



Louisa County Conservation Board – Regular Meeting Minutes

The Louisa County Conservation Board met on Monday, May 6, 2024 at 3:00 pm at Snively Campground.

Board Present: Josh Hardin, Joellen Schantz, Elizabeth Kling, and Shawn Maine

Staff Present: Lana Artz-McComb, Noah Robb, and Jacob Ewart

Public Present: Jim Rudisill

Meeting Called to Order: at 3:00 pm by Maine

Agenda Approval: Schantz motioned to approve the agenda, Hardin Second, Motion Passed all eyes

Consent Agenda: Hardin motioned to approve the consent agenda, Schantz Second, Motion Passed all eyes

Director Report: The goal is to fix what we've got with the remaining FY 24. Projects include: Langwood Lodge Improvements, A-Frame Improvements, Chinkapin Overlook Replacement, Chinkapin Bathroom Vent System and Beautification, VG Vent system, Eden Parking Lot Expansion, Various Shop equipment, Skid steer Diamond Mower - (possible trade in for drum mulcher and/or mower?) and maybe a dump trailer if we get busy. As the monthly reports come in, I will adjust what we can buy. Obviously the goal is to not spend money we don't have. As of now though, I think these could all be funded.

1. Project funding acquired!!! – see letter from Orion Renewable.

- a. Prairie Signage project at Wilson Prairie
- b. 8 Aluminum Picnic tables at Chinkapin
 - i. 8X800 = \$6400 for 8 tables
 - ii. 9x1000 = \$9000 for 9 signs – 2x3, 2 on each side, one in parking lot
- c. Just need approval to receive/spend money (later in the meeting)

2. Disc golf at an area? – NEXT FY

- a. I was contacted by the same guy as last year. Nothing came of it, but he asked and so I said I would run it by you all
- b. Interest? Where? – Initially thought Chinkpin, but was moved to Eden

Kling remembers that the disc golf setup uses removable posts.

Board asks Ewart to follow up with disc golf contacts and potentially have them come to a meeting to learn more.

3. Projects Working on:

- a. Chinkapin Drinking fountain
 - i. Donation of roughly \$6,000. This pays for the concrete and the fountain; we will cover installation out of the reop budget.
- b. Deck at chinkapin
 - i. I have the email out to RPlumber (Schrocks), 12x15, using the existing framing - \$2,100

Board asks Ewart to look into metal options for railings to extend the lifespan of the deck past what an all wood deck would be.

- c. Masonry at chinkapin for fireplace and pillars
Quote from Gary Sanders on Fireplace: ~\$3000 to repair/replace what needs to be replaced ~\$5000 to rebuild



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Quote on stone around concrete pillars to match sundial ~\$6700

Board asks Ewart to have Gary Sanders confirm safety. If rebuild is needed for safety of the shelter, then that's what is needed. If repair/replace will be safe, go with that.

Board asks Ewart to look into what reserve money can be used on. Can it be used for park improvements such as the stone, fireplace etc.?

4. Amendments are done
5. Baby coming, so will be taking some time off
6. Public Conservation Land Estimates

Staff plan to put maps of campground and Toolesboro usage demographics up on website, facebook etc to get the word out about value of public areas.

Staff will find the Iowa Tourism formula that equates visitors to dollars spent in the area.

Maintenance Report: Robb reports water on in all areas and testing will happen soon. Keegan Akers has started and Bryar Runnells starts on the 13th. LM Falcon Day of Service at Hickory Hollow was a huge success pulling out over 1000 lbs of metal and .25 ton of trash. Working on seeding down project areas and doing campground prep. All LCC maintenance vehicles should be good to go for the upcoming financial drought.

Environmental Education Report:

Day Camp registration opened and the day camps were full by the end of the week. We still have space in the River Paddlers and River Raiders which is typical. We have full scholarships available for the paddling camps so we will be working on publicity about that.

Drake University students will be presenting their final strategic plan for Toolesboro via Zoom on Friday, May 10 and 10:45 am. If anyone would like to zoom in, please let me know and I'll email you the link.

EE interns Griffin and Brelynn start next week on the 13th.

the LCC Hunter Ed instructors received the Teaching Team of the Year from the Iowa Hunter Education Instructors Association. DNR will be at the October picnic to present them with the award.

Seeking volunteers for Langwood Adventure Day. Please let Lana know if interested.

