

## Minutes of the Allamakee County Conservation Board

The Allamakee County Conservation Board met in regular session at 1:00 P.M. Tuesday December 4, 2012 in the Board Office located at 427 North First Street Harpers Ferry, Iowa. Board Members present were as follows: Dennis Blocker, Dave Carroll, Marilyn Clark, Bill Moody, and Gary Soper. Present from the public were as follows: Jeanie Carroll, Bruce Plomborg, Dennis Koenig, Ric Zarwell, Joe Cunningham, Jim Kerndt, Gary Graphl, Rod Bloxham, Dave Martin, and Mark Moines. Also present were Board Staff Members Jim Janett and Jarrod Olson.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 P.M. and the minutes from the previous meeting were read and approved.

Claims were reviewed and approved by the Board. Current fiscal year budget summaries and revenue account balances were also presented to the Board.

Board Members submitted mileage from July – December 2012.

A number of projects for the upcoming 2012-2013 budget were presented and discussed by the Board. Projects included work on the planning for the Columbus Property Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center, construction of a shelter house at Stone Brooke Park, site preservation and construction of a restroom and small shelter at Ray's Landing, and various Park entrance sign replacements. The Board will further discuss budget planning at the January Board meeting. Other informational items discussed by the Board included updates on the Volney stream bank stabilization project, hunting issues at the County Home, \$10,371.00 of REAP revenues received and deposited, December 20<sup>th</sup> District Meeting being held at Clinton County Conservation Board new Rock Creek Education and Visitor Center, disturbance of Alliant Energy monitoring wells on the Power Plant road south of the power plant, the purchase of an aluminum trailer, addition of a vehicle for the department, and job description posting for the naturalist position. Other items discussed included contacting Town and County Sanitation to secure recycling materials when traveling from collection sites, completing a news release on snow shoeing rentals in the County, and status of current fish habitat grants.

The Director conveyed information to the Board regarding gender balance on Boards and Commissions. A summary of Board Members appointment dates was submitted to the Board. Board Member Dave Carroll will be up for appointment in 2013. Carroll will accept a reappointment to the Conservation Board. A letter will be submitted to the Board of Supervisors regarding Carroll's reappointment. Board of Supervisor Sherry Strub had been in contact with the Director prior to the meeting regarding the need to comply with the gender balance rule and that opening for Boards and Commission in Allamakee County will be placed in the local papers in the near future.

The January 2013 Conservation Board meeting date was discussed by the Board. The first Tuesday of the month falls on New Year's Day. The Board set the January meeting date for Tuesday January 8<sup>th</sup> 2013 in the Board Office.

Member of the Allamakee County Conservation Foundation held a meeting with the Allamakee County Conservation Board to discuss the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center. Possible members of a fund raising committee for the project were also in attendance. The Board began the work session on the Columbus Property Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center. A brief history of past to present activities were presented.

Representatives from Martin/Gardner Architecture presented information to the Board and Foundation Members regarding the design of the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center building on the Columbus Property. A number of items were discussed with everyone present. These items included the benefits of approaching the construction of the education center from a project manager vs. a general contractor, zoning code section change to allow the education center and submitting a variance request for parking on the County right of way. Possible color changes of the building were discussed. It was the feeling of those in attendance that earth tone colors should be used as much as possible. Martin/Gardner will make those changes. A construction guide line was discussed. Martin indicated there would be a 160 day process to be completed after the final design is approved until bid letting. The need to have the parking variance, geothermal, well, and septic issues resolved are important to establish the earliest possible construction start date. Start time frames were discussed. A late fall start date should be avoided due to possible adverse weather conditions. Other items discussed included implementing the Federal Scenic Byways Grant, possible interim payment options, creating requests for engineering proposals, and various aspects of letting smaller bids for construction stages of the construction process rather than having a general contractor.

The operation guidelines and reimbursement methods of the Scenic Byway Grants were discussed by the Board and Foundation. Options of using Allamakee County funds or private banks to serve as an interim finance to implement the grant were discussed. The Conservation Board and Foundation discussed fund raising options for the building and answered questions from possible fund raising volunteers. The possibility of using a professional fund raiser was also discussed. Discussion included the amount needed to be raised, creating a fund raising brochure for the project, and how possible donors will be identified. The Director will continue to coordinate between the Conservation Board, the Foundation and possible fund raising volunteers.

There being no additional business a motion was made by Soper to adjourn, second Clark, all in favor, motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 P.M.