

Regular Meeting Buchanan County Conservation Board September 16, 2019

The regular meeting of the Buchanan County Conservation Board was held on Monday, September 16, 2019 at the Fontana Interpretive Nature Center. The meeting was called to order by Board President Loren Hamilton at 6:00 pm. Board members present: Ron Wolfe and Anita Miller. Others present: Director Dan Cohen, Secretary Diane Johnson, Leon Bachman, Jeanne Bachman, Paul Bachman, Keeley Bachman, Kris Lenz and DNR Conservation Officer Dakota Drish.

Motion Miller/Wolfe to approve agenda and the August 19 and 27 minutes. All Ayes, motion carried.

Now comes Andy Crump at 6:01.

Paul Bachman stated that on September 8, 2019 a person or persons unknown was shooting within 200 yards of his property which is adjacent to Cortright Wildlife area. He said much of his personal property had shotgun holes in it and fears for the safety of his small children. Bachman further stated that there is ATV use in the area. He then showed pictures of the damage to his house, barn, motorhome and vehicle. Leon Bachman and Lenz asked to either forbid hunting, make it a preserve, or archery hunting only at Cortright.

Cohen pointed out that there are signs up, more so than on other county or DNR-managed areas, and those who shoot within 200 yards of occupied buildings are breaking the law. Grant fund agreements used to purchase Cortright require the area be managed for public hunting. Drish quoted Iowa State Law regarding shooting within 200 yards of buildings, and that on state ground the law does not apply to buildings constructed after 2004 near public hunting areas. The State has recognized the importance of providing public hunting lands. Drish stated that illegal shooting is a law enforcement issue that continues to be investigated, and that he has written citations for this activity in the past and will continue to do so. The Conservation Board discussed possible plans for more signage and/or a mowed strip to further delineate the 200-yard zone from Bachman's house. The four Bachmans and Lenz left the meeting at 6:45. No action taken.

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

Alliant Energy	\$1236.40	Andrew Anderson	\$800.00
Andy Krempeges	\$204.00	Blake Streicher	\$75.00
BMC Aggregates	\$235.22	Buchanan CNTY. Public Health	\$44.00
Consolidated Energy	\$1241.39	Corkery's Welding	\$12.36
Cy & Charley's	\$320.00	Dan Cohen	\$46.81
Diane Johnson	\$529.11	ECI REC	\$584.55
Elaine Walker	\$691.90	IA Regional Utilities	\$557.98
IDALS	\$175.00	Independence Light & Pwr.	\$32.00
IA Prison Industries	\$216.37	Independence Plumbing	\$125.04

Jacon Schwarting	\$650.00	JD Financial	\$234.47
National Wildlife Fed.	\$33.95	O'Reilly	\$56.98
Oelwein Vet	\$198.40	Samantha Hanson	\$915.00
VISA	\$306.26	Waste Management	\$274.01
Windstream	\$274.83		

The FY 2020 financial report was read and discussed. Motion Wolfe/Miller to accept the financial report. All Ayes, motion carried.

Cohen updated the Board on the Iron Bridge Access. He then presented a payment voucher for the first payment to Eastern Iowa Concrete and Excavating for work on the project. Motion Crump/Miller to approve a claim equal to the payment voucher. All Ayes, motion carried.

Cohen presented a Ride Along Policy that was derived from a template provided by the insurance company and reviewed by the county attorney's Office. The policy allows volunteers interested in learning about law enforcement to ride with a certified peace officer/park ranger. Motion Crump/Wolfe to approve the Ride Along Policy with the addition of allowing up to 2 people over 2 shifts in a given year. All Ayes, motion carried.

Discussion was held on the new appointment process for new Board members. Cohen stated he met with the Board of Supervisors, and that they approved publishing the board appointment/vacancies advertisements in the local newspapers by October 1, 2019, with a process leading to appointing board member in November for terms beginning January 1. No action taken.

Motion Miller/Crump to accept the Director report which was submitted as follows. All Ayes, motion carried.

- Attended meetings of Bird Friendly Iowa/Counties (phone); Buchanan County Tourism; County Conservation Directors Association and Legislative Committee; I WiLL Messaging; Buchanan County Supervisors; and Buchanan County Trails Association.
- Field Staff: Staff maintained park roads, cut dead trees and invasive shrubs, sealed the old water control structure to allow water to fill the Koutny wetland; mowed trails in outlying areas and for next year's burn breaks; conducting law enforcement. Van Raden attended the safety mtg in my absence, and Whittle handled investigation at Cortright. Short one staff person, after interns completed their terms. Some staff took vacation ahead of their anniversary dates.
- Naturalist Staff: Naturalists have begun their fall school programming schedule. Intern Sam Hanson returned to school but remains working some weekends until September 20. Maas returned from paternity leave. Public programs included: Monarch tagging; Talons of the Night (owls); Prairie Playground Club; Moonlight Paddle; Nature Kids – turtles; and Animal Encounters (salamanders, turkeys). Michael and Sondra received CPR and 1st Aid certification training.
- As per August Board meeting, signed agreement for FEMA grant award for constructing concrete steps to mitigate repeat damages to the steps from the Main Shelter to Otter Creek at Fontana. Received confirmation that costs are correct and accepted by FEMA.

