

**Walworth County Board of Supervisors
Park Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 18, 2019
Walworth County Government Center Room 114
100 West Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin**

Chair Dan Kilkenny called the meeting to order at 1:01 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; Assistant Director Fleet/Parks/Facilities Dennis Clark

Members of the public: Maggie Zoellner, Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge Board Member; Jacob Schmidt, Land Protection Specialist-Geneva Lake Conservancy (GLC); David Strand, President and CEO of Wisconsin Oven Corp.; Mary Nicoson, Secretary to the Board of the East Troy Area Community Foundation, Inc.; Greg Rajskey, Executive Director-Kettle Moraine Land Trust; Joseph Klarkowski, Town of East Troy Chair; A. William Finke, Attorney for East Troy Electric Railroad

Citizen Member Nowak made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Staples, to approve the agenda. Motion carried by voice vote.

Supervisor Staples made a motion, seconded by Vice Chair Russell, to approve the January 14, 2019 meeting minutes. Motion carried by voice vote.

Public comment – There was none.

New Business

- Presentation by the East Troy Area Community Foundation, Inc., on a multi-use recreational trail between the Village of East Troy and Village of Mukwonago
David Strand, president and CEO of Wisconsin Oven Corporation in East Troy, said he grew up in East Troy, and used the railroad tracks as a trail between Mukwonago and East Troy. Most of his employees live in either East Troy or Mukwonago, and the multi-use trail along the railway between the communities would provide a safe place for residents and visitors to hike and ride bicycles, and accommodate disabled individuals. He said the East Troy Area Community Foundation, Inc. (Foundation) has been working with the communities on establishing the trail for several years and has developed detailed plans for the project. He urged the Committee to support the building of the trail to promote wellness, as well as access to other communities and trails, and the East Troy Electric Railroad. Joe Klarkowski, Town of East Troy Chair, spoke as a member of the Foundation and engineer assisting with the project. Klarkowski worked for the State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) as an engineer and developed several recreational paths during his employment. He distributed maps showing the proposed route of the multi-use trail from the Village of East Troy to the Village of Mukwonago. The trail would provide a connection between communities, an alternate means of transportation and support the safety and health of users and the environment. The approximately 7 mile trail would begin on CTH G and continue northeast on CTH ES to the Village of Mukwonago, primarily along the Railroad right-of-way (ROW). The trail would connect the Village of East Troy, the Village of Mukwonago and the Town of East Troy, and connect to six camps and parks along the route. Additionally, the Town of Troy is planning a trail that would eventually connect to this proposed trail, and the trail in Mukwonago could be expanded to reach trails in Milwaukee County. Klarkowski said the Foundation will sponsor fundraising events, and the plan is to apply for a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) federal grant, which is

administered by the State DOT. The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) makes the decision on grant awards. The competitive TAP grant would fund 80% of the estimated \$3 million at the completion of the project; however, initial costs would be the burden of each community until project completion. The Foundation is requesting that Walworth County accept the responsibility for being the Lead Public Agency for the project. As Lead Public Agency, the County would designate a project manager and act as the cost allocation/billing clearinghouse. Klarkowski said an Intergovernmental Agreement between the five affected units of government has to be negotiated, as well as a license agreement between the Railroad and the trail entity. If the legal documents are executed by all parties, Klarkowski said the grant application would be submitted by January 31, 2020. The expenses to submit the grant will be approximately \$10,000, and funds are already covered. Supervisor Russell said the Board has received requests for assistance from other organizations, and although she supports the concept, ongoing improvements and maintenance of the County's three parks are top priority. She does not feel the County can make the financial commitment to the project. Supervisor Kilkenny concurred; the County must adhere to levy limits, and he added acting as the Lead Public Agency would incur extra costs and substantial investment of county staff time. Klarkowski said the other stakeholders, with the exception of Waukesha County, have budgeted funds for the project. Officials in Waukesha feel the Village of Mukwonago should bear the costs of the portion of the trail in Waukesha County. Director-Public Works Richard Hough said that other than the preliminary design fees of \$10,000, a financial commitment is not required in 2019. He expressed concern about involving the County's engineer in the project; there are major county capital projects pending, and Joe Kroll is already overburdened. The County's project managers would be challenged to take on responsibilities of this proportion. Hough said the approval by the Railroad seems to be the major obstacle at this juncture in the planning, and if their agreement can be obtained, the Foundation could come back to the Committee for discussion/action. William Finke, counsel for the Railroad, stated the Railroad is concerned about contracting with an entity who would be responsible for perpetual maintenance and repairs to the trail, and agreed that it was an idea that should be investigated. **Vice Chair Staples made a motion, seconded by Citizen Member Nowak, to direct staff to work with the Foundation to identify funding sources, timing, and potential staff involvement and provide an update/recommendations at the next meeting. Motion carried 5-0.**

- Request by Geneva Lake Conservancy (GLC) to present a Birds of Prey segment during the Founder's Day event

Jacob Schmidt, Land Protection Specialist with the GLC and Board member of the Friends of the White River County Park, presented a request from the Conservancy to use the barn at the White River County Park for their Founder's Day activities on May 18th, during which there will be a Birds of Prey segment. They are asking to use the barn because it would impose less stress on the birds as requested by the Fellow Mortals organization. In addition, using the barn will be good publicity for the Park and offer better accessibility and comfort. Chairs would be set up on the west side, and access to the south and east sides will be restricted. The Conservancy has offered to install a door, which will lock to eliminate access to the open stairs. Hough said his staff would ensure the restricted areas are properly marked for safety and ensure the door is installed securely and removed by the GLC after the event. Citizen Member Holst asked if the County would require a proof of insurance certificate from the Group for the event. County Administrator David Bretl replied that the Director-Public Works would make that decision, and he thinks the Conservancy most likely has sufficient liability insurance coverage. **Supervisor Staples made a motion, seconded by Citizen Member Nowak, to approve the request from Geneva Lake Conservancy to use the barn at White River County Park for the Founder's Day event, contingent upon the Conservancy furnishing proof of liability insurance and Public Works inspection of the barn to ensure proper safety precautions have been taken. Motion carried 5-0.**

- Update on the Hackmatack Wildlife Refuge

Maggie Zoellner, Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Board member, requested their presentation be postponed to the next meeting to allow them more time. **Supervisor Staples made a motion, seconded by Citizen Member Holst, to table this item for presentation at the May 20, 2019 committee meeting. Motion carried 5-0.**

Reports

- Annual pesticide application on the White River State Trail

Hough said last year the pesticide application was not needed. Staff will reassess this spring.

- Volunteer Work Days

The work day schedule for the three parks was included in the packet. Citizen Member Holst asked whom she should contact if individuals wanted to donate contributions toward trees. Hough said Public Works is the contact department for donations to the parks. **Citizen Member Nowak made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Staples, to approve the volunteer work day schedule. Motion carried 5-0**

Correspondence

- Outagamie County Resolution No. 157-2018-19 Supporting Funding Renewal for the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program

Supervisor Staples made a motion, seconded by Vice Chair Russell, to direct staff to draft a resolution supporting funding renewal for the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program. Motion carried 5-0.

Reports/announcements by Chair – None.

Confirmation of next meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 20, 2019 at 1:00 p.m.

Adjournment

On motion by Supervisor Staples, seconded by Citizen Member Nowak, Chair Kilkenny adjourned the meeting at 2:20 p.m.