

LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

202 N. Wisconsin Avenue
P.O. Box 187
Muscodia, WI 53573
(608) 739-3188 or 1-800-221-3792

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 8, 2016, RIVERWAY BOARD MEETING

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB) met on Thursday, September 8, 2016, at the Spring Green Community Library to conduct a regular monthly business meeting. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chair Fred Madison. All members were present with the exceptions of Ritchie Brown and Jerry Dorscheid. (NOTE: One vacancy exists.) Gigi LaBudde, the new Sauk County representative to the board, was introduced. Acknowledgment that the meeting was properly noticed was provided by Mark E. Cupp, Executive Director. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Bob Cary, seconded by Dick McFarlane. **MOTION CARRIED.** A motion to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2016, meeting was made by Cary, seconded by McFarlane. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Executive Committee report was presented by Madison who introduced the guest speaker, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Warden Dave Youngquist. Youngquist noted he works on the Sauk City to Lone Rock segment, which is the heaviest used segment on the river. He said the number of users appear to have increased and attributed much of the increase to rentals by canoe livery operators. Motorboat use, mostly local anglers, is about the same. He said citations were issued for glass, fireworks, cutting of live trees, no PFDs, illegal camping and noise. Ron Leys asked about use of enforcement method at night when drug sniffing dogs are taken to sandbars. Youngquist said that technique is not used in the Riverway. Professor Michael Nee asked about receiving permission to collect botany samples at the closed area by the Mazo Beach. Matt Seguin, DNR Property Manager, said he should be able to attain a special permit for scientific research. Youngquist then addressed questions from the audience related to frequency of patrols, fireworks citations, illegal camping at the closed area by Mazo Beach, and low flying aircraft.

Madison then asked Cupp to discuss his memorandum to the Natural Resources Board regarding the DNR Riverway Master Plan. Cupp discussed the main points of the memo including opposition to road closures and trail closures in the Muscodia area and the need to restore scenic easements without public access as a real estate acquisition tool in the Riverway. Leys noted a public benefit to scenic easements in the Riverway is protection of scenic qualities, a fundamental reason for creation of the project. Cupp noted the public will have access to the memo via the board's website or by request from the LWSRB office.

The Operations Committee report was presented by Acting Chair Leys. The request of Joyce Hagen for a timber harvest in the Town of Wauzeka, Crawford County, was considered. Leys noted a field inspection was conducted by Cupp on August 16, 2016. Kobby Antwi, Crawford County Forester, and Ms. Hagen also were present for the field inspection. Plans call for selective harvest of merchantable hardwoods. Portions of the harvest area are visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions. The Bluff Zone was delineated during the field inspection. The harvest will include treatment of an oak wilt area in the Resource Management Zone and selective harvest of oak and walnut in the Bluff, Riverview and Resource Management Zones. The parcel is about 10 acres in size. Only mature to over-mature trees will be harvested. No new roads will be constructed. The harvest will occur during the times when the ground is frozen or dry and the leaves are off the deciduous trees. Leys made a motion, seconded by Cary, to approve issuance of a permit for the activity with the following standard conditions:

- The harvest shall comply with the basal area limits for the residual stand in the Riverview Zone and Bluff Zone, as detailed in Chapter NR 37, Wisconsin Administrative Code;
- In the Bluff Zone and Riverview Zone, all trees selected for harvest shall be appropriately marked and reviewed by the LWSRB for compliance with the applicable performance standards prior to initiation of the harvest;

- In the Bluff Zone and Riverview Zone, the harvest shall be limited to the times when the ground is frozen or dry and the leaves are off the deciduous trees;
- The LWSRB shall review the location and design of all new logging roads, if any, in the Bluff Zone and Riverview Zone;
- The new logging roads, if any, shall comply with the applicable performance standards regarding grade and erosion control and shall be re-seeded upon completion of the harvest;
- The LWSRB shall review the location and design of all small regeneration cuts, if any, in the Riverview Zone to assure compliance with the applicable performance standards;
- The Bluff and Riverview Zone shall be delineated prior to initiation of the harvest, if necessary;
- The landowner or his/her agent shall notify the LWSRB within 10 working days upon completion of the harvest and, if necessary, the LWSRB shall conduct a post-harvest field inspection; and,
- The LWSRB shall review modification of the plans, as submitted, for compliance with the applicable performance standards.

MOTION CARRIED.

The request of Sheri Luther Knerr for an extension to a previously issued timber harvest permit for two parcels in the Town of Spring Green, Sauk County, was considered. Cupp explained he had conducted a field inspection in conjunction with the original permit. The harvest was not completed and Ms. Knerr's father, Vernon Luther, had passed away. The previous field inspection revealed a small portion of the harvest area is visible from the river during leaf-on conditions. Plans call for the selective harvest of miscellaneous hardwoods. One parcel is located in the uplands west of STH 23. The other parcel is located in the bottomlands south of STH 60. Review of the trees slated for harvest will occur when a new consultant or logger has been retained by Ms. Knerr.

