

## **Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board Minutes May 24, 2018**

**Members Present:** Roger Witherbee, Vernie Nethercut, Tom Orth, Adam Poll, Boris Gerber, Terry Gougeon, Elizabeth Littler, Judy Kalmanek

**Members Absent:** Karen Enterline, Susie Austin, Christian Stevens

**Resource Members:** Catherine Stedman, Mark Beins

### **I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m. by Chair Terry Gougeon

### **II. Approval of April 19, 2018 Minutes**

There was a date error in the April minutes. A correction will be made changing the date from April 23<sup>rd</sup> to April 19<sup>th</sup>. Roger motioned, seconded by Elizabeth that the minutes be approved with the date change. Motion carried.

### **III. Agenda**

There were a couple of additions to the agenda which will be discussed under #12 Further Remarks.

### **IV. City Update: Adam**

Adam reported that the temporary storage shed for the kayaks/canoes has been set up at Duck Park. Judy noted that it looks nice and that the muted colors work well.

In other city news, Adam said that the fencing is being installed presently for the Dog Park and that concrete is being poured for the Splash Park.

There was a request made to Adam by a youth group, Rainbow Girls, who are planning an outing at Duck Park. They have requested to have a scavenger hunt on the Island and Adam reminded them that they will need to search from the trails and not cross into other areas. There will be about 20-30 girls with some parents for the event. The event has not yet been scheduled with Adam. The Chair called for voice approval on the request which was given. The event promotes the board's mission to foster quiet recreation in the sanctuary.

A question was raised concerning progress on the sledding hill, a strong concern of the board. Adam will talk with Rich Sullenger to see if the matter was discussed by the Recreation Board. Tom sent Mary Beth Stutzman copies of the various maps which show incorrect identification of the Wildlife Sanctuary and Lake Besser. Mary Beth did not know how to have these corrected. The board suggested that Adam draft a letter to the various producers of the commercial maps to see about making corrections. Tom will send Adam the names of the companies and contact information. The city's own maps seem to be OK.

### **V. River Center Update**

Judy reported that planning continues for the campaign. The marketing plan has been drafted and due to finalize at the next meeting. The committee has settled on the name for the campaign, *Our River: Our Future*. A logo has been designed and will appear on all the marketing materials. The committee is asking that there be 100% financial support from both the Wildlife Sanctuary Board and the River Center Board. Each member is asked to pledge a minimum of

\$5,000 over the next 5 years to begin raising the local match that will be needed for grants. Grant research continues. A draft letter of inquiry has been completed and edited by Lorraine Reuther (who did the original River Center plan in 2008). An additional, mostly graphics, information packet has been developed to accompany the letter of inquiry. A draft of the packet was passed around to the board. Approximately 30-35 letters of inquiry will be mailed to those foundations who support capital investment in environmental, water, or fish projects.

## **VI. No-Wake Signs**

Boris has taken pictures of the various possible sites for the sign placements and his daughter photo-shopped in the signs on the photographs. These photos had been sent out to the board earlier. Boris passed around large photos of the various sites. Discussion followed about the relative merits of each site and which ones were the most important for sign placement. Those that are city property are not a problem and Adam will ask the county for permission to place signs at the fairgrounds. He will check with the city DPW to make sure they can place the signs at the sites we choose.

It was agreed that the first six signs (all we have at present) will be located:

2 at Washington Park (back to back) toward the center where they will be clearly visible

2 at the fairgrounds (at the smaller dock on the east side and the playground facing the river).

1 on Chisholm Street bridge (east side for boats entering the sanctuary)

1 at the "sandies" (Adam will take photos of prospective sites and email them to board)

## **VII. Habitat Study Plot**

Tom, Karen and Catherine walked the Island and located two possible sites for the study plot. Karen has had experience with similar plots and Catherine is a master gardener. So, although the committee will seek professional input for interest and assistance from ACC, AHS, CMU, SVSU, NMU, the final decision on both site and process will rest with the committee.

One of the proposed sites is at the O.B. Eustis Overlook. Part of the vertical steep site would be left as is; the other part from the lookout to the trail and then across the trail to the river edge would be fenced with signage indicating this is a restoration plot. The other proposed site is near the sandy edge by the Turtle Bar and would be similarly marked and signed.

