

Minutes of the

Warren County Conservation Board

The Warren County Conservation Board held its regular monthly meeting on Monday, September 15, 2025 after rescheduling was required to make a quorum. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom at the Anette Nature Center.

Meeting called to order by President Mark Kickbush at 5:00 p.m.

Those present:

Mark Kickbush, President, via Zoom

Angie Croll, Secretary, via Zoom

Ace Hendricks

Jake Sickels

Comprising a quorum of the board.

Absent:

Joe Schettler, Vice President

Staff present:

Zach Hall, Director

Kelsey Longnecker, EE Coordinator

Hannah Hernandez, Naturalist

Kevin Brown, Conservation Tech

Colton Schwenke, Maintenance Tech

Jon Livermore, Conservation Ecologist

Mallory Wells, Office Manager

Monty Freeman, FWCC Treasurer

Guests:

Convene

i. Call to order

ii. Agenda Review

1. Ace Hendricks made a motion to accept the agenda as submitted. Mark Kickbush seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried

iii. Reading of the Minutes

1. Ace Hendricks made the motion to approve the August 2025 regular as presented. Jake Sickles seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried.

iv. Public Comment

1. None

v. Friends of Warren County Conservation

1. Prairie Picnic is Saturday September 20th. They are offering a kayak, paddle, and life jacket to those that registered early. Ace Hendricks would like to donate two tickets for the board to give away.
2. They have had two pop-up plant sales and Monty Freeman won't know the results until later in the week.

vi. Business Agenda

a. New Business –

a. Resolution Forest Program

- i. Conservation Ecologist Livermore has been working on a forestry resilience grant through the Iowa DNR. This grant is due October 1st and is a one-time opportunity to apply. The funding is just for County Conservation Boards to apply to. In addition to the forestry grant Jon will be pursuing the Wildlife Habitat Stamp Grant to help cover the cost of the matching funds for the forestry grant.
- ii. Angie Croll made a motion to approve a resolution to apply to the Forest Resiliency Partnership Program and provide 25% of the required matching funds via other grants or internally funding. Jake Sickles seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion Carried.

b. TASA Resolution

- i. Director Hall met with the Warren County Board of Supervisors to see if they would like to help with a “Plan B” for bike trail improvements if WCCB doesn’t get the State Rec Trails Grant.
- ii. Ace Hendricks made a motion to approve the TASA resolution, in which the WCCB will provide a total of \$177,000 towards a \$826,000 reconstruction project for 1.47 miles of trail starting at the Martensdale trailhead. Jake Sickles seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried.

c. Medora Park Policy

- i. The cedar removal from fall of 2024 at Medora Prairie is now able to be seen on Google Maps. You can now compare the years 2024 and 2025 to see the work that has been done.
- ii. Director Hall presented the park rules that he cross referenced to the Iowa code. He made changes to item 9, Domesticated Animals. The change is to not allow domesticated animals to run free during March 15th -July 15th to protect nesting birds.
- iii. Jake Sickles made a motion to approve the Medora Park Rules with an amendment to item 4 to include the wording “WCCB employees are exempt” to harvest seed. Angie Croll seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion Carried.

d. Removal of Seasonal Hires

- i. Jake Sickles made a motion to remove Owen Huyser, effective August 8, 2025, Raegan Fitch, effective August 15, 2025, Monty Freeman, effective September 30, 2025, Vickie Morton, effective September 30, 2025 and Mark Kickbush seconded the motion. All Ayes. Motion carried.

e. Pheasants Forever Lodge Donation

- i. Director Hall provided a weekend rental certificate at the Middleswart Lodge for Pheasants Forever to auction off at their October banquet, pending WCCB’s approval. WCCB recognized PF’s partnership in funding our food plots and prairie seed on county properties.

Pheasants Forever voted at their last board meeting to pay about \$600.00 in prairie seed to help restore Gobbler's Knob habitats. The lodge certificate donation is to help that partnership and expand WCCB's marketing the Lodge.

- ii. Jake Sickles made a motion to approve the weekend donation of the Lodge to Pheasants Forever. Mark Kickbush seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried.

f. Mobile Bar

- i. Mark Kickbush made a motion to prohibit mobile bar trucks at Warren County Conservation Areas. Angie Croll seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried.

g. Fire Unit Sprayer

- i. WCCB staff attended the Loess Hills Co-operative Burn Week for training this spring. Staff used a sprayer unit similar to the equipment being requested for purchase. Sprayer designs and costs were compared to determine what fits our staff needs. The selected sprayer unit should be low profile, hold 75 gallons of water, have baffles, high abrasion hoses, dual wet lines, and be custom designed to fit the WCCB Equipment.
- ii. Jake Sickles made a motion to approve the purchase the Wohler's Fire Equipment sprayer unit as presented in the quote. Mark Kickbush seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried.

vii. Discussion Items

1. GIS Tool

- a. Brandon Lane has been helping WCCB staff by providing access to GIS and updating park trails. Lane customized a GIS survey that allows staff or the public to enter coordinates to track locations of plants, animals, or rare finds – which can be uploaded to our shared mapping profile. This will help staff track wildlife and plants to focus their time and energy when choosing management strategies.

2. Fence Installation

- a. The fence at Medora Prairie has been installed. Staff will be installing signage soon along our property lines.

3. Playscape

- a. EEC Longnecker completed her contract with Snyder & Associates for the Playscape. Naturalist Hernandez, Director Hall, and EEC Longnecker are now interviewing other agencies to work with to begin the next step. They have met with one company and our staff are excited to see how the rest of the interviews go.

4. WHKS Bridge Inspection

- a. WHKS completed their bridge inspection report for Zo-El bridge and Middleswart Lodge entrance bridge.

5. Comprehensive List

- a. There has been no action on the list or plan in the last month due to work schedules. Director Hall's goal is to have the plan in place by Fiscal year 2027.

6. Taxidermy

- a. Staff discovered the underground exhibit had moths inside the display that have now ruined two pieces of taxidermy. Ecologist Livermore provided guidance on coating our taxidermy with an essential oil-based mix on all our Taxidermy. Staff spent a week treating the taxidermy to help prevent future break outs of moths.

viii. Upcoming Events

1. Staff shared the upcoming events.

ix. Approval of Bills

1. Jake Sickles made a motion to approve the bills as submitted. Angie Croll seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried.

x. Financial Report

1. MY County Parks

- a. Office Manager Wells is working to create a coversheet for My County Parks deposits. Since the online payment option has started WCCB has taken in over \$10,000.00 between rentals and programs.

2. Year to Date

- a. Director Hall shared his year to date financial report.

3. Jake Sickle made a motion to accept the financial report. Angie Croll seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried.

ii. Staff Reports

1. WCCB staff provided a summary of their workload.

iii. Adjournment

1. Angie Croll made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:47pm. Ace Hendricks seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion Carried.