

**Regular Meeting
Buchanan County Conservation Board
July 21, 2020**

The regular meeting of the Buchanan County Conservation Board was called to order at 6:00 pm by Board President Loren Hamilton. Board members present: Andy Crump, Ron Wolfe and (via Zoom) Anita Miller. Others present: Director Dan Cohen, Secretary Diane Johnson and (via Zoom) Craig Erikson of Shive Hattery.

Motion Crump/Wolfe to approve agenda and June 16, 2020 minutes. All Ayes, motion carried.

Motion Wolfe/Crump to approve claims as follows. All Ayes, motion carried.

Alliant Energy	\$867.83	Baily Bergman	\$1760.00
BCHC	\$72.55	Blake Streicher	\$100.00
BMC Aggregates	\$152.98	CJ Cooper	\$35.00
Consolidated Energy	\$491.25	CY & Charley's	\$14.00
Diane Johnson	\$596.21	ECI REC	\$209.33
Elaine Walker	\$532.72	Fairbank Plumbing	\$1211.50
Hawkeye Alarm	\$72.00	IA. Reg. Utility	\$420.33
IMWCA	\$5090.00	Independence Light & PWR	\$32.00
Jacob Schwarting	\$1760.00	JD Financial	\$337.67
Katheryn Melka	\$64.00	Keith Nuehring	\$340.00
Oelwein Publishing Group	\$17.50	Office Towne	\$10.23
Ratchford	\$750.00	Richard Heiserman	\$60.00
Shive Hattery	\$2864.22	Teresa Mensen	\$340.00
Treasury of Iowa	\$72.00	USDA	\$85.00
Vern's True Value	\$44.97	Virginia Lake	\$348.00
VISA	\$19.55	Walmart	\$46.43
Waste Management	\$188.25	Weber Paper	\$68.25
Windstream	\$271.94		

Erikson presented the Board explained elements of a draft Master Plan for Fontana Park. Two options were presented and Board Members had immediate questions answered. Cohen requested the Board take home the Plan handouts, think about it some more, and then call or email him with any questions or comments within the next 7-10 days.

Cohen updated the Board on the Iron Bridge Project as well as the Spillway steps at Fontana.

Fiscal Year 21 Budget highlights were presented. Cohen stated some of the highlights as mower replacement, Main Shelter roof replacement, steps/spillway at Fontana Park, Needs Assessment Survey, as well as ongoing Master Plan for Fontana. Latrine placement at Troy Mills Access may not happen due to decision by DNR not to allow the project. No action taken.

Fairbank wetland mitigation was discussed. Motion Crump/Wolfe to potentially accept management of a Buchanan County Secondary Roads 14-acre wetland mitigation property, sometime after approximately 12 years of management/restoration by the Roadside Department, as per a plan outlined in a letter submitted by the County Engineer. All Ayes, motion carried.

The Directors report was presented as follows:

