

Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary Board Minutes
September 17, 2020
Zoom Meeting

Members Present:

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

Absent: Susie Austin, Karen Enterline

Resource Adviser: Catherine Stedman

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Gougeon at 4:19 p.m.

II. Approval of minutes of August 20, 2020

Roger Witherbee motioned, seconded by Tom Orth that the minutes of August 20, 2020 be approved as presented. The motion carried.

III. Additions to the Agenda

The agenda was accepted as presented.

IV. City Update

There was no city update

V. River Center Update

Judy Kalmanek reported that the River Center Board is developing a promotional video which features a walk-through of the interior of the Center. It is based on the input of the Exhibit Committee and developed graphically by exhibit designer Larry Hutchinson. The plan is to use the video as a promotional piece for the upcoming Giving Tuesday campaign which will be held on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving: December 1, 2020. The board hopes to raise between \$8 and \$10K this year.

The Magic in Our Midst Committee will again this year hold the free event on Island Park the evening of December 11th from 5 until 8 p.m. The free tickets will be distributed through Muddy Paws Grooming on a first come, first served basis. Bill Haase has secured funds from the Lutheran Brotherhood for the flashlights. These were a great hit with the children who were delighted to keep them. This year pre-packaged animal crackers will be served with the hot chocolate; which has been OK'D by the health department as Covid-19 safe. The hot chocolate will be provided again by Top O'Michigan Insurance. The animals will be the same as last year and voices will be recorded by volunteers, since Thunder Bay Theater personnel are not available. High school girls will be recruited to serve as phone handlers to broadcast the animal voices. The committee is looking for additional volunteers.

VI. Island Maintenance

The proposed Island maintenance work suggested at the August meeting has not yet occurred, but will be done in the near future. Tom Orth agreed to take a photo of the restoration area before a work session to remove invasive species from that area. Tom will take another photo after the work is completed. Terry set Friday, September 25th at 10:00 a.m. as the work project date. Roger and Terry will cut out the old marker stumps, workers will pull spotted knapweed and

check for autumn olive. Everyone who can is invited to help that day. Boris Gerber, Catherine Stedman and Terry each did some individual work over the summer to remove spotted knapweed. Terry also pulled the large weeds along the sides of the bridge and trimmed other lower growth leaving the native flowers intact.

VII. Remarks from the Attendees

Will MSU give us a report on what types and numbers of insects they caught in their traps? Terry replied that MSU has kept him apprised of each time they visited and checked their traps. He is expecting a report from them after the traps are removed. Currently, the traps are still in place.

Elizabeth reported that about 100 of each type of the information pamphlets was distributed via the rack at Duck Park.

Tom re-iterated the amount of sunken large trash (old snowmobile, number of tires) that still need to be removed and there is a hammock high in a tree that needs to come down; this could be done when the ice is thick enough. A tree-trimmer pole could be used to cut the hammock down and then the "steps" nailed to the trees removed. There was concern about someone living in that area; it appears they were removed by combined law enforcement and DNR officers. As he kayaked the sanctuary during the summer, however, Tom noted there was not much trash in the water nor along the shore line. What was there he could easily pick up from the kayak.

Vernie Nethercut mentioned that in the recent Alpena News Supplement on NOAA's 20th anniversary, there was mention of places that students were visiting, and she wondered if the Wildlife Sanctuary Board should be making contacts to invite educational visits to Island Park. The reference was to an article titled "Sanctuary inspires hands-on learning in Alpena schools". To teach about the health of the Great Lakes and its ecosystems, "teachers take students on field trips to the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center for a glass-bottom boat tour and a visit to the makerspace outside of the center, as well as to Rotary Island Mill Park, Arthur E. Sytek Park and other places throughout Alpena."

VIII. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Wildlife Sanctuary Board will be on October 15, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

IX. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Terry Gougeon at 4:44 p.m.

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