

# 1000 ISLANDS ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

## 1000 ISLANDS COMMITTEE

City of Kaukauna

### **Nature Center Building**

1000 Beaulieu Court, Kaukauna



Thursday, August 20, 2026, at 6:30 PM

### **MINUTES**

**Members Present** White, Eggleston, Timmons, West, Manion, Zornow, and VanBerkel

**Not Present** Hietpas and Breitzman

**Also Present** Brad Garrity, Cassandra Kohls, and Terri Vosters

Timmons called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM. A quorum was present.

**Public Appearances** - None

VanBerkel moved to take Good of the Center action items out of order. White seconded; motion carried.

Karl Zornow was introduced and welcomed by the Committee. He will serve the remainder of Jakel's term through October 15, 2028.

The 2026-2027 Committee Member Listing was reviewed. Eggleston noted her term end date should be corrected from May 1, 2026, to May 1, 2028.

### **July 16, 2026, Committee Meeting Minutes**

Manion moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Eggleston. Motion carried.

### **July Financial Report**

The Committee reviewed the July Financial Report. VanBerkel inquired about a \$10,000 unrestricted donation from an anonymous fund within the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region; Vosters explained she had requested the donation, which was approved. White moved to accept the report; Zornow seconded. Motion carried.

VanBerkel commended staff on programming revenue growth. Garrity attributed the increase to expanding the Assistant Naturalist position from part-time to full-time.

VanBerkel requested that the \$1,000 Eagle Cam donation from Fox Family Endurance Events Inc. be reclassified from Account 4802 (Donations and Contributions) to Account 4910 (Environmental Center Restricted Donation).

## **Correspondence**

The Committee reviewed the grant award letter from the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region. Garrity reported that grant funds will be used to install stairway railings to the Upper Woods, with any remaining funds applied toward construction of switchback in the Upper Woods.

VanBerkel raised concerns about fencing along the eroded shoreline. Garrity noted the affected trail segment will be rerouted to higher ground and reinforced with split-rail fencing. Eggleston moved to accept the correspondence and place it on file; West seconded. Motion carried.

## **Friends of 1000 Islands Report – No report**

## **July Naturalist Report**

Garrity presented the Naturalist Report. White motioned to approve; seconded by Manion. Motion Carried.

## **Sub-Committee Meetings**

### **Admin-Finance Sub-Committee**

Garrity asked the Committee to consider whether subcommittees should be retained or dissolved. In response to a question from VanBerkel, Vosters clarified that staff develop policies, the Committee provides recommendations, and Council approves changes. Vosters and Garrity are reviewing the bylaws for needed revisions and to formalize existing policies, while keeping them consistent with City policies.

Eggleston said the Committee remains an important advisory body to City Council, but she did not see a need for standing sub-committees. Garrity agreed that the partnership between the City and 1000 Islands has been mutually beneficial and suggested project-specific committees could be created when needed.

Manion and VanBerkel highlighted the value of the Building and Grounds sub-committee in providing focused project oversight. Both supported using ad hoc committees for specific projects, with those committees dissolving once their work is complete.

West emphasized that the Nature Center was established through the support of Outagamie County and the Kaukauna School District and that the Committee should continue to uphold the interests of those founding partners. Eggleston added that the bylaws should evolve to remain relevant and encourage participation and noted Vosters' role to ensure the Committee remains included in City discussions.

White noted that the Education sub-committee already relies on ad hoc teams, citing the Goat Team and Eagle Cam Team as examples, and expressed support for forming groups only when needed.

Van Berkel asked Vosters to rewrite Article 6 of the Committee's bylaws to replace sub-committees with an ad hoc structure and bring the revised language back for review at the next meeting.

The Committee reviewed the endowment statements. Kohls noted the reports were generated through the Community Foundation portal. Van Berkel stated the 2026 endowment distribution is expected in the first quarter of 2027. Garrity explained that donation funds help offset operational expenses and that the Committee will discuss allocation of any year-end surplus donation revenue.

## **Education Sub-Committee – No meeting**

## **Building and Grounds Sub-Committee – No meeting**

## **Old Business – None**

### **New Business**

The Committee reviewed the preliminary 2027 budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Garrity outlined plans to utilize the remaining 2026 budget before year-end.

For the 2027 budget, Garrity noted a decrease in animal care expenses due to the loss of Jabber and reduced food costs. Proposed increases include contractual services to account for a projected 3-5% increase in custodial costs. Garrity noted that quotes were obtained but the current vendor remains the most cost-effective option.

The Committee reviewed the CIP and agreed to reprioritize projects, moving restroom toilet replacements and lighting upgrades ahead of window replacement. Garrity noted that the toilets frequently run, wasting water, and are becoming more difficult to repair due to limited parts availability. Vosters will obtain replacement quotes. Committee members supported prioritizing restroom and lighting improvements over window replacement.

Garrity reported that aging ballasts and flickering lights support moving forward with a lighting upgrade. The Committee also discussed adding roof replacement to the CIP within the next four years and a potential \$10,000 playground enhancement project. Eggleston suggested exploring whether equipment from the River View playground could be repurposed, though Garrity noted the intent is not to create a full-scale playground at 1000 Islands.

Eggleston asked about the front entry project. Garrity stated the project will begin at the end of September and is set to be completed by the end of October.

Zornow motioned to approve the preliminary 2027 budget; seconded by Manion. Motion Carried.

### **Committee Size Discussion**

Garrity reviewed Ordinance 1.44 - 1000 Islands Environmental Center Committee, which currently requires (11) committee members: (8) citizen members, (1) School Board representative, (1) Friends of 1000 Islands member, and (1) Council representative. Garrity recommended reducing the Committee to (9) members, including (6) citizen members with staggered terms. Manion moved to approve the change; Van Berkel seconded. Motion carried.

Vosters will work with the City Attorney to draft the change to Ordinance 1.44.

### **Good for the Center - None**

### **Next Committee Meeting**

The next Committee Meeting will be on Thursday, September 17, 2026, at 6:30 PM in the Nature Center building.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, VanBerkel moved to adjourn the August 20, 2026, Committee Meeting at 8:02 PM. Seconded by Eggleston. Motion carried.

Cassandra Kohls