

**Winona County Park & Environment Advisory Committee Agenda**  
**Tuesday January 4, 2022 - 4:30 p.m.**  
**Ring Central Meeting**

---

---

- 1.0 Call to Order
- 2.0 Introductions and welcome new members (if appointed)
- 3.0 Election of Officers: Chair and Vice Chair
- 4.0 Approval of Agenda
- 5.0 Approval of Minutes of November 2, 2021 Meeting
- 6.0 Apple Blossom Park Updates
- 7.0 Farmers Park Updates
- 8.0 Stone Point Updates
- 9.0 Area trails update
- 10.0 Member Updates
- 11.0 Reminder: sign (or e-sign) and return Respectful Workplace Policy form to Personnel Dept.
- 12.0 Next meeting date: March 1, 2022
- 13.0 Adjourn

To Join the Meeting, please follow the instructions below:

Join using this link:

<https://v.ringcentral.com/join/721940781>

Meeting ID: 721940781

Or dial:

+1 (650) 419-1505

Access Code / Meeting ID: 721940781

# Winona County Parks & Environment Advisory Committee

## Meeting Minutes

Tuesday November 2, 2021 - 4:30 p.m.

### Ring Central

---

---

Committee Members Present:      John Howard                                      Marie Kovcesi  
   Jack Stansfield                                      Dale Hadler  
   Kristin Dieterman                                      Matt Neil  
   Amanda Gentry                                      Steve Jacob  
   Don Evanson

Staff Present:                                      Kay Qualley                                      Aaron Lafee  
   Lew Overhaug                                      Ross Dunsmoor

#### **1.0 Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Vice Chair Dale Hadler

#### **2.0 Approval of Agenda**

On motion by S. Jacob and seconded by D. Evanson, the Parks & Environment Advisory Committee voted to approve the agenda. Vote: Yes – All.

#### **3.0 Approval of Minutes of August 3, 2021 Meeting**

On motion by K. Dieterman and seconded by S. Jacob, the Parks & Environment Advisory Committee voted to approve the minutes. Vote: Yes – All.

#### **4.0 Survey Information to Inform American Recovery Act Fund Priorities and Dispersal and Park Updates**

Kay Qualley shared results from a survey conducted by Engage Winona in regard to county/community priorities. Parks figured prominently. Some of the input included adding shade structures and play equipment/improvements at parks, It also included prioritizing community events that celebrate small businesses and providing improvements to the fairgrounds. Respondents suggested a variety of investments that would make it easier to meet one another and build connections and they expressed a desire to see improvements to public places they have enjoyed in Winona County. With this information, Planning & Environmental Services will make

requests to improvements within Winona County utilizing funds from the American Recovery Act.

K. Qualley discussed Stone Point improvement ideas, such as fencing to prevent deer predation. Also suggested was inclusion of at least a 1-mile trail loop based on the existing approved plan and Parks Committee review and recommendations of the site last summer, which seemed to make sense within the framework of this potential funding. D. Evanson thought Stone Point Park could have trails developed that overlook viewshed areas. He suggested trees could be trimmed or removed to allow for a better viewshed and prairie grasses could be added. After more discussion, S. Jacob stated he would second the motion to convert some of the wooded areas to prairie. He understood the County is short on staff so some of the funds could be used to hire contractors.

K. Qualley reintroduced the concept of paving some the Apple Blossom parking lot (which estimate was presented by A. LaFee previously) and putting in an accessible connection to an existing ADA-accessible picnic table, especially in the event that funding could be obtained for the project. A couple more dead trees are near an overlook and need to be removed as does as a poison ivy infestation too close to one of the trails. Based on community input from the survey, a planned pavilion to provide shade at Apple Blossom might be timely as an amenity there. It is possible the Lions Club would assist with this project; contact will be needed to ascertain interest. K. Qualley suggested looking into estimates for a pavilion to share with the Parks members via email. Parks members agreed that staff should investigate cost estimates and suggested using funds from the Recovery Act, especially if community members have already asked for shaded areas in the survey.

Discussion moved onto Farmer's Park. The discussion centered around adding two new pieces of play equipment, including one that is ADA accessible (*this topic was introduced in a previous meeting*). Also, maintenance has prioritized the removal of a dead Cottonwood and split Honeylocust and administration has approved this unbudgeted expense. Additional discussion ensued about a possible fix for crossing a creek located within Farmer's Park. D. Hadler requested staff look into the possibility of a crossing with the MN DNR by January's meeting. D. Evanson suggested looking into a secondary park access off the County road. L. Overhaug added that there are some low water culverts and other similar options that could be explored. K. Qualley and A. LaFee met at Farmers prior to the meeting to discuss solutions for reducing cars on the lawn areas which necessitate repairs by maintenance staff. Staff suggested adding a small paved parking area for four cars along the township road to provide better access for residents utilizing the lodges further from the main parking area. Staff has also identified the need for new signage for Farmer's Park and discussion occurred about a multi-language option for the signs.

A. Lafee shared that the grant will provide internet service through the Arches. Internet will be provided to the entrance of the park and could be extended. The Parks Committee discussed the poor cell service in the area and by extending Wi-Fi service, it would alleviate safety concerns as well as provide opportunities for internet-based activities at the park, increasing the utility for age groups that don't.

A. Gentry shared that the (BWSR) *Lawns to Legumes* Program has added public spaces as an eligible component for the next cycle of grant funding. Information should be coming out in December. K. Dieterman shared that Prairie Restorations has an office out of Lewiston. A. Gentry shared another contractor in the area is Gabe Erickson. S. Jacob wanted to see an open bidding process for future prairie/wildflower seeding projects.

D. Evanson made a motion to clear some trees and create prairie grass in their place; seconded by D. Hadler.

K. Qualley asked if the motion was in conjunction with the possibility of trails being built. D. Evanson stated it could be done without the trail being built with the goal to ultimately have a trail. D. Hadler agreed that to prairie restoration could be a good start. Parks Committee discussed converting wooded land and viewshed areas to prairie. J. Howard supported the idea but suggested to incorporate the trail in the plan so you're not establishing prairie and then cutting through it to create a trail. L. Overhaug added that trails help act as fire breaks. The Parks Committee agreed that it is important to keep that in mind when planning.

Vote: Yes – All.

#### **5.0 Member Updates**

K. Qualley thanked Jack Stansfield for his service with the Parks Committee.

A. Gentry reminded everyone that looking into how the Board of Water and Soil Resources *Lawns to Legumes* program for the parks work would be helpful for everyone.

K. Dieterman suggested participation in the Winona La Crescent One Watershed One Plan process.

#### **6.0 Adjourn**

On motion by S. Jacob and seconded by K. Dieterman, the Parks Committee adjourned at 5:25pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Anne Schwertel  
Administrative Specialist

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Chair/Vice Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date