Tom distributed a plan prepared by the committee. This is likely to be a 3-5 year project; plants grow slowly and are hard to colonize. Periodically, it may be necessary to remove invasive plants on the site. The committee believes the signage should be a significant size to draw people's attention to the project. This will begin to help folks understand what a natural area is and why protecting it is important. The committee members will write the narrative and do the photographing necessary to both prepare the signage and document the project.

Tom will contact Ron Worth to learn of his interest in the project and Adam will check on fencing with DPW (we'll probably need to buy our own)

## **VIII. Activity Signs** (tabled since Susie was absent)

## **IX. Storage Shed**

Judy gave an update on the application to Youth and Rec for the permanent kayak/canoe storage shed. Roger, Judy and the high school boys working on the project will make an oral presentation to Youth and Rec on the evening of August 20<sup>th</sup>. They will not know if they are

successful until December. The boys believe they can find a group of high school students who will be willing to help construct the deck atop the building. It was suggested that the Lions Club members might be willing to help as well. Roger will contact Bernie Lamp to learn of the club's interest in assisting. The project, if funded will not begin until spring of 2019.

#### **X. Island Maintenance**

Terry noted that there are several trees and large limbs that have fallen over the winter. He and Roger will arrange a time to cut these large woody pieces and trees. Terry will schedule a work bee in the near future and ask for volunteer help. We need to order bark with the remaining funds from this year's budget before June 30<sup>th</sup>. Adam and Terry will take care of this.

Terry showed a sample of the bird houses (6 of them) made by the Boys and Girls Club. They are not suitable for placing as nesting boxes in any way. The board decided that Terry should not place them. For future requests, groups will need to build bird, bat, bee houses that follow the plans that are suitable. Terry will email Adam a copy for bird houses, Catherine will do so for bees and Elizabeth will do so for bats. No butterfly houses will be accepted; butterflies don't use them. Adam will retain the file and inform any group that desires to build such houses that these plans must be followed. In general, the board discourages the construction and placement of artificial houses since the sanctuary is a natural area where animals create their own homes.

#### **XI. Rivers' Edge Setback**

Elizabeth reported that the plantings from last year are doing OK. They will need a couple of years to re-populate as they are slow-growing. The next area is already staked out and a herbicide has been applied to the area to kill the grass. The next step is to plant the area with buckwheat (as a ground cover) in preparation for planting native grasses in 2019.

#### **XII. Further Remarks**

Mark discussed the upcoming artist in residence program. The artist, Charles Pompilius, will be in Alpena from June 7<sup>th</sup> through June 17<sup>th</sup> or longer to create his work. Mark will put notices out next week in the newspaper and TV. He plans to promote the fact that AWS Board is sponsoring this event. Mr. Pompilius will be welcomed and meet the board at a pot luck to be held at the Witherbee home on Long Lake, Friday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. Board members should email Roger and copy the rest of the board on what they plan to bring. Mark has planned for an opening reception at the museum, for Mr. Pompilius to conduct a workshop at Art in the Loft and take a walk with interested public at the Wildlife Sanctuary to allow people to see things through an artist's perspective. It was suggested that Mark contact the Chamber of Commerce to have the Artist in Residence put on their event schedule.

Judy reported that Huron Pines will be spraying for cattails in mid June. They will cover the area from the covered bridge to the mouth of Fletcher Creek. This will enable the removal of frogbit. There will not be a frogbit pulling involving school children this year since we'll be using herbicides. However, we may need to schedule a frogbit pull with adult volunteers at some point. Huron Pines has a grant to work on frogbit and will concentrate much of their effort and their work crew at Fletcher Floodwaters (local source of frogbit) and on a large patch on the river at the end of the airport runway.

A suggestion was made to be explored later, that we need large posters to promote the Wildlife Sanctuary.

There was some concern expressed that we may not be doing enough to promote quiet recreations. In reply note was made that we do have River Rats (beginning twice a week after July 4<sup>th</sup>), Science in the Sanctuary (after River Rats ends) and Beginning Birding on June 9<sup>th</sup>. The Marketing Committee is planning a public event to announce the campaign, probably in July which will include hot dogs, drinks and a chance to walk the duct taped site of the Thunder Bay River Center.

**XIII. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the AWS Board will be at 4:00 p.m. on June 21<sup>st</sup>, City Hall

**XIV. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 5:38 p.m.

Minutes taken and submitted by  
Judy Kalmanek, Secretary  
Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board