- Attended all meetings via ZOOM or conference call: Buchanan County Supervisors; Buchanan County Department Heads.
- Field Staff: Staff mostly tried to keep up with mowing of grounds, trails, and lots; bladed roads (and rocked some sites); maintained equipment; finished private lands plantings; patrolled; placed some signs; removing sand from Iron Bridge; etc. James Mount was off and had some surgery, other staff took vacation before losing it as per policy, leaving reduced staff.
- Naturalist Staff: Naturalists provide a good mix of on-your-own programming and in-person programs, including the restart of camps and paddling programs. “Facebook Live”, and QR Code nature trails and “finding the fawn” parks challenges, continued. Michael and Bailey (intern) did most chore days while James was gone.
- Requested updates from EIE&C regarding finish of work at Iron Bridge. Hasn’t jumped on the narrow window to fix rock levels when water levels briefly have been down. Lowering the rock riprap and making sure all street lamps were are the main items remaining.
- Met with Craig Erickson of Shive-Hattery for a site tour and to work on the Park Master Plan. I also brought in naturalist and field staff for input. Met again via teleconference. Draft plan layouts were developed by S-H for Board input at July Meeting (agenda item).
- Called Ron VanVeldhuizen regarding the Board’s decision to accept the gift of land adjacent to Otter Creek Roadside Park, but continue to wait for a reply to begin moving forward.
- The easement request from Iowa Regional Utilities Association (rural water) to bore/maintain a water line under Otter Creek Roadside Park was approved following a public hearing of the Board of Supervisors,
- Worked with Buchanan County Tourism on the upcoming county visitor’s brochure.
- Notified Tschiggfrie that they were award the contract for work on the access steps to otter Creek and other improvements for the spillway at Fontana Park. Also submitted the change order to remove pillars from the wade-in area. A contract and the change order have been signed. Tried to set a date/time for the contractor meeting, but Alex Davis has been busy and an employee for Tschiggfrie tested positive for Covid-19 (agenda item).
- Opened the Nature Center to the public. Initially, we just “strongly urged” the visitors to wear masks as per the Board’s minimum guidelines. However, due to the number of people refusing, we ended up requiring masks, with much better results. The Buchanan County Courthouse since followed suit when it reopened.
- Submitted final grant report for the Buchanan County Community Foundation Iron Bridge Access grant, and signed the award document for the grant dollars received for this year’s Fontana Steps and Spillway project. I also received a check from Tri-Rivers Waterfowlers (\$5,000) for final work on the Iron Bridge Project.
- Entered into the contract with INRCOG for the 2020 Needs Assessment Survey. Work on the questionnaire will begin in the coming month.

- Sent survey questionnaire from the Iowa County Conservation System to Board Members ahead of meeting. A summarized response will be submitted following the Board Meeting.
- Sand erosion off the slope onto the sidewalk at Ion Bridge continues to be a problem. Contacted Sherlyn Hazen regarding some hydroseeding and erosion control material.
- Received a response from Iowa DNR regarding placement of latrine at Troy Mills Access. The request (started last fall) was moved up the ladder. The response was that the DNR does not provide latrines at any of its wildlife management areas, and therefore would not allow the latrine (since, if they had to take over management they would have to dispose of the restroom). I am still trying to work on this...
- Park Ranger Van Raden reported issues with electrical pedestals giving shocks/heat. Had the pedestals checked by electrician Dean Kress who could find no issues and opened the pedestals back for use. No problems since...
- Received a request from someone wishing to have a wedding at Jakway Forest. The request she made for the wedding would break several park rules. However, I state she could request a variance from the Board.
- Wells at Cortright were plugged.
- Lightning struck near the nature center, splitting a pine and knocking out phone service. After checking with the phone company and IT, had the phone vendor fix the system.
- Wrote employee evaluations and began conducting evaluation interview meetings.
- Continued working again rules and regulation changes for park visitors and ordinance update. Had changes reviewed by County Attorney's Office, and asked Dan Clouse to draft language for the ordinance changes. Deer stand signs were placed at 15 areas where stand placement is most prevalent.
- Spoke with County Engineer Keierleber regarding the Conservation Board potentially taking ownership/management of a wetland mitigation site near Fairbank (agenda item).
- Met with the County's insurance representative (ICAP). Main areas mentioned were getting on a schedule for fire extinguisher replacement, removing a playground unit at Fontana Park, and minor playground fixes at Jakway.
- Fall ICCS Conference was cancelled.
- Advertised for part-time Office Manager position, as per June Meeting. Interviews will be conducted end of July/beginning of August. I plan to fill the position by mid-August.

Motion Crump/Wolfe to accept the Director's Report as presented. All Ayes, motion carried.

The next regular meeting of the Buchanan County Conservation Board will be held on Tuesday, August 18, 2020.

Motion Wolfe/Miller to adjourn. All Ayes, meeting adjourned at 6:59.

Diane Johnson
Secretary

