

LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

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MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 11, 2010, RIVERWAY BOARD MEETING

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB) met on Thursday, November 11, 2010, at the Avoca Village Hall to conduct a regular monthly business meeting. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman Bill Lundberg. All members were present with the exceptions of Melody Moore, Fred Madison and Ritchie Brown. Acknowledgment that the meeting was properly noticed was provided by Mark E. Cupp, Executive Director. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Jerry Dorscheid, seconded by Greg Greenheck. **MOTION CARRIED.** The minutes of the October 14, 2010, meeting then were considered. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Don Greenwood, seconded by Nick Nice. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Executive Committee report was presented by Chairman Lundberg. Lundberg introduced Don Pluemer, Project Chair of the Harry and Laura Nohr Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TU), who gave a presentation on stream restoration efforts undertaken on tributaries of the lower Wisconsin River. Pluemer said the cold water resources of the Driftless Area make it a good place for TU to devote resources. He described outreach programs to students and the general public and then focused on specific stream restoration efforts in the local area. Ron Leys noted improvements in farming methods and installation of conservation practices on the land have helped improve water quality and have reduced runoff. Leys said he is concerned about the lessening of outdoor experiences for today's young people and asked if Pluemer shared that concern. Pluemer agreed and said it is important to make the next generation understand the importance of conservation and environmental protection because they will be the next stewards of our resources. A member of the public, Maurey Laruent of Avoca, said local residents have been disappointed in the permit process and associated difficulties in working with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on Morrey Creek. Pluemer said TU tries to working closely with DNR officials to avoid permitting problems. Leys then thanked Pluemer and his colleagues at TU for their good work.

Correspondence was reviewed. Lundberg said Cupp had received an award from Citizens for a Scenic Wisconsin for his efforts to designate STH 60 from Lodi to Prairie du Chien as a Wisconsin Scenic Byway. Cupp said the award is shared with the board and staff and others who worked with him on the project. Lundberg noted the Riverway was featured in a recent Chicago Tribune article. Cupp said he has been working with the Wisconsin Department of Tourism to provide travel writers with information on the Riverway. Greenwood gave a report on a newly formed Spring Green West Basin Flood Study Group. He noted Cupp and Madison serve with him on the committee. Pete Nowak of the University of Wisconsin Nelson Institute on Environmental Studies is facilitating discussion and information gathering on flooding issues in the Spring Green – Lone Rock area. A public meeting will be held on November 17th to solicit citizen comments and questions. Leys noted the issue is relevant to the Riverway Board because the water/runoff ends up in the river. Greenheck asked if the board should be concerned with having two members on the committee because of open meeting law requirements. Cupp noted that Madison and Greenwood would not constitute a quorum and neither is representing the board on the committee. Greenwood represents Jewell and Associates while Madison is on the committee due to his role as a soil scientist and professor at University of Wisconsin – Madison.

Cupp then reviewed results of the recent elections and said there will be two new representatives for portions of the Riverway. Travis Tranel will represent the 49th Assembly District, which includes Grant County, and Howard Marklein will represent the 51st Assembly District, which includes Iowa County and portions of Sauk County. Cupp said he will send letters to both offering to provide a briefing on Riverway matters.

The Operations Committee report was presented by Chairman Dorscheid. The request of William Unke of American Transmission Company for an extension to a previously issued was considered. Cupp explained the reconstruction of the transmission line crossing the river between Crawford and Grant counties in the Boydtown and Woodman area had been pushed back. No changes have been made in the plans. Unke simply request an extension with the time for implementation of the required planting plan to be pushed to June 1, 2012. Dorscheid made a motion, seconded by Nice, to approve issuance of an extension to the previously permit for a period of one year with retention of the original permit conditions. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The request of Joe Dremsa for a management permit to enhance a native plant community in the Town of Marietta, Crawford County, was discussed. The consultants/loggers are Budd and Clay Bunders. Cupp explained the field inspection revealed that the site is partially visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions. Plans call for removal of aspen on the bluff. Screening vegetation and a very narrow viewshed will minimize the visual impact. The aspen is mature and removal will enhance the native plant community. The area has been demarcated and GPS'd by Hutnik and approved as being appropriate for the site. No new structures become visible from the river as a result of the activity. Dorscheid made a motion, seconded by Leys, to approve issuance of a permit with the following standard conditions:

- No existing structures shall become visible from the river as a result of the activity;
- The LWSRB shall approve of any modification to the plans, as submitted; and,
- The applicant shall notify the LWSRB upon initiation and completion of the activity.

MOTION CARRIED.

Cupp reported that he and Hutnik had met with the loggers conducting the harvest on the Joe Dremsa property in the Town of Marietta, Crawford County. The marking of trees slated for harvest was reviewed and determined to be in compliance with the applicable performance standards. A post-harvest field inspection will be conducted in the future.

