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LOUISA COUNTY
CONSERVATION



Board Members
Joellen Schantz
Sam Willson
Josh Hardin
Shawn Maine
Elizabeth Kling

Louisa County Conservation Board - Regular Meeting Minutes

The Louisa County Conservation Board met in regular session on April 6, 2026 at 3:00 pm at the Louisa County Complex

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

Staff Present: Jacob Ewart, Lana Artz-McComb, Tanner Hollingsworth

Public Present: Jim Rudisill

Meeting called to order: at 3:00 by Maine

1. **Agenda Approval** – Kling motioned to approve the agenda as amended by Ewart, Schantz seconded. Motion passed all ayes.
2. **Audience Consideration** – Rudisill questioned agenda item #9 on if this was ready for board approval. Ewart confirmed that this is the 2nd meeting and #9 can be an action item. Rudisill also questioned if the Board is allowed to set the appointment and term limits given that the Supervisor's are the superior board. Ewart shared that he'd contacted ICCS CEO Adam Shirley who provided his opinion that it is within the Board's rights. Rudisill also spoke on agenda item #14 to encourage the Board to really look at the trail plan as established and is it something they want to follow including talking to adjoining counties about their plans. Maine questioned if LCC Board meetings have to be monthly or can they be quarterly. Ewart checked Iowa Code and confirmed that Board meetings need to be monthly.
3. **Consent Agenda** – Schantz motioned to approve consent agenda, seconded by Hardin. Motion passed all ayes
4. **Environmental Education Update** – We offered the second seasonal position to Ziva Green (Kary Conger's daughter). Ziva is 15 and interviewed incredibly well. She has a lot of childcare/kid experience. Her position is going to solely involve day camp, which is where I need the most help. Her hours will revolve around the hours of camp plus 30 mins – 1 hour before and after depending on needs. She will not do evening, weekend, or overnight programs or drive. Pick up the Parks at PLNWR/Mississippi Boat ramp was a HUGE success with 28 people in attendance. The final one will be River Forks on Earth Day, April 22. We also noticed a huge uptick in our social media reach through the Pick Up Our Parks engagement. Attended the Go Outdoors Day at the Capitol and connected with Rep Cisneros and Rep Lofgren. We also met Rep Collins but didn't get a chance to talk much. Main goal was imparting our passion for Natural Resources in Iowa and the need for funding the Trust. New programming partnership formed with Community Housing Initiatives in CJ with Resident Services. Assisted with the contractor meeting at Toolesboro and facilitated a site visit with Lara Noldner, OSA, and John Pearson, DNR. Hoping for a work-week this winter with the Iowa Conservation Corp to remove the trees growing on the mounds and clean up the area in general. Joint with DMCC and housed at Big Hollow. The CJ and MS librarians met with Tri Rivers and secured additional funding for the Story Book walk project at HNT MS, CB, and VG. We have a Scout wanting to do his Eagle Scout project installing the already completed panels at Chinkapin. He is awaiting project approval before he and I meet with Mandy to plan the installation. The Girl Scout Silver Award project with Sophie Spitznogle and Makynzie refurbishing the LW bird blind will be taking place early Spring. We received a Paint



Iowa Beautiful grant to paint the inside of the blind and the Scouts will be mulching, repairing feeders, removing a dilapidated wood fence, and constructing an additional view ledge inside. Field Trip season officially kicks off on Friday so away we go!

