was Ross Geerdes, Erin Cubbon, and Becca Hefflefinger. Present from the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors was Mark Reiser and Tom Clark. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and the day's agenda and minutes from the November 12, 2024 regular board meeting were approved with a motion by Carrol and a second by Koenig with all members in favor.

There was no public comment.

The board reviewed and approved the claims with a motion by Clark and second by Weymiller. All in favor.

The board began preliminary discussions for the fy2025/2026 budget. Denise Beyer, the county Auditor has not provided the budget worksheets to the department heads as of the board meeting but they are expected to be available within the next week. Director Geerdes talked about projects they have planned for the upcoming year that will be funded through any grants that are received as well as through the budget. These projects include the Nobles Island Fish Habitat work, a sidewalk at the Harpers Ferry Boat landing for the transient dock and continued timber stand improvement projects at the parks. Equipment updates being considered for the next budget cycle is the purchase of a new mower. Currently a John Deere zero turn and a Kubota zero turn are being used and both have about the same hours. Vanderkolk is going to be working with Premier Kubota and Bodensteiner John Deere to get quotes for trade in value of each mower and the purchase price of a new zero turn mower. The county van was also discussed as being needed to upgrade. The need for the van was discussed and if a different style of vehicle would potentially fit the needs of the naturalist. Supervisor Reiser reminded the board of the nearly \$5,000 that would be available from the sale of the 2013 Dodge Ram and also the money from the Waterville Farm timber sale would be available to help with additional timber stand projects.

In information items the board heard updates from staff members on projects they have been working on. The director informed the board of a possible land donation that is in the works near Volney Park involving .2 acres along the driveway to the park. The Director gave an update on the refinishing of the turtle at the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center and updated the board on the planning for the Iowa County Conservation System District 6 meeting being held at the visitors center on December 18. Dave Cota had been back to finish the work from the power surge that happened on October 28. He initially thought a new control board would be needed but after inspection by a representative from the company it was determined that the existing board would still be functional.

The next meeting was set for January 7 , 2025 beginning at 1 p.m. in the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center.

With no additional business the meeting was concluded at 1:47p.m. with a motion by Koenig and seconded by Clark to adjourn. All in favor.

