

Winona County Parks & Environment Advisory Committee
Special Meeting Minutes- Ring Central
Wednesday February 9, 2022 - 3:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present: John Howard Don Evanson
 Dale Hadler Matt Neil
 Amanda Gentry Kristin Dieterman
 Sadie Neuman

Staff Present: Kay Qualley Aaron Lafee
 Ross Dunsmoor Lew Overhaug

1.0 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair Amanda Gentry.

2.0 Introductions and welcome new member Sadie Neuman

Sadie Neuman introduced herself. All attendees introduced themselves and welcomed Sadie Neuman.

3.0 Approval of Agenda

On motion by Kristin Dieterman and seconded by John Howard, the Parks Committee voted to approve the agenda. Vote: Yes- All.

4.0 Discuss/Take Action: Stone Point Park – DNR Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Application

John Howard presented information regarding a potential grant, Conservation Partners Legacy Grant, administered by the MN Department of Natural Resources – Division of Fish and Wildlife. The Conservation Partners Legacy (PL) Grant Program funds conservation projects that restore, enhance, or protect forests, wetlands, prairies, and habitat for fish, game and wildlife in Minnesota. The Parks Committee discussed utilizing the grant for Stone Point Park. The proposed project would enhance the 80 acres of grassland to become upland dry prairie and facilitate removal of non-native species as well as out of place trees. By adding in native prairie species, the grassland areas become much more attractive to people who wish to hike and recreate in the park and also be valuable to wildlife. The habitat work will vastly increase the ecological value of the park and may facilitate the re-establishment of rare and endangered species. A park plan for Stone Point Park was finalized in 2014 and recommended restoring the proposed areas for upland prairie. Thus, the work being proposed is in alignment with County planning (Parks & Environment), as discussed during the Stone Point tour by P & E members in summer of 2020 and as recommended at the last meeting in review of a PowerPoint about survey results. John Howard explained the proposed 3-year project timeline and associated task approximate deadlines as well as the budget details associated with the grant. Amanda Gentry suggested an in-kind match utilizing a Truax wildflower seeding drill for native prairie plantings through Winona Soil and Water District.

On motion by Dale Hadler and seconded by Sadie Neuman, the Parks & Environment Advisory Committee voted to submit an application for the Conservation Partners Legacy Grant. Vote: Yes – All.

5.0 ARP Act trail work application for funding allocation discussion

Kay Qualley shared that approximately \$100,000 was preliminarily earmarked for Park updates, by outgoing Administrator Ken Fritz,, such as trails at Stone Point Park. Per Interim County Administrator, the public and internal requests for ARP funds far exceeds the funds available so it is possible some fund requests may not be granted. Bids for the trail designs will be solicited in order to firm up the ARP Act fund ask from the County Board asap.

Ross Dunsmoor discussed some Stone Point Park work that has occurred over the last few years.

6.0 Member Updates

None

7.0 Reminder: sign (or e-sign) and return Respectful Workplace Policy form to Personnel Dept

Park Committee members were reminded to return the policy sign-off to Personnel Department.

8.0 Next regular meeting date: March 1, 2022

9.0 Adjourn

On motion by Dale Hadler and seconded by Kristin Dieterman, the Parks Committee adjourned at 3:44pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Schwertel, Administrative Specialist

Signed by: 
Committee Chair/Vice Chair

5/3/22
Date