

**MINUTES**  
**ALPENA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY BOARD**  
**City Hall – November 19, 2015 – 4:00 p.m.**

**Present:** Tom Orth, Alice Holcomb, Judy Kalmanek, Roger Witherbee, Elizabeth Littler, Vernie Netherut, Terry Gougeon, Melissa Doubek, Adam Poll

Guests and Resource people: Karen Enterline, James Shultz (Boy Scout Troop #92), Catherine Stedman, Joy Lieson and Jennifer Muladore (Huron Pines), Brook Alloway (Alpena Montmorency Conservation District)

**Roger called the meeting to order** at 4:00 p.m. Judy made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 15, 2015 meeting, Vernie seconded. Minutes approved.

**Updates – Adam**

Adam reported on the City's Recreation Survey results. According to the survey Island/Duck Parks and the Bi-Path were the most popular parks. The next meeting of the Recreation Committee is on December 2 at 7:00 p.m. Adam asked that one to two people from the board be present. Elizabeth and either Roger or Judy plan to come to the meeting.

The dedication of the bridge has been moved to spring. Signage will be up to the board, not through the NEMCOG signage as previously stated.

Receipts requested for the County Youth and Rec committee from the River Rats grant have been forwarded to Alice.

The Island Park Guidelines should now be on the website.

**Island Management Plan - Elizabeth**

Elizabeth thanked the volunteers who have helped with the work projects, YVC, AWS volunteers, and the board.

Elizabeth gave a landscape report describing the plans for the new bridge and what has been done so far.

Two species of native grass, Indian Grass and Little Blue Stem, were sown on both sides of the bridge. More native grass of the same species will replace the non-native grass on the island next spring. Both grasses start low and green then in the fall, the LBS has red stems and silvery gray seed heads – the color of the stone and the IG becomes a golden color with deep gold seed heads, the color of the wood of the bridge.

Plantings done on the island this fall include, Snowberry, Ninebark shrubs, Balsam and Purple Coneflower and native iris. Red Osier Dogwood was planted in Duck Park.

Next spring, on the island and the park side, native flowering plants will be planted beside the grass, probably by a school group, to form a border along the rocks at the river edge. Once the grasses are established, single native wildflowers will be interspersed within the grass with highlights of color the same as is found in the border plantings.

Elizabeth asked if the board would consider planting more flowering shrubs that produce berries for the birds up on the island, as their food source – Autumn Olive and Buckthorn are aggressively being removed. Elizabeth has already ordered Pin Cherry for the bridge landscaping from the Soil Conservation District at \$1 a seedling. Other shrubs with berries would be Chokecherry and Serviceberry and perhaps Big Leaf Dogwood.

Heather Rawlings of the Fish and Wildlife Service has offered to help financially and physically with plants for the bridge landscaping.

Mike has offered to help with the cost of the additional landscaping on the Duck Park side of the bridge. The Garden Club will also contribute. Mike wanted the plants and shrubs ordered from Netta's. Delivery is next Tuesday (November 24). Elizabeth will e-mail us with a time.

The Garden Club will re-do the area near the pamphlet rack in the spring and Mike still has plans to expand the butterfly garden all the way to the street.

### **Eagle Scout project update - James**

James has met with Omega Sign and Electric Company and learned about "Omega board", which is similar to the outdoor NOAA signage. They are approximately \$40 each. DTE has offered to pay for everything and also help with installing the new signs and removing the old ones.

James passed out a sample of a sign (White Cedar). There is a QR code so that more information about a species could easily be obtained by smartphone.

The backside of the handout was a sample of the Island map and locations of each species. The board had a few suggestions:

#17 – Add "Red Osier" to Dogwood ID

#5 – Change Largetooth to "Big Tooth" Aspen

#2 – Add "White" to Birch

- Try using a Google Earth image to show markers on the pamphlet rather than a hand drawn map.

- On the signage, in addition to the identifying characteristics, add a bit about the natural history of the species.

- On the signage, make the silhouette image smaller and the leaf image larger, plus add picture of berries, seeds, or cones.

Brook offered to help with a final check and any additional info James may need on each species.

### **Pamphlet update - Tom**

Tom passed out a prototype for each of the pamphlets he is working on, one for the Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary, and one for Island Park. He would like to have a photo for the front of each and user-friendly maps for the inside. Vernie suggested that for the pamphlets and signage everything be kept simple and polite.

### **Herptological presentation – Joy Leisen, Special Projects Coordinator, Huron Pines**

Joy informed the board about the native reptiles and amphibians of Michigan and passed around pictures. Of special concern is the Blandings turtle, as the best breeding females need to live to be 40-50 years old. A threatened species in Michigan is the Mississauga Rattlesnake. Both species move from wetland to upland to hunt and breed. With all

reptiles and amphibians invasive species have an adverse effect on their population. Another factor is climate change.

Joy encouraged the board and Alpena community to get involved by using the Michigan Herp Atlas at [www.MIHerpAtlas.org](http://www.MIHerpAtlas.org). Users log observations on the web. Also, cages can be installed where a nest has been observed to help protect the eggs. Hatchlings can crawl out, but predators cannot get in. There are design recommendations on the Herp Atlas website. She asked that if we see a turtle on the road, we pull over and physically move the turtle to a safe area across the road.

She passed out ID cards of Michigan reptiles and amphibians which can be viewed or downloaded from the Huron Pines website.

**Invasive presentation – Jennifer Muladore, Ecologist, Huron Pines**

Several members of the public were in attendance for the presentation. Jennifer outlined the invasive management plan for the sanctuary, which includes all of the city's parks. Some of the common invasive plants include Buckthorn, Phragmites, Japanese Knotweed, Spotted Knapweed, Autumn Olive, Frogbit, and Narrow Leaf Cattail. Eurasian Milfoil is not high on the priority list to remove, as it is so widespread. Harvesting of Milfoil is currently done at Higgins Lake and harvesting would also help remove the Frogbit. It needs to be done annually.

Jennifer explained about Project Native. HP is working with plant nurseries to encourage and educate them to sell more native plants. Educational trainings will take place in the spring for those who want to help with identification and treatment programs. Press releases to the media will tell when and where the trainings will be. People don't need special knowledge to participate.

The HP Swat Team is using a new injector tool to inject herbicide into Japanese Knotweed. HP is trying to get permission to eradicate the knotweed from the LaFarge site near Misery Bay.

HP has a 50% cost share offer for private homeowners to remove invasives. They are also working with local landscapers to get on board with removing invasives.

The next regular board meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, December 17, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.** at City Hall. The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Alice Holcomb, Secretary