

Winona County Parks & Environment Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday May 4, 2021 - 4:30 p.m.

Stone Point Park

Committee Members Present: John Howard Dale Hadler
 Jack Stansfield Matt Neil
 Kristin Dieterman James Spartz
 Amanda Gentry County Board representative:
 Don Evanson Commissioner Steve Jacob

Staff Present: Ross Dunsmoor Lew Overhaug
 Kay Qualley Megen Kabele
 Anne Morse Aaron La Fee (as amended)

1.0 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:34 p.m. by Vice Chair Dale Hadler. The group met at the greenhouse location for the market gardeners, a portion of Stone Point community gardens.

2.0 Approval of Agenda

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

3.0 Approval of Minutes of March 2, 2021 Meeting

J. Howard stated that he did not vote on the motion for Farmers Park rental fees. This will be changed in the minutes. On motion by A. Gentry and seconded by S. Jacob, the Parks & Environment Advisory Committee voted to approve the minutes as amended. Vote: Yes – All.

4.0 Apple Blossom Park Tree Planting on Arbor Day

Staff member A. Morse gave a short presentation about the planting of 15 Bur Oak trees at the Apple Blossom Overlook Park on April 30th. 10-#25-gallon larger size plants and 5- #5-gallon size plants were augered in with the assistance of City of La Crescent public works staff. They had been planting trees in the city earlier in the morning and agreed to lend a hand since they were already mobilized. In addition, volunteers from the Lions Club helped with the planting. The trees were larger than usual because of tight market availability for container bur oak trees. Although this meant a higher price tag for the trees, the wind and site conditions are such that a heavier root ball and larger plant may increase survivability. The tree quality was excellent.

A neighbor lent a wheelbarrow for the project and mentioned that they wished a garbage container to be placed at the park since they walk their dog there every day and pick up trash. They wanted to be able to place it in a container.

The group re-visited the previous discussion about providing garbage/recycling containers vs. pack in-pack out currently. A short discussion ensued. Motion by J. Howard, 2nd by K. Dieterman to provide accommodation for trash. Motion opposed by S. Jacob and D. Evanson. Motion passed.

5.0 Farmers Park Updates

Maintenance Supervisor staff member Aaron LaFee gave the update for removal estimates for two crumbling bathrooms on the site (range in the \$5700 x 2 are) plus tuckpointing, gravel, removal of unsafe play equipment, etc. He stated that since these are extraordinary maintenance expenses, the total amount would be brought forward for approval through Administration and the Board.

6.0 Member Updates

None were offered.

7.0 Stone Point Park Review

Prior to the walking tour of at Stone Point for potential trail development, discussion about recent intrusions into the property, thefts and illegal activities ensued. The group requested that the County post the property lines as soon as possible.

The group tour viewed two sites to assess potential for future trails (views available, etc.) as shown on the existing approved Stone Point Park Concept Plan. After a quick stop at one site, the group drove to another site that currently has a wide grass path which emanates from near the sheriff's facilities. This was walked by the group who noted the excellent views, potential for a picnic area and trails and interesting ruins of the previous homestead.

How to make a trail happen, public/private partnerships, grants, etc. was informally discussed.

Other topics included:

- Does DNR provide trail development assistance on county-owned property (as opposed to state property)?
- Can groups be approached for trail building help (AmeriCorps, etc.)?
- Can groups be approached for partnering on the expense?
- What is usability status of areas labeled "contaminated soils from Nodine and Winona" in terms of safe use by the public? Any hazard concerns? Staff to research (Ross Dunsmoor).
- General impressions were favorable to creating trails and use in the second area.
- D. Evanson inquired about the possibility of the County Sheriff's Dept. opening up the shooting range to the public.
- A general discussion about the possibility of volunteers helping in the development of the park also occurred.
- D. Hadler raised questions to county staff about the level of ATV activity coming from private property onto County property due to erosion concerns and soil sensitivity as it

needs to be managed. GPS markers at the edge of the County property and survey work should be placed as a priority.

8.0 K. Dieterman voted to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Matt Neil. Adjourned.

9.0 Next meeting date: July 6, 2021 at Farmers Park

Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Schwertel
Administrative Specialist

Signed by: *Dale A. Hoelle*
Committee Chair/Vice Chair

8/3/21
Date