- Worked with County Attorney's Office to have a letter sent to Louie Gallery to clean up debris left from him clearing illegally at Buffalo Creek Area, as per the August Board meeting.
- Work a little on the FY19 Annual Report, but too many other pressing items did not allow for much progress.
- Was on site many hours evaluating and answering questions from contractor/Assistant County Engineer Alex Davis regarding work at the Iron Bridge Access. Requested a special Board Meeting to obtain approval for additional parking along Nolen Ave. Much of the grading, hauling and placement of rock has been completed. Cost over-runs are anticipated for extra pipe placement for additional parking and extra materials for the retaining walls. Provided regular website posts/Facebook/and article to keep public informed about parking, launching and project update. Davis has been very helpful. He calculated quantities estimates to confirm billing from subcontractor B&J Hauling (agenda item).
- Received/placed boundary area signs at Littleton Dam, and ordered one-way road signs for the new parking at Iron bridge, along with a few other signs needed.
- Presented the ppt on Forest Reserve survey results during a panel session at the Iowa State Association of Counties Conference (meeting of Boards of Supervisors, Assessors, and Conservation Directors), as per August Board Meeting.
- Notified Ken Meggers regarding the Board's decision not to allow digging of the ditch at the Troy Mills Access wildlife are.
- Spoke with Mike and Michael (both help with the Richardson-Jakway Foundation) regarding the roofing project for the historic house. Michael offered to check on National Register requirements, and then quotes will be obtained for roofing. The Foundation has about \$10K to put toward the project.
- Met with County IT/GIS directors regarding programming the new interactive display that will feature drone video orientations to the county parks and natural areas, as well as park facilities and amenities. The display has many other potential uses. Cabell also is working a watersheds display. These displays are being funded by Friends of Fontana Park.
- Spoke with the Alex Davis about his availability for drawing up some plans for the new Fontana Steps and the East Cabin, that can be used to solicit "apples to apples" bids. Davis is willing/happy to do the work. I asked him to check with his supervisor (Brian) first (Agenda Item).
- Received the \$73,715 check from the Wellmark Foundation for use with the Iron Bridge Project.
- Attended a meeting of Iowa Board of Health as they adopted a resolution in support of funding the natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund. Met with a messaging group regarding using the resolution as a springboard to educate about the Trust Fund.
- Met with the Board of Supervisors to discuss their process for appointing Conservation Board members, as per the August Board meeting.
- James Mount satisfactorily completed his pre-employment requirements and started as Conservation Technician September 16, 2019.
- Field staff interns have requested a desire to volunteer by doing a "ride along" with a park ranger during hunting season and to get some tree felling experience. Checked with other law enforcement and the County's insurance carrier, which provided a sample policy and waiver form they would like adopted. (Agenda item)

- Contacted Swales Concrete to schedule delivery of latrine at Buffalo Creek Area, as per the FY20 budget.
- Completed layout and distribution of the Otter Creek Quarterly. The article I had written about public lands was published as a guest column in the Des Moines Register.
- Management clearcut at Jakway was completed.
- The County-designation program for Bird Friendly Iowa was initiated. Worked with the state steering committee and conservation boards subcommittee to make final changes. Presented the program to Conservation Directors.
- Worked with Buchanan County Tourism on marketing plans, including logo development, identifying target audiences, and changes to the Tourism Guide.
- Discussed continued issues with people at Cortright shooting within 200 yards of Paul Bachman's home, with Bachman and Park Ranger Whittle. Bachman received damage from his property (agenda item).
- Received a request from an individual who would like to use an ATV for hunting at Cortright and other wildlife area. I denied the request largely based upon deed use restrictions at Cortright, the fact that lots are cabled and staff will not open/close for an individual, and other considerations.

Cohen updated the Board on the East Cabin, Dam spillway and steps projects, and other capital improvements and asset spending budgeted for FY20.

Director Evaluation forms were handed out. Board members were asked to complete and return them to Hamilton by October 7.

The next Board meeting will be held on October 15 at 6:00 pm in the Board room.

Motion Wolfe/Crump to adjourn, all Ayes. Meeting adjourned at 7:35.

Diane Johnson
Secretary