

Minutes for 1000 Islands Environmental Center Committee Meeting on Thursday, September 19, 2024

Members Present Pautz, Eggleston, White, Manion, Jakel, Breitzman, Hietpas, and Van Berkel

Not Present West, Hintz

Also Present Brad Garrity, Cassandra Kohls

Pautz called the September Committee Meeting to order at 6:30 PM. A quorum was present.

Public Appearances None

July 18, 2024, Committee Meeting Minutes

Manion moved to approve the July 18, 2024, minutes. Seconded by Van Berkel. Motion carried.

Financial Reports

The July and August Financial reports were reviewed by the Committee. Pautz requested checking the KASD contribution status. Van Berkel explained the unexpended building maintenance funds due to capital projects included in the building maintenance operating budget. Contractual Services included funds for an AmeriCorps position to help with Conservancy Zone maintenance. Since that funding was not utilized, that funding was reallocated. Garrity stated a Street Department laborer was not utilized this year. Jakel asked why. Garrity explained Streets was short on staff and needed to utilize that position. White asked about Street Department assistance for residing the nature center. Garrity stated the residing project is still planned with labor being provided by the Street Department. Committee asked about the increase in donations. Donations were received in memorial for Grace Willey and will go towards Jabber's expenses. Jakel noted a donation was provided by Fox Cities Greenways in honor of Bob Jakel. Committee received the July and August Financial reports and placed them on file.

Friends of 1000 Islands Report

Hietpas reported Friends will provide a food stand at Focus on the Fox. Pautz suggested offering a coupon for Friends.

Naturalist's Report

Garrity noted corrections to change "Megan" to "Ashley" in the report. Also, correct a typo from "waking stick" to "walking stick".

Pautz requested to review the 2025 Budget. Garrity explained the tight deadline to submit the budget lacked the opportunity to have the Committee review. Expenses were shifted from building maintenance to contractual services to categorize them more appropriately.

The Committee reviewed the Capital Improvements Projects. Eggleston suggested that the entry and window upgrades could be coordinated with the siding upgrades. Van Berkel inquired about the timeline determination, to which Garrity responded that Director Vosters and himself had discussed it. Garrity confirmed that the budget aligns with the main pillars outlined in the strategic plan, with secondary goals being long-term CIP items. Eggleston requested that Director Vosters include the Committee in budget discussions. Van Berkel emphasized that the Committee is responsible for the care and management of the property. Jakel inquired if Director Vosters would attend future Committee meetings. Eggleston noted the need to provide ADA-compliant building access as visitor numbers increase. Garrity mentioned that grants are available to support these projects. Pautz highlighted that visitors from St. Paul Elder Services

cannot currently access the building. Eggleston congratulated those involved in securing the Nelson Fund grant for the boardwalk replacement.

Pautz appreciated that visitors are permitted to use walking sticks at 1000 Islands free of charge. Jakel expressed gratitude for the walking stick donation from Marcie VandenBroek in memory of Carp VandenBroek.

Van Berkel asked about the CDs that are expected to reach maturity in the future.

Pautz expressed a desire for the Roehrig exhibit to be completed and displayed. Garrity is currently seeking volunteers to assist with the completion of the exhibit.

Garrity explained that the Conservancy Zone budget for 2025 has increased. The additional funds will be used for planting trees and plants to support an effective invasive species program. The budget may also cover the installation of fencing and tree removal as necessary. Hintz will continue to provide tree removal services for the boardwalk project as planned. In response to Manion's inquiry about replanting trees around the building, Garrity noted that two new trees have been planted. Additionally, a play area is planned near the goat area, and more butterfly gardens will be installed. Jakel moved to approve the September Naturalist's reported. Seconded by White. Motion carried.

New Business

Garrity explained that Brian Jacobs is the beekeeper responsible for maintaining the hives at 1000 Islands and donates honey for sale in the gift shop. Jacobs consulted his lawyer regarding liability and noted that the 1000 Islands hive has the lowest honey production among his hives. Consequently, Jacobs expressed his reluctance to continue maintaining the hives. However, he agreed to provide contractual services for hive maintenance if 1000 Islands purchases a colony, which he would then donate a hive. Additionally, 1000 Islands would need to ensure someone obtains and maintains beekeeper certification.

Eggleston suggested consulting the City Attorney about liability concerns. Garrity proposed having two hives at 1000 Islands and offering public beekeeping programs. Van Berkel recommended updating the beehive display to create a deeper connection beyond what is visible from the outside, while Hietpas suggested integrating the display into the building. Eggleston emphasized the importance of connecting pollinators and honeybees, and Hietpas volunteered to be trained in beekeeping.

Sub-committee meetings were scheduled.

Good of the Center

Brian Hintz will not renew his term on the Committee. Manion suggested posting the opening online. Garrity asked the Committee to submit their suggestions to him.

Eggleston suggested hiring a photographer to create a goat photo calendar. Pautz indicated the Goat Team has a lot of goat photos. Homecoming students may have their photo taken by the goats at 1000 Islands.

Pautz reported the first draft of the grant for a full-time assistant naturalist has been submitted to Garrity and Vosters for review. The submittal is due at the end of September.

Next Committee Meeting

The next Committee Meeting will be on October 17, 2024, at 6:30 PM in the Nature Center building. Eggleston asked to be excused.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Manion moved to adjourn the September 19, 2024, Committee Meeting at 8:01 PM. Seconded by Hintz. Motion carried.

Cassandra Kohls, Administrative Assistant