

**Walworth County Board of Supervisors
Park Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 14, 2019
Walworth County Government Center Room 114
100 West Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin**

Chair Dan Kilkenny called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Roll call confirmed all members were present: Chair Dan Kilkenny, Vice Chair Nancy Russell, Supervisor Charlene Staples, and Citizen Members Merilee Holst and Mariette Nowak.

Others in Attendance

County Staff: County Administrator David Bretl; Director-Public Works Richard Hough; Public Works Groundskeeper Steve Messick; Volunteer Coordinator Colleen Lesniak

Members of the public: Maggie Zoellner, Former Executive Director, and Greg Rajskey, Executive Director-Kettle Moraine Land Trust (KMLT); Karen Yancey, Executive Director of Geneva Lake Conservancy (GLC); Jake Schmidt, GLC Land Protection Specialist; and GLC member Dr. Gerri Green

Vice Chair Russell made a motion, seconded by Citizen Member Nowak, to approve the agenda. Motion carried by voice vote.

Citizen Member Nowak made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Staples, to approve the November 12, 2018 meeting minutes. Motion carried by voice vote.

Public comment – Chair Kilkenny noted members of the Kettle Moraine Land Trust (KMLT) were in attendance, and would be allowed to speak during the update on the Kettle Moraine Land Trust under Reports.

Consent items

Citizen Member Nowak made a motion, seconded by Vice Chair Russell, to discuss the items concerning the Geneva Lake Conservancy and Kettle Moraine Land Trust separately, and to approve the remainder of the reports. Motion carried 5-0.

- Reports
 - 2018 White River Trail Pass Information
 - 2018 Park Hunting & Trapping Permit Statistics
 - Geneva Lake Conservancy: Accomplishments and Activities at the Park

Bretl introduced Rich Hough, Director-Public Works, who has been with the County since September. Assistant Director-Fleet/Parks/Facilities Mark Klusken has left employment to continue his education, and Hough will be attending the meetings until a new Assistant Director is hired. Karen Yancey, Executive Director of the Geneva Lake Conservancy (GLC), gave a presentation on the accomplishments at White River County Park during 2018. A new management plan for the Park has been developed, and in May 2018, a workday was held to do prairie restoration in Zone 1 of the plan. Jake Schmidt was hired as GLC's Land Protection Specialist this fall, and general activities were performed in the Park late in the year. In spring 2019, buckthorn pruning will be done as part of the management plan. On December 21, GLC held its Winter Solstice event at the Park with the assistance of Kevin Brunner, GLC Chair and the Friends of the White River Park. Over 300 people attended the activities, which included a buckthorn bonfire and candlelit tours of the Park. In 2019, GLC hopes to hold the event on a Saturday to attract more attendees and recruit more people to join the Friends group. Citizen Member Holst asked if the Conservancy planned to hold its own public programs at the Park in the future, and Yancey replied one of GLC's goals is to partner with other entities to sponsor activities. In the summer, GLC will host a

pollinator and prairie tour, beginning at a home on Delavan Lake that has a pollinator garden and ending with a prairie tour of White River Park and a lunch. GLC will advertise the outing in the *Lake Geneva Regional News*. Supervisor Staples asked that they advertise in all of the Walworth County media to attract people from other areas of the County. In the fall of 2019, two workdays are planned for buckthorn clearing in Zones 1 and 2, and to plan for the Winter Solstice event. Citizen Member Holst suggested the GLC host some children's events in the summer so more children can be active and enjoy the Park.

Yancey introduced Dr. Gerri Green, who is working with the GLC Public Works to develop a pilot program to allow pollinator plants to propagate along county roads. The pilot program will be initiated along CTH O near Delavan Lake this summer. Hough reported his staff will investigate the proposed area for any safety factors or drainage issues before planting. He added the State is also looking at alternatives to mowing and beautifying our roadways. Hough said he would communicate with the involved township before the project is underway. If the pilot is successful, Hough said not mowing along county roadways could reduce fuel and labor costs by 20%. Yancey said GLC is approaching farmers to see if they are willing to leave stretches of land along their fence lines unplanted to allow for pollinator seeding. Hough said from a Public Works perspective, safety is their top priority and it would have to be ensured that the plantings would not impede motorists' vision.

➤ Update on Kettle Moraine Land Trust (KMLT)

Maggie Zoellner, former Executive Director of KMLT, thanked the committee for their programming support and introduced Greg Rajskey, the new Executive Director. Rajskey has 25 years of experience in ecological restoration and natural management, has served as an independent consultant on the natural history and habitat improvement of many areas. Before joining KMLT, Rajskey was the director of ecological and volunteer services for a land trust in Winnebago County, Illinois. He will be reviewing KMLT's management plan for Price and Natureland Parks and making revisions and updates as needed. Citizen Member Holst thanked Zoellner for her service to KMLT, and stated the Trust put on some wonderful educational programs for children and adults at the parks during her tenure and helped to recruit volunteers and raise awareness and appreciation of Price and Natureland Parks.

Reports/announcements by Chair – None.

Confirmation of next meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 18, 2019 at 1:00 p.m.

Adjournment

On motion by Vice Chair Staples, seconded by Citizen Member Nowak, Chair Kilkenny adjourned the meeting at 1:31p.m.