

Black Hawk County Conservation Board Minutes

The Black Hawk County Conservation Board met on Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 1346 West Airline Highway, Waterloo, IA and via Microsoft Teams. The meeting was called to order by Jon McNamee, Vice-President, at 5:00 PM.

Roll call members present: Jon McNamee, Travis Turpin, Mike Bonser & Terri Rogers.

Unless otherwise noted, all actions were approved unanimously.

Staff Present:

Mike Hendrickson, Executive Director
Nichole Koelling, Office Manager
Cherrie Northrup, Planning Administrator
Jim Weimer, Wildlife Conservationist II
Karl Kozak, North Unit Ranger
Al Finke, South Unit Ranger
Amy Davison, Hartman Center Manager

AGENDA

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Bonser to approve the agenda. Motion Carried.

MINUTES

Motion by Bonser, seconded by Turpin to approve the minutes of the April 9, 2026, board meeting. Motion Carried.

BILLS

Motion by Bonser, seconded by Rogers to approve the bills submitted. Motion Carried.

VISITOR(S) CONCERNS:

None.

AUTHORIZATION TO SEEK, OPEN & TABULATE BIDS – *Mike Hendrickson*

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Turpin, to authorize staff to seek, open and tabulate bids for the capital equipment & projects budgeted in the FY27 budget. Motion Carried.

RESOLUTION – STATE RECREATIONAL TRAIL GRANT APPLICATION, BRIDGE L1 – *Cherrie Northrup*

Motion by Bonser, seconded by Turpin, to move the following resolution:

A resolution of the Black Hawk County Conservation Board, Black Hawk County Iowa, approving application to the Iowa Department of Transportation for State Recreational Trails Funding.

WHEREAS, the Iowa Department of Transportation administers the State Recreational Trails Program for the State of Iowa; and

WHEREAS, the Cedar Valley Nature Trail is established as a trail of statewide significance in Northeast and Northcentral Iowa; and

WHEREAS, the Cedar Valley Nature Trail provides over 68 miles of multiuse trail between Evansdale in Black Hawk County and Cedar Rapids in Linn County to the Johnson County line; and

WHEREAS, replacement of Bridge L1 over Blue Branch Creek between Gilbertville and La Porte City is a critical step in ensured longevity of the Cedar Valley Nature Trail; and

WHEREAS, funding assistance is available through the Iowa Department of Transportation's State Recreational Trails Program, and the Black Hawk County Conservation Board is in need of such assistance in order to replace the bridge; and

WHEREAS, the Black Hawk County Conservation Board certifies that the Cedar Valley Nature Trail, within its jurisdiction, will remain dedicated to public use and further that the Conservation Board will have jurisdictional responsibility and will adequately maintain the proposed improvements for a minimum of twenty years; and

WHEREAS, the Black Hawk County Conservation Board will provide the 25 percent local match as required.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Black Hawk County Conservation Board of Black Hawk County, Iowa, endorses said project, and that with assistance of State Recreational Trail funds, Blue Branch Creek Bridge (L1) on the Cedar Valley Nature Trail between Gilbertville and La Porte City will be replaced, and that the non-motorized, multiuse trail will remain dedicated to public use and adequately maintained.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments is hereby authorized to submit said application to the Iowa Department of Transportation on behalf of the Black Hawk County Conservation Board.

AYES: Bonser, Rogers, McNamee, Turpin.

NAYS: None.

Resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION – MOU WITH INRCOG FOR SRT GRANT APPLICATION – Cherrie Northrup

Motion by Bonser, seconded by Rogers, to move the following resolution:

Black Hawk County Conservation Board authorizes the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG) for grant writing services with a cost of \$2,000 for a State Recreational Trail Grant Application for the Replacement of the Blue Branch Creek (L1) Bridge and associated overlay paving on the Cedar Valley Nature Trail and authorizes the Executive Director to sign the same.

AYES: Rogers, McNamee, Turpin, Bonser.

NAYS: None.

Resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION – ACCEPT SUNSET SHELTER REPLACEMENT PROJECT AS SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLETE – Cherrie Northrup

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Bonser, to move the following resolution:

Black Hawk County Conservation Board accepts the Hickory Hills Sunset Shelter Replacement project as substantially complete. The Black Hawk County Conservation Board authorizes payment of the contract balance of \$48,718.51 to Great Southern Recreation.

AYES: McNamee, Turpin, Bonser, Rogers.

NAYS: None.

Resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION – ASPHALT PAVING-PARKS, CHANGE ORDER #1-FINAL – Cherrie Northrup

Motion by Bonser, seconded by Rogers, to move the following resolution:

Black Hawk County Conservation Board accepts and approves Change Order #1 – Final, for the Asphalt Paving-Parks contract with Aspro, Inc. as determined through quantity verifications. Change Order #1 – Final, will decrease the current contract amount, from \$480,183.10 to \$469,148.33. Furthermore, Black Hawk County Conservation Board authorizes the Executive Director to sign the change order document.

AYES: Turpin, Bonser, Rogers, McNamee.

NAYS: None.

Resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION – ACCEPT ASPHALT PAVING-PARKS PROJECT AS SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLETE – Cherrie Northrup

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Turpin, to move the following resolution:

Black Hawk County Conservation Board accepts the Asphalt Paving-Parks project as substantially complete. Black Hawk County Conservation Board recommends that the contract balance of \$92,958.81 as adjusted by Change Order #1 – Final, be paid to Aspro, Inc.

AYES: Bonser, Rogers, McNamee, Turpin.

NAYS: None.

Resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION – BLACK HAWK PARK CULVERT REPLACEMENT PROJECT, CHANGE ORDER #1 – Cherrie Northrup

Motion by Turpin, seconded by Rogers, to move the following resolution:

Black Hawk County Conservation Board accepts and approves Change Order #1 for the Black Hawk Park Culvert Replacement Project to correct the cost of the mobilization and the concrete washout line items which were inadvertently switched during the bidding process resulting in NO change to the contract price and authorizes the Executive Director to sign the same.

AYES: Rogers, McNamee, Turpin, Bonser.

NAYS: None.

Resolution adopted.

RESOLUTION – PARK ENTRANCE SIGNS, CHANGE ORDER #1 – Cherrie Northrup

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Turpin, to move the following resolution:

Black Hawk County Conservation Board accepts and approves Change Order #1 for the Park Entrance Sign Project which reflects a reduction in cost of the Hickory Hills Park sign and adding the costs associated with the signage permitting for a contract reduction of \$326.67 from \$100,510.68 to \$100,184.01 and authorizes the Executive Director to sign the same.

AYES: McNamee, Turpin, Bonser, Rogers.

NAYS: None.

Resolution adopted.

RAILS TO TRAILS CONSERVANCY GRANT APPLICATION – Cherrie Northrup

Motion by Bonser, seconded by Rogers to authorize staff to apply for a Rails to Trails Conservancy Grant in the amount of \$25,000 for the Blue Branch Creek Bridge Replacement Project on the Cedar Valley Nature Trail. Motion Carried.

APPROVAL TO APPLY FOR RJ MCELROY TRUST GRANT – Amy Davison

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Turpin to authorize staff to apply for a RJ McElroy Trust Grant in the amount of \$3,600 for funding the Nature in your Neighborhood, Out in the Parks & Can-Do Kids public outreach programs. Motion Carried.

RESOLUTION – ACCEPT CEDAR FALLS HEALTH TRUST FUND GRANT – Amy Davison

Motion by Bonser, seconded by Turpin, to move the following resolution:

Black Hawk County Conservation Board accepts the \$5,000 grant award from the Cedar Falls Health Trust Fund to help offset the costs associated with School of the Wild programming and authorizes the Executive Director to sign the grant agreement.

AYES: Turpin, Bonser, Rogers, McNamee.

NAYS: None.

Resolution adopted.

FEE SCHEDULE APPROVAL FOR OUT-OF-COUNTY SCHOOLS – Mike Hendrickson/Amy Davison

No action was taken.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT – Jim Weimer

Chris Hurley is the new Natural Resources Intern; he started May 11th. Staff have been working on prairie plantings, mowing & invasive species control.

UNIT RANGER REPORTS – Karl Kozak/Al Finke

North Unit:

All the seasonal employees have started working for the season. Staff have been busy with mowing, access area clean-up & hazard tree removal. Camping has been busy!

South Unit:

Staff have been busy with park maintenance. The concrete in the shower building has been sealed & new lights have been installed. Staff are preparing to pour the new sidewalk for the Sunset Shelter.

NATURE CENTER REPORT – Amy Davison

Staff have been busy with school field trips & registrations for summer camps are coming in fast. On June 2, 2026, there will be a native plant sale at Hartman Reserve. AmeriCorp student interns and a research intern have started working for the summer.

DIRECTORS REPORT – Mike Hendrickson

The 2026 REAP assembly will be held on June 17th at the UNI Center for Energy & Environmental Education. A written report was submitted.

ANY REPORTS OR INFORMATION FROM THE BOARD

None.

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Turpin to adjourn. Motion Carried.

Adjourned 6:05 PM.