

WISCONSIN POINT COMMITTEE Minutes
November 7, 2023 Regular Meeting



The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Van Sickle at 5:00 p.m. on November 7, 2023, in Government Center Room 270.

1. ROLL CALL AND MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS

Members Present: Tom Bridge*, Jenny Van Sickle, Nick Danz, Lee Sandok Baker, Deanna Erickson, Wendy Bong, Ruth Ludwig, Cherie Hagen*

Members Excused: Tom Howes, Matt Steiger

City Staff Present: Linda Cadotte, Kara Czapinski

Others Present: John Ramos

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2.1. Wisconsin Point Committee (Meeting held August 8, 2023)

MOTION by Nick Danz, second by Lee Sandok Baker and carried to approve the Wisconsin Point Committee Minutes from August 8, 2023.

Deanna Erickson joined the meeting at 5:03 p.m.

3. NEW BUSINESS

3.1. Open Meeting Law Review with City Attorney Frog Prell.

City Attorney Frog Prell recently met with the Tourism Development Commission in response to a formal complaint regarding the handling of their meetings. The District Attorney's office conducted an investigation and found that one of the meetings was handled unlawfully, although no penalties were imposed. In light of this, Prell and city offices have been advised to provide education on open meeting laws to all committees in the city. It is crucial to ensure that proper notice is given to the public when distributing agendas and that all information is accurately listed. Agendas should be posted on the city's agenda center online, the library, and the Government Center. Additionally, committee members are prohibited from discussing city business or relevant duties of a public official electronically or outside of properly noticed meetings. Prell has distributed a guide on Wisconsin's Open Meeting laws and is available to assist with any future questions or concerns related to this matter.

Attorney Prell left the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

3.2 Update on bungee dock.

Director Cadotte has stated that the city now possesses the property previously owned by the Bungee Corporation, located at the end of 44th Avenue East in Allouez, along with privately-owned railroad property utilized by the Power Squadron. The U.S. Army Core of Engineers is currently leasing the property to stage materials for various projects, and this lease was transferred to the city upon purchasing the property. Access to the property is controlled through a gate to prevent unauthorized entry. The future plans for the

remaining portion of the property are undecided, but the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is collaborating with the city to submit a grant to help determine desired amenities for the site. Despite an unsuccessful initial grant proposal, Deanna Erickson believes that the management plan contains sufficient language to submit another request for proposal by February 2024, if the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant is not approved. Cherie Hagen has provided an update on the resubmission, mentioning that there are still unresolved legal questions that the EPA is trying to work through with respect to all of the proposals that have been submitted. She will be visiting Chicago next week to speak with EPA to evaluate the progress of the proposals.

3.3 Confirm 2024 Wisconsin Point Committee meeting dates/location.

It was discussed to continue meeting quarterly on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, at 5:00 PM at the Lake Superior Estuarium, with the possibility of holding the August meeting at Wisconsin Pont. The dates for 2024 are tentatively set as follows:

- February 13, 2024
- May 14, 2024
- August 13, 2024
- November 12, 2024

MOTION by Lee Sandok Baker, second by Tom Bridge and carried to approve the 2024 Wisconsin Point Committee meeting dates/location.

4. OLD BUSINESS

4.1. Update on Bipartisan Infrastructure Competitive Grant.

At the previous meeting, Deanna Erickson presented the Letter of Intent for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Competitive Grant Proposal, which was approved by the Fond du Lac Band Reservation Business Committee (RBC). The proposal aims to create a restoration design for the 12.74 acres of land at Wisconsin Point that Fond du Lac regained. The full proposal is currently being developed with the assistance of Tom Howes and other staff members. It includes an archaeological assessment and survey, as well as working with Urban Ecosystems to obtain community input and create a restoration design. The Fond du Lac Band has already passed a resolution in favor of the proposal, but obtaining a Letter of Support from the City Superior is still necessary. The proposal is due on January 10, 2024, with the hopes of being ready for submission by December 13, 2023. Additionally, efforts are underway to secure Letters of Support from Douglas County, DNR, and the University of Wisconsin. As the Fond du Lac Band already has a resolution, no further action is necessary from them. The Vice-Chairperson of Fond du Lac Band is hopeful for approval from the National Congress of American Indians.

5. RECURRING BUSINESS

5.1 Committee Member/Partner Updates

- 5.1.1. Director Cadotte provided an update on the progress of the plans to work with the U.S. Army Core of Engineers for beach nourishment at Wisconsin Point Lot 1 in the upcoming season. The submerged land lease is being worked on and will be presented to the Public Works Committee in the next month or two. Additionally, the city is cohosting a study on resiliency with the DNR to examine the long-term hydrology and dredging on the shoreline and vegetation. Community engagement is a key opportunity to share information with the public, and the project has sparked interest in better understanding the existing plant community on Wisconsin Point with climate changes.
- 5.1.2. During the Labor Day weekend, Cherie Hagen reported that more than 2,000 pounds of seeds were planted for the Manoonmin Restoration Project. The wild rice is thriving, and there is a new funding proposal to support the project through 2026. A long-term plan for wild rice is being worked on and is nearing completion. The efforts to remove geese and stabilize water levels have greatly contributed to the growth of the rice. A presentation will be given at the next meeting. Funding for the restoration of the Allouez Bay Marsh Bird Habitat has been secured for phase two. In the first phase, the main focus will be on using mechanical management techniques to control the invasive cattail species. However, activities such as channeling and potholing will not occur this winter, but there are plans for their implementation in the upcoming year.
- 5.1.3. Nick Danz mentioned that the University of Wisconsin Superior's Lake Superior Research Institute receives an annual ranking, and this year they secured second place in research funding. Additionally, they have received a substantial donation for the creation of a floating classroom. This innovative classroom will be incorporated into a catamaran-style boat, capable of accommodating 40-60 individuals, and will serve as a platform for educational and research activities on Lake Superior. The boat, named Sadie Ann, is currently being constructed in Louisiana and is expected to be operational by the spring/summer season.
- 5.1.4. Lee Sandok Baker took advantage of the opportunity to attend the Coastal Hazards of Superior Event in early October. Throughout the event, she acquired valuable knowledge about erosion and had the chance to observe the transformations in the Wisconsin Point shoreline over time. Additionally, there were discussions about the setback practices of Planning and Zoning Departments in other counties. The event was highly educational and recommends others to attend if given the opportunity.
- 5.1.5. According to Deanna Erickson, the field trip to the Cloquet Forestry Center was a success, providing valuable insights on prescribed fire.

5.1.6. Director Cadotte stated that Makwa Ziibiins Miikana known as Bear Creek Trail, has been extended to Lot 1 of Wisconsin Point and is currently usable. However, the official “branch cutting” has not yet occurred. The pavilion’s permit process is still ongoing, and a decision regarding its location and whether it can be placed on top of the old Landfill is expected to be made by next spring.

5.2 Future Agenda Items

- 5.2.1 Manoonmin Restoration Presentation
- 5.2.2 Marsh Bird Habitat Restoration Presentation
- 5.2.3 Update on Bipartisan Infrastructure Competitive Grant
- 5.2.4 Update on Resiliency Study
- 5.2.5 Discussion on Fire Management

5.3 Confirm the next meeting date as February 13, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at Lake Superior Estuarium.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Van Sickle announced the meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kara Czapinski

2024 - Wisconsin Point Committee Meetings

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