

Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board Minutes October 20, 2016

Members Present: Roger Witherbee, Vernie Nethercut, Elizabeth Littler, Tom Orth, Terry Gougeon, Christian Stevens, Judy Kalmanek,

Members Absent: Adam Poll, Melissa Doubek, Erin Riopelle, Susie Austin, Jackie Walchek

The meeting was called to order by Chair Roger Witherbee at 4:00 p.m.

1. Additional agenda items:

Riparian buffer (Elizabeth)

2. Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Judy, seconded by Elizabeth that the September 15th minutes be approved. Motion carried.

3. Updates by Adam:

There were no city updates since Adam was absent.

4. Board Membership Criteria:

Roger had emailed the board a draft for board membership criteria. A discussion of the criteria ensued with some emphasis on recruiting members who had a passion for the Wildlife Sanctuary and/or Island Park, would make the time needed to attend the monthly board meetings and be willing to be involved in some capacity in the various projects of the board– chiefly assisting with Island maintenance. It was suggested that the word “job” not be part of the language. It would turn off some folks who already had a job and/or were retired and not looking for a job. The board criteria document should include language that a member missing 3 meetings consecutively without contacting the chairman with a reasonable excuse be removed from the board. It was thought the removal information might already be on the city website and/or available from Karen Hebert. Vernie will check on this before the next meeting. Terry has agreed to draft the board membership criteria to be reviewed at the next board meeting.

A question arose about the relationship between the Wildlife Sanctuary Board and the River Center. Roger explained that the River Center is a separate board. However, it began and remains a project of the Wildlife Sanctuary Board. There is concern about how the current increase in the Sanctuary and Island’s use will impact the delicate balance between the native flora and fauna and human users. In the 1990’s shortly after the city acquired the Island from the Sportsman’s Club that there were trained guides who conducted tours of the Island. There is a huge need to educate users of Island Park about the fragility of the Island.

5. Thunder Bay River Center Website:

There was no report since Susie was absent.

6. Island Maintenance Update:

Elizabeth noted that the major work identified in the spring to be accomplished during the warm

months was completed! In places where we placed brush to block the non-trails, a sign needs to be erected with the no-walking logo on it.

On Saturday, October 22nd at 10:00 a.m., there will be another work bee. There is still some autumn olive to be located, cut and doused with herbicide. The stairways with sand need to be cleared. All were asked to come and help.

Discussion followed on the riparian buffer. Elizabeth, Terry and Ron Young worked diligently on a setback demonstration project for Duck Park along the river on Chisholm St. Elizabeth had shared their initial draft online and received input from the board on the plan. It was revised and sent to Adam Poll. Roger left the meeting to check with city engineer, Rich Sullenger, who has not yet reviewed the plan. Rich's approval of the plan is needed prior to setting up the buffer zone. Roger made a copy of the plan including Ron Young's drawings and gave it to Rich for approval. Rich has agreed to contact Roger after he reviews the plan.

Meanwhile, Elizabeth has a number of trees/shrubs that should be planted yet this fall or we'll lose them over the winter. Huron Pines has agreed to help with this project, in that they will assist with a sign for the site. Huron Pines staff will provide wording for the educational sign and absorb the cost for producing it.

7. Wildlife Sanctuary Pamphlet:

Judy distributed draft copies of the pamphlet done by Betsy Hale. The board was asked to provide input back to Judy with any needed changes no later than October 31st. Betsy will then finalize the pamphlet and have final copies ready for approval at the November board meeting.

8. Artist in Residence:

Roger noted that Mick Grochowski, our 2016 artist in residence, will have an exhibit of 6-8 of his river-themed paintings on display at Art-in-the-Loft. Prior to that event, Roger will email photos of the paintings so that the board will be able to view them prior to voting on which painting we would like to own. Board members are encouraged to view the actual exhibit, although a number of the paintings were on display when Mick made his presentation at the library.

Roger is still looking for someone to coordinate the artist-in-residence committee. ACC is assisting in locating a coordinator for the project. Alice Holcomb's procedure booklet is currently at ACC so that prospective coordinator's can see the scope of work involved.

9. River Center Update:

Judy shared the model prepared by architect Bruce Johnson with the board. Some of the board had not seen the model as yet. The board discussed the model and Judy and Roger answered their questions. Judy reviewed the River Center work currently underway including the grant application being prepared to USDA Rural Development for the architectural fees.

10. Wildlife Sanctuary Boundaries:

This topic is being discussed by city council.

11. Round Table:

The only topic was the next meeting. Since deer season opens on the 15th, it was agreed that the next meeting of the Wildlife Sanctuary Board will be on Tuesday, November 22nd, 4:00 p.m. in council chambers as usual.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Kalmanek, Secretary