

**Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board Minutes**  
**August 20, 2020**  
**Zoom Meeting**

**Members Present:**

Terry Gougeon, Roger Witherbee, Susie Austin, Tom Orth, Karen Enterline, Elizabeth Littler, Boris Gerber Vernie Nethercut and Judy Kalmanek

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Gougeon at 4:00 p.m.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

Upon a motion made by Roger, seconded by Elizabeth, the minutes of June 18, 2020 were approved as presented.

**Additions to the Agenda:**

There were no additions to the agenda and it was accepted as presented.

**City Update:**

There was no update from the City. Judy reported that City Manager Rachel Smolinski is in the process of hiring a new City Development Director and hopes to have someone in place by mid September.

**River Center Update:**

The letter writing campaign to have the Loyola University frogbit management funds restored was successful. Judy received a letter from Representative Sue Allor's office stating that the money has been put into the state's 2021-2022 budget. Shane Lishawa has responded to Judy thanked the Board for its letter writing support and said the team will be in Alpena next summer. An outdoor event will be held on September 24<sup>th</sup> beginning at 10:00 a.m. It is cosponsored by Thunder Bay River Center and Thunder Bay Audubon and will be a bird watching and identification outing held at Wolf Creek Park. Wolf Creek is a major tributary of the Thunder Bay River. Details will be coming soon.

Magic in Our Midst will be held on Island Park on December 11<sup>th</sup> beginning at 5:00 p.m. The trails and animals will be similar to last year's event. Again, it is a free but ticketed event and more information will be coming. Tickets will be available at Muddy Paws.

**Island Park Maintenance:**

Terry reported that the entomology department from MSU have checked their insect traps for the third time this season and seem pleased with the results.

Terry, Roger and Judy met with Steve Schulwicz from the *Alpena News* and walked Island Park. Steve is planning a forthcoming article promoting the Island.

A question was raised about the numbered, short posts that are still on the Island. Roger and Terry will meet and cut them off.

The experimental erosion control site is progressing nicely. Much of the area has been covered with new growth. It was noted, however, that there are a few invasive species in the plot. It was agreed that the spotted knapweed and white clover should be removed. Other knapweed on the Island needs some work as well. Rather than planning a work bee, it was agreed that members

can take a plastic bag and do some removal themselves. Filled bags can be placed next to the trash containers at Duck Park.

**Additional Remarks from the Table:**

--The city wide ban on smoking in the parks has cut down significantly on the amount of cigarette butts on the grounds and especially in the parking lot.

--The wood chips that were spread in autumn 2019 by volunteers from DPI are holding up well even in the lower usually wet paths. It was agreed that the board would like more of these chips to complete the main trails.

--One area that needs to be repaired is the fishing dock on the southeast side of the Island. Part of the approach has been washed away, making it difficult to reach the dock itself. Boris and Terry will measure the area and draw up a needed parts list and a repair plan by the next board meeting. --Terry and Elizabeth will meet and determine what needs to be done with the flora growing beside the bridge.

--The Artist-in-Residence program this year was a huge outdoor success. It began on Friday evening, July 10<sup>th</sup> with a reception by the board for the artist and her husband at the home of Terry and Judy Gougeon. During the following week, the sculptor, Autumn Bildson, allowed visitors to the Island to try their hand at using the sculpting tools. There were over the period a couple hundred visitors to the site. Many children and adults tried their hand at cutting the limestone block. A thank you letter was sent to Marcia and Avery Aten for providing housing for the artist.

--Another successful event was River Rats. Despite the fact that Covid-19 restrictions prevented the usual group classes, about 150 children participated over the four weeks. Susie filled individual bags with materials and instructions for activities which could be done at the park or at home. It was an activity that could easily follow the Covid-19 rules.

--Judy reported that Casey Stutzman, owner of Pedal and Paddle and Performance Locker, will not be re-opening either of these businesses. Casey owns the storage building at Duck Park and the kayaks/bicycles which are stored there. Judy will write a letter to Casey to tell him that the board agrees the building need not be removed until Spring 2021. If he sells the business, the purchaser will need to contact the board to negotiate a new plan. If Casey does not sell the business and he does not re-open, the board expects the building and its contents to be removed before Memorial Day.

**Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of the Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board will be held on September 17, 2020 on Zoom.

**Adjourn:**

Roger motioned, seconded by Elizabeth that the meeting be adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

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