

Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board Minutes

**June 16, 2022  
Zoom Meeting**

**Members Present:**

Terry Gougeon, Tom Orth, Vernie Nethercut, Elizabeth Littler, Roger Witherbee, Boris Gerber, Judy Kalmanek

Resource Advisor Catherine Stedman, Sheri Waldrop, Artist-in-Residence Coordinator  
City Staff: City Planning, Development and Zoning Director Montiel Birmingham

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

**I. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Gougeon at 4:05 p.m.

**II. Approval of Minutes of April 21, 2022**

A motion was made by Roger, seconded by Boris and carried that the minutes of April 21, 2022 be approved as presented.

**III Approval of Minutes of May 19, 2022**

A motion was made by Vernie, seconded by Roger and carried that the minutes of May 19, 2022 be approved as presented.

**IV. Additions to the Agenda**

There were no additions to the agenda and it was accepted as presented.

**V. City Update**

Montiel noted that City staff have been discussing green infrastructure options with Huron Pines. Some of the sites include the high school and various waterways. She will keep the Board updated on progress.

**VI. River Center Update**

Judy reported that the sale of native wild flower seeds has been going well. Several businesses are selling them and there were a couple of days when seeds were sold at Perch's Grocery. To date, the cost of the project has been met and about \$3,000 collected. People are interested in planting native seeds.

There is no word yet on the application to USDA-RD on the grant for \$19,600 to complete the final 20% of the architecture and engineering plans for TBRC. The application to DNR Land and Water for \$150,000 has been judged to be complete and it is under review presently.

**VII. Island Park Maintenance**

Terry discussed the amount of vandalism that has taken place on Island Park. Wood duck houses have been taken; others destroyed. The tree signs are in a terrible state. Some of the plates have been ripped off; others are bent or missing. A suggestion was made that the tree signs could be printed on metal and put directly on the metal base with a strong epoxy type adhesive. The top rail of the O.B. Eustis platform was broken and torn off and the top part of the fence around the restoration area bent. Wire cutters were used to cut an entry into the bottom section of the restoration area. Boris and Terry fixed everything, but the problem will persist if nothing is done.

It was suggested, and Montiel will follow up on the idea, that maybe a police walk through after 10:00 or 10:30 at night might help. Montiel noted that there is a problem, too, with the City's public bathrooms being vandalized. Using the cameras on the bridge and elsewhere on the Island after 10:00 until around 3:00 a.m. might help as well. There is a fairly large tree down across the trail on the Long Rapids Road side of the Island. Sledding during the winter continued to be a problem.

The concrete slab for the approved bench has been poured and awaits installation by the contractor perhaps on June 17th.. There has been no further communication with the person who wants to install the second bench. A motion was made by Judy, seconded by Elizabeth and carried to limit the number of benches on Island Park to four. One of the benches could be to either refurbish the one at the Southeast section of the wildflower meadow looking out toward St. Anne's towers or to remove it and install a new one there. It was suggested that the fourth bench could be placed near the trail, just below this one.

Terry noted that the new aquatic groomers (cattail cutters) have been put together, filled with gas and tried out. We need to have young strong people to operate them and Terry suggested that people need to change off using them. All four cutters (including the one belonging to the Loyola team) will be used on the weed removal work day, June 24<sup>th</sup>.

#### **VIII. Further Remark from the Table**

Sheri Waldrop, our Artist-in-Residence Coordinator, joined the meeting to make further plans for this year's artist, Emily Drew Yates of Elkville, IL. The dates for Emily to work in Alpena are August 11 through the 25<sup>th</sup>. The Board will hold a welcome potluck supper at Terry and Judy Gourgeon's home on the evening of August 11<sup>th</sup> beginning at 5:00 p.m. Terry will send out an email to find out what folks would like to bring. Terry's address is 128 Colorado Road and his phone number is 989-464-4788.

Roger will send an email to Emily by way of welcome to his home which will be her home-away-from-home for her stay in Alpena. Roger's address is 176 Long Rapids Road.

Sheri will do a press release announcing the artist's stay and Vernie agreed to help with media contact information. It was suggested that the media may wish to interview Emily which would help advertise her community presentation/workshop. Sheri will update the website as well. Vernie noted that we had a guest book for our events and wondered where it is. Judy reported that it was in Mark Beins' possession and when he died his family threw away anything connected with the AWS. Betsy Hale does have photos of all the Artists-in-Residence from 2013 to the present. The suggestion was made to create a new 8.5" x 11" guest book made specifically for the AWS events. Sheri will work on the cover and create loose leaf pages that will include: name, address, phone/cell and email address.

Elizabeth reported that when the work was done on the Bagley Street bridge, the sign for Sytek Park was taken down and is lying on the ground. Consensus was that the sign needs to be replaced since it was old and in disrepair. There was a \$600 donation made for a new sign some time ago and Montiel will follow-up on this.

Catherine said there is no water available at Duck Park to do the watering. The pump is broken and the hospital is having it repaired. Aaron Dickinson (Alpena Supply) has no idea when that will happen and the water restored. That means there is no water to wash kayaks/canoes or to water plants. Catherine is carrying water to do what needs to be done in the gardens there.

Tom had a number of wonderful photos including a pied billed grebe. Another photo showed a trumpeter swan with 6 cygnets for which we were all excited to see a successful hatching. However, the most exciting were the photos of the common loon family. The hen had a

hatchling on her back, but only one. Tom will watch to see if he perhaps missed another one. Both parents were caring for the hatchling. The invasive mute swan population is down and that will help to restore a variety of waterfowl to the sanctuary in the future.

**IX. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the AWS Board will be on July 21, 2022 via Zoom at 4:00 p.m.

**X. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 4:52 p.m.

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