



MUSCATINE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

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February 16, 2026
Regular Meeting

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE MUSCATINE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

The Muscatine County Conservation Board held its monthly meeting on Monday, February 16, 2026 at the Environmental Learning Center. Chairperson Mike Schulte called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Members present: Mike Schulte, Julie Jindrich, Jeff Snyder, Sherry Seright, and Karen Hartman.

Members absent: None.

Also present: Katie Hammond, Eric Furnas, Lori Dietrich, Michelle Berns, and Scott Sauer.

Meeting Minutes

Julie Jindrich made a motion to approve the January 19, 2026, meeting minutes, Jeff Snyder seconded. Voting aye: Julie Jindrich, Mike Schulte, Sherry Seright, Karen Hartman, and Jeff Snyder. Voting nay: none.

Public Participation - None.

Discussion and action to approve a bid for the Deep Lakes Park Maintenance Building Project from Wolfe Construction in the amount of \$357,000.00.

The Board discussed the three bids received for the Deep Lakes Park Maintenance Building Project. Julie Jindrich made a motion to approve the low bid of \$357,000.00 from Wolfe Contracting out of Muscatine. Karen Hartman seconded. Roll call vote was taken. Voting aye: Julie Jindrich, Mike Schulte, Sherry Seright, Karen Hartman, and Jeff Snyder. Motion carried.

Special Events Permit Applications

Four Special Event Permit applications were discussed by the Board. Pearl City Rendezvous-Buck Skinners at Discovery Park Shelter #1 on May 14-17, 2026. Master Gardeners Plant Sale at Discovery Park Shelter #1 on May 9, 2026. Genung Wedding at Saulsbury Lodge June 5-7, 2026. Morgan Wedding at Saulsbury Lodge, October 2-4, 2026. Karen Hartman made a motion to approve all four Special Events Permit applications, Jeff Snyder seconded. Voting aye: Julie Jindrich, Mike Schulte, Sherry Seright, Karen Hartman, and Jeff Snyder. Voting nay: none.

Discussion and possible action on approving an in-kind match for a NAWCA grant application being submitted by The Nature Conservancy.

Katie Hammond gave the Board an overview of the letter of commitment that Muscatine County will contribute \$2,020.00 of in-kind match for the 2026 North American Waterfowl Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant application for the potential transfer of the Russell Tract and the Holliday Tract to Muscatine County, to be managed by the Muscatine County Conservation Board. The in-kind match includes administrative, supervisor, and park ranger hours for paperwork, signage and habitat improvements to the property. Sherry Seright made a motion to approve the in-kind match of \$2,020.00 providing that the NAWCA grant is received. Karen Hartman seconded. Voting aye: Julie Jindrich, Mike Schulte, Sherry Seright, Karen Hartman, and Jeff Snyder. Voting nay: none.

Update on Projects

The Director stated that the Deep Lakes Park campground is officially completed and online reservations are up and running with some reservations already made for campsites when the season opens. The ribbon cutting on February 2, 2026, was a success with quite a few people attending on a cold but sunny day, complete with hot cocoa, a campfire, and smores.

Environmental Education report and discussion about potential grants

Naturalist, Michelle Berns gave the Environmental Education report. There were 1159 kids & 150 adults, for a total of 1309 people served throughout 63 programs since the last meeting. They are working on many programs and scheduling for summer nature camps. Michelle also informed the Board about MOTUS, a wildlife tracking system for birds, bats, and flying insects, that uses a stationary antenna, receiver, and radio transmitted tags for tracking migration. Muscatine County Conservation has been invited to receive an antenna at Discovery Park. The antenna and installation would be provided at no cost to the County. MCCB's obligation will be to provide power and internet for the antenna and data capture program. The Board gave their blessing to move forward with the MOTUS project. The Director stated that Kathi Eichelberger, who has been a MCCB extern and is a part-time employee with MCCB, is working on a 3-year STEM Scale-Up grant. Michelle Berns stated that this would provide training and useful tools that involve lights, shadows, engineering, balance, and lamps for educational purposes. No money is to be exchanged for the grant. The Board provided direction for staff to continue pursuing this stem grant.

Operations Report

The Director gave the operations report. Staff have been busy clearing brush along trails, splitting wood at Saulsbury, repairing baseboard heaters in the Lodge, and pruning trees. At Deep Lakes Park, staff are preparing the campground for the season opening (April 15) and cutting brush for the upcoming Disc Golf Course. Firebreaks have been mowed at Cedar Bluffs, Richardson, Pike Run and Saulsbury. Wood duck boxes have also been cleaned out and/or replaced and are awaiting the wood ducks to return for nesting.

Other items from the Director

Katie Hammond reported that Tri-State has submitted a quote of \$1,425.00 to repair a malfunctioning backflow preventer in the basement of the Environmental Learning Center. The quote has been accepted, but repairs have not been done yet as they are waiting for parts. The public water supply well permit from the DNR for Deep Lakes Campground has been applied for. Staff will be turning the water on as soon as possible to get a water test and determine what is needed for water softening. Katie also stated that

Tuesday, March 24, 2026, is Iowa's Outdoor Day at the Capital and invited all to attend. The Director and staff will be doing interviews tomorrow, February 17th, for maintenance summer help.

Items from the Board

There was discussion about acquiring firewood for the Deep Lakes Park campground. There were several suggestions, but no decisions were made. The Board suggested looking at all options, then deciding which would be best.

Claims

Sherry Seright made a motion to approve all claims in the amount of \$14,961.66. Julie Jindrich seconded. Voting aye: Julie Jindrich, Mike Schulte, Sherry Seright, Karen Hartman, and Jeff Snyder. Voting nay: none.

Adjournment

Chairperson, Mike Schulte adjourned the meeting at 7:07 P.M.

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Katie Hammond, Director – Muscatine County Conservation