

Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board Minutes
October 20, 2022

Members Present:

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

Supporting Member:

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 4:00 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion by Elizabeth Littler, seconded by Tom Orth the minutes of September 15, 2022 were accepted as amended (date correction) and approved by the Board.

III. Additions to the Agenda

The agenda was accepted as presented

IV. City Update

Montiel reported that she is continuing to communicate with NOAA about the 2023 schedule for the cruise ships what will be coming into Alpena. Once the schedule is known, the AWS Board can determine what dates and events can be planned for those who wish to visit the Wildlife Sanctuary.

Montiel noted that she has found a number of boxes of brochures most for them for AWS and another box for the River Center. Judy will meet with Montiel and go through the boxes.

Elizabeth and Boris will both need some for the places where they distribute them.

V. River Center Update

The TBRC Board has composed and signed an appeal letter for matching funds that will be mailed in November. Each TBRC Board member was asked to send the names and addresses of 10 people who are potential donors. The AWS Board was asked to do the same. The list should be emailed to: greennancy@yahoo.com by November 1, 2022.

Phase I of TBRC is moving ahead; UP Engineers & Architects have been contracted to complete the final 20% of the drawings needed before construction of Phase I. Once their work is completed construction can begin.

Magic in Our Midst is scheduled for December 3rd from 5:30 until 8:30 p.m. Of the 15 resin animals on hand 7 have been selected for this year's event. A group of employees from Northland CU have volunteered to work on the event. We'll have a list of them soon. They will help with distributing booklets, hot chocolate, animal crackers and at the gate. Catherine, Boris, and Amy Dodge together with a friend of Boris' will be the guides again this year. More information will be coming at the November meeting.

VI. Artist in Residence Wrap Up

The week with the artist, Steven Gutierrez and Family, was a delight for all. Steven spent his days from early morning until evening in the Sanctuary both on land and in a kayak, observing and taking notes for his piece. An article appeared in the Friday, September 21st *Alpena News* about the artist. Steven and his family loved Alpena and are planning to return next summer for their vacation.

VII. Tree Identification Signs

After some discussion, Judy motioned, seconded by Catherine and carried that the tree signs be re-done once some technical problems are solved.. Elizabeth had done the research and obtained a price of \$300 which is not to be exceeded without further Board input.

VIII. Island Park Management

Terry reported that the insect traps put up again this year by MSU have been collected and we should have a report in the near future.

Although there will be just a few Board members available on October 24th, Huron Pines intends to hold the buckthorn removal event that day. They will pile the bio-debris. Catherine will try to be there.

There was a lengthy discussion on the habitat restoration area. As a prelude to the discussion, Catherine had written a short science-based report and Terry had written a historical review of the restoration project. Although the grasses and native plants, namely Gillman's Goldenrod, have returned, the soil is too tightly compacted to allow plant growth to return along the "illegal" paths down the hillside. Tom has some before and current photos of the area which he will make available to Catherine. She has agreed to write an article for media release showing the impact of compaction and erosion on the area. Other discussion centered on how to educate park users on the fragility of the Island and how to properly enjoy its beauty without harming it further. This educational signage will be at the O.B. Eustis lookout showing how to reach the water without disrupting the hillside. Another was to further the fencing since people are making their own new paths on either side of the enclosure. This part of the agenda was tabled until it can be further discussed in November.

IX. Further Remarks from the Table

Elizabeth expressed concerns about Sytek Park. The sign was taken down when the bridge on Bagley Street was re-constructed; the sign was not replaced and the area there has grown up in weeds, possibly invasive weeds. Elizabeth noted that there was money donated by the old Alpena Watershed Council to pay for this type of upkeep at Sytek Park; it was part of the distribution of their funds before they disbanded. It was suggested to contact Ron Young who was treasurer of the Watershed Council at the time and oversaw the distribution of their remaining funds.

Eizabeth will send a photo of the area to Montiel who will talk with the county road commissioner and the township to see what can be done to clean up that area.

Catherine reported that the water which was on for a while at Duck Park has now been turned off again by the hospital. It was hoped that they drained the lines this year since their failure to do so in 2021 resulted in no water available at Duck Park all summer to water the gardens or to clean kayaks and canoes (a state law) coming out of the Sanctuary. Montiel noted that Shannon was

looking into having an electrician look at the pump and see what needed to be done to ensure that it worked in the future; she'll check with Shannon

X. Next Meeting

The normal November meeting will fall during hunting season. It was agreed to meet earlier in the month and the next meeting of the Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board will be November 10, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall.

XI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 5 09 p.m.

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