

**Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board Minutes**  
**September 15, 2022**  
**Alpena City Council Chambers**

**Members Present:**

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

**Member Absent:** Catherine Stedman

**Supporting Members:**

City Staff: City Planning Development and Zoning Director Montiel Birmingham

**I. Call to Order:**

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

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Roger motioned, Elizabeth seconded that the minutes of 8-18-2022 be approved as amended. The motion carried. Judy had sent out the corrected minutes to the Board after the missing paragraph was added.

**III. Additions to the Agenda**

There were no additions to the agenda.

**IV. City Update**

Montiel was happy to report that the City received a \$4.9M grant from the Michigan Strategic Fund which will begin to address the housing shortage in Alpena. The new facility will be constructed on the site of the former Habitat for Humanity building. The upper story will contain fifteen apartments with space on the ground floor for retail development.

Montiel spent some time discussing how the AWS Board could assist with cruise ship tourism in Alpena. Passengers on these ships are looking for onshore excursions when the cruise ship is docked. Many like to tour Lake Huron on the glass bottom boat (Lady Michigan). However, a number of others are looking for land opportunities. Some suggestions were made by the board including hiking on Island Park, around the bi-path, and in Sytek Park. The hikes could be designed to meet the physical abilities of the hikers. Another possibility was kayaking—either solo or group conducted tours. If there was a pontoon boat available probably a number of people would be interested in that (Judy will check with Brian Bartosh about what kind of insurance would be needed for a pontoon). Another suggestion was to conduct a birding excursion with the Audubon on Island Park probably spring during migration.

A number of questions surfaced which Montiel will research: the dates of the cruises, time they would devote to shore excursions, costs to passengers, whether we can select the dates we'd offer excursions. After Montiel investigates, we'll need to write a proposal to NOAA about what we could offer.

**V. River Center Update**

TBRC received a \$2,000 grant from First Federal Legacy Foundation and another donation of \$500 from Thunder Bay Audubon this past week. TBRC is eligible to apply for a second grant to

First Federal in six months which they plan to do.

The 15<sup>th</sup> annual Reel Fun Ice Fishing Tournament will be on February 25, 2023. Tickets have been printed and are available for early sale online.

TBRC is on target to begin construction of Phase I–Pavilion and restrooms in 2024.

#### **VI. Artist in Residence**

Steven Gutierrez, this year's Artist in Residence and his wife (Tammy) and seven year old daughter (Emma) will arrive on October 1<sup>st</sup> and stay in Alpena until October 11<sup>th</sup>. The family will stay with Betsy and Judy. After some discussion, it was agreed that the Board will host the artist and his family at Terry and Judy Gougeon's home for a welcome pot luck reception on Tuesday, October 4<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. Terry will send out an email to ask Board members what they'll bring for the potluck sometime before the event.

#### **VII. Island Park Maintenance**

The autumn olive pull on Island Park on Wednesday, the 14<sup>th</sup> was a success. Each of the four volunteers filled a large garbage bag with the invasive species and cleared the weed from most of the upper portion of the Island.

The vandalism to the tree identification signs prompted Elizabeth to take one of the signs to Omega to learn what could be done to make the signs less susceptible to vandals. She reported that if the signs were done in full color on metal, adhered directly to the existing plate and sealed, they would be safer. One problem with the current signs is that they are larger than the (10"x 8") plates and can be easily pulled off. The signs should be the exact same size as the plates. (The current digital file of the signs indicates that they were drawn at 10" x 8" which is correct).

Elizabeth will pick up a printed copy of one sign and the digital file, take it to Omega and find out how much replacing the existing signs with new metal ones will cost.

#### **VIII. Additional Remarks**

Tom suggested that the Wildlife Sanctuary should be listed under City Parks on the City website as well as under City Boards. People looking for the AWS have difficulty locating it.

Elizabeth and Catherine will write an article describing the restoration area on Island Park, why it is necessary and what the Board hopes to achieve within this area.

Terry will check to see the availability of volunteers on October 24<sup>th</sup> who can help Huron Pines with the buckthorn cutting and hauling.

#### **IX. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the AWS Board will be in Council Chambers on October 20<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. If there are any members who need to connect remotely, let Montiel know and she'll arrange for a connection.

#### **X Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 4:50 p.m.

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