Add Jacob Ewart as MSB Signer: Hardin makes a motion to add Jacob Ewart as signer on the MSB Account for MyCountyParks accounting with Artz-McComb staying on as a second signer. Kling seconds. Motion Passes, all ayes.

Sandy Creek LLC Update: No update on what LCCB asked to have in easement contract.

Approval of List of Expected Purchases: Ewart stresses the FY24 deadline to get all of the projects completed or at materials purchased by the end of the FY and acknowledges the cap of spending above \$2500 requiring Board approval. The next Board meeting will be too late.

Hardin makes a motion to approve projects from the Director's Report as listed with adjustments as Ewart sees fit. Schantz seconds. Motion Passes, all ayes.

Memorial Donations Policy: Kling indicated that a Fuller family member expressed displeasure with the memorial bench recently installed at Chinkapin because of the wording on the plaque. After discussion,



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the LCC Memorial Donations Policy will be amended to indicate that working on any memorial items will be limited to “In Memory of” followed by the name of the person. This change will be on the next agenda.

Park Security Cameras (US Cellular): Ewart has quotes from US Cellular regarding solar powered security cameras with sd card, night vision, alerts etc. \$160 per camera and \$15 per month for data plan. 30 day return policy. Service can be suspended in winter. Locate at all three campground entrances, river forks, chinkapin bluffs etc. Would be used to record entrances and exits.

Board asks Ewart to find a way to pay for them and then we can move forward.

Snively Access Road Usage: Decision is needed on cabin owners using the road for access during the winter. LCC posts a “no winter maintenance” sign at the top of the road but the gate remains open. Cabin owners have a gate on the north side of the campground. They open it when the hill at Schafer Access gets closed by the DNR. Cabin owners pay someone to maintain Snively Road. LCC concerns about liability and safety of others plowing an LCC road and others using it during the winter. One easement was found for named individuals but nothing tied to the address or descendants etc. Cabin owners will need to find another way in and out through the private cabin owner’s access further north.

Board asks Ewart to set a meeting with Adam Parsons to discuss the best way to move forward and draft a letter to the cabin owners. Ewart will also double check Snively rentals in Winter to check if there would be lost income with road closures. Board will then determine when the Snively Access Road closes and opens again. First snow? Set dates? Etc.

Adjournment: Schantz motions to adjourn the meeting, Hardin seconds. Motion passed, all ayes. Meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Next Regular Meeting: Monday, June 10, 3:00 pm. Location TBD.

LOUISA COUNTY
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Wapello, IA 52653
319.523.8381
conservation@louisacountyia.gov

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Orion Renewable Energy Group LLC
155 Grand Ave #706
Oakland, CA 94612

May 2, 2024

Jacob Ewart
Executive Director
Louisa County Conservation
12653 Co Rd G56, Suite 101
Wapello, Iowa 52653

Dear Mr. Ewart and Louisa County Conservation Board,

Orion Renewable Energy Group LLC (Orion) has been working in Louisa and Muscatine Counties since 2021 on an early-stage solar energy project, Louisa Solar Power LLC, and we've met with a range of community stakeholders as part of our outreach. After reading Louisa County Conservation's strategic plan, we learned that Wilson Prairie is believed to be a native, remnant prairie, which is rare since most of the surrounding land is farmed. We reached out to learn more about LCC's vision for this area.

Executive Director Ewart proposed the creation of a Wilson Prairie Education Trail in alignment with the strategic plan's vision for educational and public programming on site. Our intention is to raise awareness about prairie habitat and the site's unique history, including the potential former bison wallow. Additionally, we learned about the LCC's work with elementary school students at the Chinkapin Bluffs shelter and the need for replacement picnic tables at the park.

At Orion, we believe in the importance of environmental education and would be thrilled to support both initiatives, which can serve as interactive spaces for local students and community members. With the LCC Board's approval, we'd like to fund these two initiatives, based on the previously shared budgets. Please feel free to contact our project development manager, Sazzy Gourley, with any questions or comments.

Many thanks,

Michael Cressner
Vice President, Development
Orion Renewable Energy Group LLC

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Chair

Secretary/Treasurer

Date Approved

Chair – Shawn Maine

Vice-chair – Joellen Schantz

Secretary/Treasurer – Elizabeth Kling

*Louisa County Bylaws regarding voting by the Chair/Acting Chair:

According to Article II, number 2.4 of the Louisa County Conservation Board Bylaws, "At all meetings that a full quorum is present, the board chair does not vote except to break a tie. In a three-member quorum, all persons present cast a vote."

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