

**Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board Minutes**  
**April 20, 2023**  
**Alpena City Committee Room**

**Members Present:**

Terry Gougeon, Tom Orth, Boris Gerber, Catherine Stedman, Judy Kalmanek (via Zoom), Elizabeth Littler, Vernie Nethercut, Lucille Bray, Lisa Kruse, Larry Johns (via Zoom)

**Member Absent:** No members were absent

**Supporting Members:**

City Staff: City Planning Development and Zoning Director Montiel Birmingham (via Zoom)

**I. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Gougeon at 4:02 p.m.

**II. Additions to and Approval of the Agenda**

With the addition of the item “Relationship between the Wildlife Sanctuary Board and the Thunder Bay River Center Board”, the meeting agenda was approved upon a motion made by Judy and seconded by Tom.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the February 16, 2023 meeting were approved upon a motion made by Lucille and seconded by Elizabeth. The minutes of the March 23, 2023 meeting were approved upon a motion made by Vernie and seconded by Catherine.

**IV. Public Comment**

No others, beside the board member and supporting member, were present, therefore there were no public comments.

**V. Relationship between the Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board and the Thunder Bay River Center Board**

Judy was thanked for preparing a comprehensive document detailing the history and responsibilities of the AWS and TBRC boards. The AWS board initially established a steering committee of the AWS board for purpose of guidance and support for the River Center. In order to be able to apply for grants for funding our new River Center, the TBRC applied for and obtained 501(c)(3) status. The TBRC board is now the 501(c)(3) subsidiary of the AWS board.

**VI. City Report**

Swan Mitigation: Montiel reported that from the Sanctuary the USDA removed 21 mute swans, out of a total 36 observed, and oiled a number of mute swan eggs. 10 of the much desired trumpeter swans were observed (Tom personally has seen 9 trumpeters, and two loons!).

Street Plantings Recommendations: Montiel reported that the draft of recommendations will be presented to the City Planning Commission on May 9. This will be the first review, and not the final. She is awaiting a review of the recommendations from Huron Pines, and would like to receive any other feedback from our board members by April 26. During a discussion of both the desirable and not desirable (either invasive or not desired for a number of other reasons) trees and shrubs, it was agreed that our board would benefit from a presentation and discussion by

Samantha Nellis, the Water Program Director at Huron Pines. We would like a deeper understanding of Huron Pines plans for invasive removal, and also how we personally can be better stewards of our land and water. Judy agreed to contact Samantha and invite her to attend a future meeting of our board.

### **VII. River Center Report**

Judy reported on grants received (an additional amount from First Federal adding up to a total \$12,000) and grant requests submitted for building the first stage of the River Center. She indicated that we are working towards obtaining the matching funds needed to obtain our major grant, without having to use our current funds for the match.

### **VIII. Other Business Reports**

Artist in Residence: Judy and Boris reported that initial interest has been indicated by two local artists, although no completed applications have yet been received. It was recommended that Edith Gerber, our Artist in Residence coordinator, update the board at our next meeting.

### **IX. Park Maintenance**

Terry presented a number of reports:

Our Island storage shed was broken into. The metal mesh door cover was forcibly removed and discarded, and the door forced open. Police were called and investigated. It is believed nothing was taken, our store of rakes, wheelbarrows, pails, etc. all seem present (our underwater vegetation cutters were not, and will not be, stored in the shed). Terry repaired and replaced the locks.

Terry cleaned out our two Island birdhouses, and added a third new birdhouse. He indicated we have a specific list of requirements for any new birdhouses.

Frogbit Removal / Cattail Cutting dates: June 14, July 19, August 9. Will be from 9am to 1pm, and city trucks will be on site for removal. Support from community volunteer groups will be requested.

Buckthorn cutting on the Island: October 4. Huron Pines will do the cutting, the city will operate the wood chipper, volunteers are needed to haul the cut buckthorn to the chipper area.

Wood chips from the city may be available for our trails, if not DPI will be asked for support.

The paved trail on the Island was cleared of leaves and winter debris by the city, Terry will pick a date next month for us to clean the stairs on the Island.

Tom indicated the water-trail buoys are very out of place, and he will contact DNR to see if they can assist moving them back into place, as they have helped previously.

### **X. Additional Remarks**

A brief presentation of our River Rats and Science in the Sanctuary programs was given by Judy and Catherine. These past very successful and appreciated community programs are on hold needing a coordinator to lead. More discussion at a later meeting is recommended.

As a topic for discussion at our next board meeting, Lisa recommended we discuss the possibility of our board venturing into launching a social media campaign.

Wildflower seed packets were distributed by Elizabeth to board members for us to promote and sell as a fundraiser for the River Center.

Lucille and Elizabeth will get together to plan and coordinate the delivery and stocking of our pamphlet holders.

It was noted that our websites need updating. Judy indicated she has individuals in mind for this.

Judy requested that all board members, within the next week, send her an updated list of our contact information: mailing address, email address, cell and land-line phone numbers.

#### **XI Next meeting**

The next meeting of the AWS Board will be held in the City Committee Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Alpena City Hall at 4:00 p.m. on May 18, 2023.

#### **XII. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 5:06 p.m.

Minutes taken and submitted by Boris Gerber, member Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board