Cupp said he had completed the field inspection of the proposed logging road on the Jerry Jones property in the Town of Marietta, Crawford County. He met with representatives of Nelson Hardwoods to review the proposed location and design of the logging road. Cupp determined the road would not be visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions for the portion that exceeded the 10% slope limitation so a variance would not be required. Hutnik will work with Nelson Hardwoods on implementation of water bars and other measures to minimize erosion upon completion of the harvest.

Cupp said James Ringlestetter, a landowner in the Town of Troy, Sauk County, contacted him regarding installation of a logging road on his property. Previously, the board had approved issuance of a timber harvest permit for the parcel. The logging road location and design had been reviewed and approved by Hutnik. Cupp said the Operations Committee may conduct a field inspection at the site next month.

Cupp noted a cover letter had been sent to Mel and Alice Levy with the permit for the new storage shed as well as to address issues with the lack of compliance with the planting plan for the house constructed in 2006. Copy thanked Greenwood for reviewing the draft letter to assure the complications with the extraterritorial zoning (ETZ) jurisdiction were accurately portrayed. A copy of the letter was included in the board members' packets and was reviewed.

Cupp said the Phase II archeological reconnaissance on the STH 60 project between Gotham and Muscoda in Richland County is underway. He has established contact with the DNR liaison to the Department of Transportation and hopes to have more information on the construction timetable in the near future.

Cupp said he and Greenwood had met with representatives of Taliesin Preservation, Inc. (TPI) to discuss a proposed parking lot lighting project and to review general vegetative management plans for the property. The meeting led to a site visit by the Operations Committee. Dorscheid noted the committee met with the TPI officials prior to the board meeting and reviewed the proposed lighting project. He said the project will minimize the visual impact of the new lighting structures. Leys expressed concern with the light color and said he would like something in writing from Taliesin that assures the proper light color and that addresses times of use. Cupp noted the structures are dark sky compliant and said TPI has been cooperative throughout the process and has reduced the number of structures as well as the height of the poles. A strategy for addressing vegetative management on the 600+ acre property is being developed but will be modeled after the board's interaction with the DNR and the State Natural Areas program.

Cupp reported there was one permit issued by the Executive Director since the October meeting. A management permit was issued to Dan Vernon of Taliesin Preservation, Inc. for a timber stand improvement project in the Town of Wyoming, Iowa County. Hutnik reviewed the proposal and determined the activity was appropriate for the site. No new structures become visible from the river as a result of the activity. Plans call for removal of trees for oak wilt control and to enhance the vigor of the woodlot on a bluff near the main estate at Taliesin.

The Budget Committee report was presented by Chairman Nice who reviewed the status of the FY 11 budget.

The Personnel Committee report was presented by Acting Chair Greenwood who noted Cupp had completed the annual performance evaluation of Office Associate Marsha Nachtigal. Nachtigal received ratings from "satisfactory" to "exceeds expectations" for the duties noted on the position description. Cupp said Nachtigal is a dedicated staff member and noted he appreciates her professionalism and commitment to the project.

The Executive Director's report was given by Cupp who reviewed the materials in the board members' packets. He noted river flow remained well above normal flow based on the 100 year average. He said the Cultural Landscape Legacies annual tour was held in the Wisconsin Dells-Necedah area and included stops at the Kingsley-Bend Mound Group, Roche-a-Cri State Park and the Hulbert Creek garden beds. Greenwood noted it was a very informative tour. Cupp said the Lower Wisconsin River Road Steering Committee will be directed by the Riverway Board staff for the foreseeable future.

Under board members' business, Leys said he was impressed with the number of portable toilets placed along the Elroy-Sparta trail during a recent biking expedition. He said there usually aren't that many. Brian Hefty, DNR Riverway Manager, said there likely was a special event on the trail.

Under DNR report, Hefty said Riverway staff have been laid off for the use season. The Black Hawk Unit facilities are closed for the season. Wildlife staff continues with pheasant stocking and road repairs. Hutnik noted the String of Pearls harvest in the Town of Muscoda is underway and the Monument Road sale west of Spring Green should begin shortly. Cupp said the Operations Committee tentatively will visit the String of Pearls site in December. Leys asked if the high water of 2010 and other high flow events in recent years were enough to address the concerns about changing bottomland ecology. Hutnik said the extremes likely were not enough to mimic conditions from the days before impoundments and river flow management.

During the public comment session, Timm Zumm of Spring Green, Co-Chair of the Friends of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway (FLOW) said the contested case hearing regarding the Lake District pumping project will move forward. FLOW also will monitor developments with the Spring Green West Basin Advisory Committee. The final hike of the year to Ferry Bluff will be held on November 14th. All are invited.

A motion to adjourn until December 9th when the meeting will be held at the Muscoda village hall was made by Leys, seconded by Nice. **MOTION CARRIED.**

END

For further information, corrections, additions or deletions to the minutes, contact Mark Cupp, Executive Director, at (608) 739-3188 or 1-800-221-3792.

Minutes submitted by:

Mark E. Cupp, Executive Director
Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board