

Winona County Parks & Environment Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday July 6, 2022 - 4:30 p.m. at Stone Point Park

Committee Members Present: John Howard George Howe
 Dale Hadler Amanda Gentry
 Steve Jacob Sadie Neuman
 Don Evanson Beth Stanford

Staff Present: Ross Dunsmoor Aaron Lafee
 Lew Overhaug

Guests: Gabe Ericksen

1.0 Call to Order

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

2.0 Approval of Agenda

On motion by Dale Hadler and seconded by Steve Jacob, the Parks & Environment Advisory Committee voted to approve the agenda. Vote: Yes – All.

2.1 Introductions

All committee members introduced themselves.

3.0 Approval of Minutes of May 3, 2022 Meeting

On motion by Steve Jacob and seconded by Dale Hadler, the Parks & Environment Advisory Committee voted to approve the minutes. Vote: Yes – All.

4.0 Stone Point Park Update

4.1 DNR Conservation Legacy Grant

Ross Dunsmoor informed the committee that the Winona County Board accepted the grant at the June 14th County Board meeting so the work addressing the invasives and prairie enhancements will be moving forward. Gabe Erickson, restorationist, and George Howe walked the prairie at the park with John Howard. Ross Dunsmoor has the original seed mixes, contract documents, burn specs from approximately 2012 and maps of burrowed areas from the original plantings. Additionally, Ross Dunsmoor pointed out some areas of buried utilities.

More time may be needed to have a complete survey of the prairie, to include data about grassland birds and insects. By gathering more data, better advice can be given on how to

prepare and plant different areas, including aftercare considerations. Ross Dunsmoor pointed out the 2008 enhancement areas done by Prairie Restorations.

4.2 American Rescue Plan Act Trails Application

Lew Overhaug shared that Planning requested funds from the County Board for the trails to be built at Stone Point, per direction by the Parks Committee. He shared County Board packet materials that included the categorization of received applications to be considered for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The trails application was categorized as “recommend funding if funding comes available.” This application to promote the park to more visitors prompted some discussions with the Sheriff’s Office as they utilize part of the park area for a shooting range and storage. Future collaborative discussions between Planning and the Sheriff’s Office will need to occur. County Board discussion and possible recommendation regarding the applications will occur at the July 12th County Board meeting. Discussion ensued about the locked gate at Stone Point Park, the township road to Stone Point Park and the current uses which allow access to the park.

Note: At the July 12th County Board meeting, the ARPA applications were approved as presented to the County Board.

5.0 Farmers Park Update

Chair Amanda Gentry took over facilitating the meeting and introduced agenda item 5.0. Per Aaron Lafee, Sentence to Serve has been weeding and trimming trees. Also, there are a couple dead trees that need to be removed by the creek. Staff has noticed some pavilions are not being cleaned after use; pavilions that don’t require sign-up to use. They are first come, first serve. Clarification is needed on whether or not alcohol is allowed at the park. There are trash cans available to garbage to be disposed of. The Parks Committee suggested signage regarding cleaning up and camera surveillance to encourage the public to clean up. Wi-fi should be available by the end of the year at the park. Some new equipment will be ordered to install at the park in the upcoming weeks.

6.0 Apple Blossom Park Updates

Aaron Lafee shared that the no dumping/camera surveillance and no burning signs just arrived within the last week and will be installed soon. He shared cost estimate for wood deck with railing, as provided in the agenda. The parks committee talked about trail enhancement and vegetation control to make it easier for the general public to be able to use the overlook.

On motion by Don Evanson and seconded by Dale Hadler, the parks committee voted to utilize volunteer labor to open the viewshed at the Quarry outlook and conduct some vegetation management. Vote: Yes – All.

Parks committee discussed volunteer waivers.

7.0 2023 Meeting Discussion Dates Discussion

Lew Overhaug shared the proposed 2023 Parks Committee meeting dates, which are scheduled to be held the first Tuesday of the odd months during the year. On odd months, occasionally the

parcs meeting date needed to be changed due to holidays during the months of January, July and September. Lew also shared potential meeting dates on the even months and there are no foreseen conflicts with holidays.

On motion by John Howard and seconded by Beth Stanford, the parks committee voted to change the parks committee meeting months to the even months during the year. Vote: Yes – All.

8.0 Member Updates

George Howe – Asked status about a map with kiosk for Apple Blossom, as approved in past park meetings.

Sadie Neuman – Will be teaching field methods at Winona State University in the Fall for the Geoscience department. If there are any volunteer opportunities for the students, let her know.

Amanda Gentry – County Fair started today. New employee started in the office and the SWCD is in process of hiring a 4th staff member, then they'll be full staffed.

9.0 Next meeting date: Tuesday September 6th at 4:30PM Farmers Park

Don Evanson asked about being granted trail access to the park by the neighbors. The parks committee discussed the possibility of bringing that up the property owners.

10.0 Adjourn

On motion by Dale Hadler and seconded by George Howe, the Parks Committee voted to adjourn. Vote: Yes – All.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Schwertel, Administrative Specialist

Signed by: 
Committee Chair/Vice Chair


Date