

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

**Members Present:**

Terry Gougeon, Tom Orth,, Catherine Stedman, Judy Kalmanek, Elizabeth Littler, Vernie Nethercut, Lisa Kruse, Boris Gerber,

**Member Absent:** Lucille Bray,Larry Johns

**City Liaison:** Montiel Birmingham

**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**

There were no additions to the agenda and the agenda was approved upon a motion by Vernie, seconded by Elizabeth and carried.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the June 15, 2023 meeting were approved upon a motion made bymLlisa, seconded by Judy and carried.

**IV. Public Comment**

No others, beside the board members, were present; therefore, there were no public comments.

**V. City Report**

Montiel reported that the City will host an historical architect on August 10<sup>th</sup> at the library. She will be looking at the historical buildings in Alpena and discussing their historical value.

Jeff Konczak has purchased the former post office/federal building and is planning its future.

Remodeling has started on the fire-damaged Thunder Bay Theater Building. The damage was extensive and the insure covered only about \$400K. The remainder of the costs will be covered by grant funds.

**VI. River Center Report**

Judy noted that the TBRC is continuing to look into modular buildings. It appears that the cost per sq ft of these types of construction is about \$150 per sq ft. Other options are being investigated as well.

**VII. Other Business Reports**

Unfinished Business:

*Events on Island Park.* Terry reviewed an old memo from the former City Engineer concerning use of the bridge and Island Park for weddings and other events. The memo noted that weddings were limited to 30 persons total with no seating; wedding parties were to stay on the trails. Picture taking and weddings on the bridge were OK, but the bridge had to remain open for public use at all times. It was noted by Board members that the Island Management Plan stated that the sanctuary is a place for quiet recreation and environmental education. It is the home of the animals who live there.

*Nation Guard Workday.* Forty-five Ohio National Guard members worked on the Island from 9:00 until 11:30 a.m. They spread three large piles of wood chips on the trails, trimmed overhanging vegetation from the trails and did some additional clean up work. The Board thanked member Lisa Kruse for making this possible.

*Cruise Ships.* Montiel stated that she had no further word from NOAA (coordinators of the cruise ship visits) and so activities for the cruise ship visitors is on hold for this year.

*Artist in Residence Potluck.* The afternoon potluck for Steve Jakubcin at the lake cottage of Edith and Boris Gerber was an occasion to become better acquainted with this year's artist. Steve is a photographer and will hold a class on Island Park followed by a review session at Art in the Loft.

*Habitat Article:* the article done by member Catherine Stedman was completed, sent to Judy who in turn emailed it to Darby Hinkley at the Alpena News (with a copy of the email to Catherine). For some reason Darby did not publish it. Judy will follow up with Darby.

### **VIII. Park Maintenance**

Terry noted that yesterday (July 19<sup>th</sup>) frogbit and cattail removal was successful. Two dump truck loads of biomass were taken out of the sanctuary continuing to the northeast of the kayak launch. The workers used a tarp to drag out the cuttings which were placed on Joel's tractor loader and dumped into City trucks. A good crew of local volunteers, three Huron Pines members and the Youth Volunteer Corps helped. In the future we will need two tarps to contain the cuttings. Tom will begin working on a more systematic plan for the work. Montiel will check to see if we need permits or release forms for those who will use the gas-fired cutters. Catherine suggested the need for more hand tool cutters. Judy has two and will see about getting more before next year. Tom will contact the Loyola team who helped (before Covid 19) and see if they can come again. They had more equipment and more experience that helped. What was done that year was effective in keeping the cattails from that area. It was suggested that we need to have an article on the invasive cattails which can go to local media and on social media. Montiel suggested that the cattail problem is a good start for posting educational signage on the problem and asking the community for help.

### **IX. Additional Remarks from the Table**

Tom reported that he now has the River Rats materials at Grace Lutheran Church. He noted as well that there is still a loon chick (beginning to show some adult features) doing well.

Judy has seen a couple of trumpeters (maybe the second year cygnets) on the east side of the sanctuary, a moorhen pair with nine surviving chicks and a family of five ring billed grebes. Several female wood ducks are shepherding a few chicks.

Boris caught a photo of a sandhill crane colt behind two disappearing maybe adults near Bagley Street Bridge.

Catherine would like to employ the YVC group on August 9<sup>th</sup> to do a spotted knapweed pull on the Island. Tom noted that HP won't cut any cattails that day—only pul frogbit. By now frogbit work will have to be done by kayak. The near shore is clear.

Terry asked what the board would like to do with the amphitheater on the Island. It will be a topic for next month's meeting. The amphitheater is not longer used for programs.

### **X. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by the chair at 5:28 p.m.

The next meeting of the AWS Board will be on August 17, 2023

Minutes taken and submitted by

Judy Kalmanek, Secretary  
Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board