5. **Maintenance Update** – Burning with TNC, DNR plus at Wilson and VG pond dam and prairie. VG Fish Habitat project is ramping up. Rock has been delivered at the pond parking lot. Hollingsworth has been working on repairing the Snively bathroom roof. Mower maintenance is happening and the new John Deere mower arrives Friday. Luke Perkins, seasonal 6 months, started today. Working on getting quotes for the power rake and will have info for the next meeting. Shafer has been given a hard date for the shop roof work because it must be completed this fiscal year.
6. **Director Update** – Ewart has been working with the DNR, TNC on a NAWCA project that would include Indian Slough. All organizations have projects that collectively could make a competitive project. The grant is due in a month. The investment from LCC would be ~\$1000. Ewart asks permission of the Board to proceed with talking about the grant. Board agrees that Ewart can proceed with gathering information.
7. **Approval of REC Repair Bill**– Schantz motioned to approve payment, Hardin seconded. Motion passed all ayes
8. **LCCB Bylaws Approval** – extensive discussion on the Board Chair voting rights discussion which is 2.4 of the LCCB Bylaws. Statement amended to say that the Chair is a voting member. Hardin motioned to approve the LCCB Bylaws with the amended 2.4 language, Kling seconded, motion passed all ayes
9. **LCCB Bylaw Amendment (2nd meeting) - Term Limits** – discussion about a member being able to return to the Board following a 1 year break after 2 consecutive terms served. Kling believes that it is up to the Supervisor's. Maine says that the Board term limit would be a recommendation to the Supervisor's. Hardin motioned to approve 2, 5 year, consecutive term limits as written, Schantz seconded. Maine, Hardin, Schantz aye. Kling, Willson nay. Motion passed 3:2.
10. **LCCB Policies Approval** – Ewart requested an addition to the expenditure policy regarding grant expenditures. If a grant has already been approved by the Board, LCC can make expenditures for that grant above the \$5000 limit without Board approval.

Ewart also requested an amendment to the section dealing with the sale of county owned surplus based on discussion last meeting. LCC will get Board approval before selling.

Willson moved to approve Board policies as amended, Kling seconded, motion passed all ayes.

11. **Review and Accept Bid for Naturalist SUV**- Board opened two bids, Mincer for a Ford Explorer and Wiele for a Chevy Traverse. Kling motioned to accept the lower bid from Mincer for a Ford Explorer as bid at \$37,679. Schantz seconded, motion passed all ayes

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12. **Approve bid request for sale of Conservation Toyota Sienna**– Bids open April 23 and close on May 4th. Bids will be opened at the May 4th meeting. Bidders may attend the May 4th meeting to raise their bid if desired.
Schantz motioned to approve the bid request, Kling seconded, motion passed all ayes.
13. **Renew Agreement between LCCB and MFHRC** – The agreement remains the same as last year.
Ewart reports no issues and that the area is used a lot.
Hardin motioned to renew, Willson seconded, motion passed all eyes.
14. **Hoover Nature Trail Discussion** – Ewart provided a packet of HNT information. Maine, Hardin, Willson, and Schantz have all been contacted by landowners either wanting to know what the plan is or wanting to purchase their section of the HNT.
Ewart shares that the Trails Council made a Master Plan in 2012 or 2014. Kling, Schantz, and Kathy Vance had a Trails Council meeting in 2022 or 2023 but no one else showed up.
Hardin’s opinion is that the trail will never connect because farmers will never sell. Schantz agrees. Willson reminds that other similar trails will often dog leg along roads or around parcels to make trail connections. Hardin states that DMCC sold their HNT portions. Schantz reminds that the previous HNT sale funded the CB shelter. Kling states that the HNT will never connect perfectly along the railroad bed but it can be made work as explained by Willson. Hardin wants to re-examine the plan. Schantz mentions that there was never a formal agreement between Lihs, Heater etc. Maine wonders how HWY 61 will affect the portions south of Wapello.
Maine concludes discussion by saying that the Board will need to address each portion, chunk by chunk, assessing the overall plan and doing it the right way.
15. **Next regular meeting: May 4, 2026, 3:00 pm, Louisa County Conservation Office**
16. **Adjournment 4:48 pm** Willson motions, Hardin seconds, motion passed all ayes.

Chair

Secretary/Treasurer

Date Approved

Chair – Shawn Maine

Vice-chair – Josh Hardin

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.”