

**Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board Minutes**  
**October 19, 2023**  
**Alpena City Committee Room**

**Members Present:**

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

**Member Absent:**, Lucille Bray

**City Liaison:** Montiel Birmingham

**I. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Gougeon at 4:01 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 Judy, seconded by Larry and carried.

**III. Approval of Minutes of September 21, 2023**

The minutes of September 21, 2023 were approved upon a motion by Vernie, seconded by Elizabeth.

**IV. Public Comment**

There were no other persons present; hence, no public comment.

**V. City Report**

*Bench:* Montiel discussed the new bench on Island Park which was donated by Don and Jean Stewart. It is very substantial and the City Public Works Department did a wonderful job of installing it. Judy added that she drove Jean and Don to the site; Betsy took a number of photos. Judy passed around a couple of the photos for Board members to view.

Montiel said that the City had received the grant to remodel Plaza Square downtown. The work should begin in spring 2024.

Much work has been done at Sytek Park. The Lions Club painted the decking, cleaned up debris and the Kiwanis Club installed a bicycle rack. A new sign is being installed and a fish sculpture placed at the Park. Sean McCarthy is retiring and Shannon Smolinski will be moving into that position. The plan is hire someone to be harbor master, the position Shannon currently holds. Montiel suggested that the Public Works Dept has tools that can remove the graffiti that is scribbled on the railings on Island Park. We can pursue this in the spring.

*Social Media* Lisa has managed to locate everyone who has an administrative role on any of the AWS and/or TBRC social media sites. The site coordinators with posting privileges will be Lisa Kruse, Steffen Mantlo, Lydia Thomson, Larry Johns and Montiel. It was suggested by Lisa that there be one default email owned by the City's site manager and has ultimate control over the site. Content for social media should be contributed by members of both boards and should be 90% positive and educationally aimed. Photographs are highly encouraged with accompanying bits of information.

## **6. River Center Report**

The “T”s have been crossed and the “P”s dotted so it appears that the River Center will soon have \$5,000 in ARPA funds deposited into the operational fund. This will help make up for the money lost due to event cancellations during Covid 19.

TBRC did received an award of \$73,400 toward the \$150K needed for the dollar for dollar match of the \$150K DNR Land and Water grant. This money ensures that Phase I can be completed in 2024.

TBRC is still awaiting word on the recent application to the MILEO Community Center grant. The request was for \$1,264M; if awarded this money will move Phase II forward to construction.

## **7. Other Business Reports**

There were no other business reports.

## **8. Park Maintenance**

Terry reported that 5 volunteers pulled, cut and dug out 4 large bags of autumn olive during the October work bee.

Terry distributed a sample of the new tree identification signs. They appear to be sturdier than the original ones and Terry plans to glue them to the metal base plate with marine glue. This will deter vandals from removing or tearing off the signs. However, they will still be able to destroy them with spray paint. Some discussion followed on the QR codes. These no longer work and Larry agreed to contact MSU Extension to update the codes to use on the new signs. Judy will send Larry the tree file so that the individual Power Point slides can be updated with the new code.

The November meeting will fall on the second day of deer season so the next meeting will be held on November 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **9. Further Remarks from the Table.**

Catherine reported on her work with the Huron Coastal Invasive Species Network. Huron Pines has a grant to remove knotweed from Island Park. The work will begin in 2024. Catherine also has access to acquire pocket tools, herbicide pens, and work gloves. The gloves can be purchased at \$17 for 150 pair. She will go ahead with obtaining these items. Another item that may be available is a boot brush. It was suggested to put this across the entry to the bridge to encourage people to clean debris from their shoes before entering/leaving Island Park to reduce the transmittal of invasive species.

Tom suggested that we need to plan this winter for a coordinated attack on the invasive cattails next spring/summer. Judy is researching a concentration of vinegar designed to control cattails. The December meeting of the AWS Board will be on December 21<sup>st</sup> as scheduled.

## **10 Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 5:05 p.m.

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