Leys made a motion, seconded by LaBudde, to approve issuance of a one-year extension with retention of the following permit conditions:

- The harvest shall comply with the basal area limits for the residual stand in the Bluff Zone and Riverview Zone, as detailed in Chapter NR 37, Wisconsin Administrative Code;
- In the Bluff Zone and Riverview Zone, all trees selected for harvest shall be appropriately marked and reviewed by the LWSRB for compliance with the applicable performance standards prior to initiation of the harvest;
- In the Bluff Zone and Riverview Zone, the harvest shall be limited to the times when the ground is frozen or dry and the leaves are off the deciduous trees;
- The LWSRB shall review the location and design of all new logging roads, if any, in the Bluff Zone and Riverview Zone;
- The new logging roads, if any, shall comply with the applicable performance standards regarding grade and erosion control and shall be re-seeded upon completion of the harvest;
- The LWSRB shall review the location and design of all small regeneration cuts, if any, in the Riverview Zone to assure compliance with the applicable performance standards;
- If necessary, the various zones shall be delineated prior to initiation of the harvest;
- The landowner or his/her agent shall notify the LWSRB within 10 working days upon completion of the harvest and, if necessary, the LWSRB shall conduct a post-harvest field inspection; and,
- The LWSRB shall review modification of the plans, as submitted, for compliance with the applicable performance standards.

MOTION CARRIED.

Two permit requests submitted by Jason Sable on behalf of DNR were considered. Both are management activities related to forest health. The first permit request involved the former Bogenschneider parcel in the Town of Wyoming, Iowa County. Timber stand improvement and invasive species control are the activities. Sable explained the intent is to prepare the site for a future regeneration harvest. The activities will not be visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions. Plans call for the removal of woody invasive species and spraying of herbaceous invasive species. The primary targeted species will be barberry and red maple. The non-commercial treatment of the forest understory woody vegetation and invasive plants will assist in regeneration of shade intolerant species such as oak and aspen. No new structures become visible from the river as a result of the activity. The management permit would be issued for a two-year period. Leys made a motion, seconded by Cary, to approve issuance of a permit for a period of two-years with the following standard conditions:

- No existing structure(s) 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 landowner or his/her agent shall notify the LWSRB upon initiation and completion of the activity.

MOTION CARRIED.

The second Sable permit request was for a timber stand improvement project in the Town of Millville, Grant County, the former Munz tract. Sable noted the Operations Committee and Cupp had visited the site him in the spring of 2016. Plans call for understory treatment in anticipation of later small regeneration cuts in the Riverview Zone and Resource Management Zone. Plans call for use of a variety of techniques to treat/remove woody vegetation and small trees that are shading the forest floor. The long term goal is for regeneration of oak. The permit would be issued for a two-year period. No new structures would become visible from the river as a result of the activity. Leys made a motion, seconded by McFarlane, to approve issue of a two-year permit with the following standard conditions:

- No existing structure(s) 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 landowner or his/her agent shall notify the LWSRB upon initiation and completion of the activity.

MOTION CARRIED.

The Budget & Office Committee report was presented by Chair Cary who reviewed the FY 17 budget and the figures for the FY 16 close out. Cupp said then discussed the agency budget proposal for the 2017-2019 biennium. He noted the final numbers aren't available at this time but, since it will be a zero-based budget, it will be in the neighborhood of the current budget of \$227,400 per year. Another exercise required by the state budget directions involved scenarios by which the agency budget would be reduced by 5% in FY 18 and 5% in FY 19. (NOTE: This would not representative a cumulative 10% reduction but rather 5% of the base for each fiscal year.) Cupp then described the proposed cuts which included a 50% reduction in board meetings, elimination of travel reimbursement for the Executive Director, elimination of the voyageur canoe program, reductions in purchases of supplies, training, newspapers and elimination in office cleaning services. Cupp said he attempted to arrive at the necessary savings through reductions in the supplies and service line rather than considering staff furloughs or reductions from full time to part time hours for support staff. The proposal generated a great deal of discussion from board members.

Leys said it would be absurd to go to six board meetings a year. He noted the importance of the board's business and the need to be available to the public on a routine basis. Cary said he understood the need to conduct the reduction scenario exercise because of the directive from Governor Walker but said it should be communicated to the Legislature that the LWSRB does not support the proposed cuts. Dave Martin

expressed concern about eliminating the Executive Director travel reimbursement funds and suggested the board look at other means to accrue the required savings. McFarlane asked if it would be appropriate to contact area legislators. Cupp replied in the affirmative and said he will meet with Riverway legislators and others once the budget document is finalized. Leys, LaBudde and Cary all reiterated their opposition to the proposed cuts. A motion to approve the budget documents and reduction scenarios as presented by Cupp was made by Cary, seconded by McFarlane.

Martin made a motion to amend the proposal and eliminate all board member per diem and travel expenses and restore the line for Executive Director travel expenses, seconded by LaBudde. Martin said it isn't a lot of money to sacrifice to assure that Cupp doesn't have to take a de facto pay cut. LaBudde noted Cary's previous sentiment that the budget request and reduction scenario should be passed as presented and requested additional explanation. Cary noted Cupp has been Executive Director since inception of the project and has been through the budget process many times. He continued that the board should trust Cupp's judgment in the matter, even though the proposed cuts will harm operations and the ability to fulfill the board's mission. He said the board has challenges currently in recruiting new members and felt elimination of the meager per diem and mileage reimbursement would make it even more difficult. A member of the public, Don Greenwood of Spring Green, former LWSRB Chair, agreed and noted the change would be especially unfair to "at-large" members who have to travel longer distances to meetings. Cary cited the example of former Chair and long-serving member Bill Lundberg of Wisconsin Rapids who traveled thousands of miles on board business during his twenty years on the board. A vote on the amendment to eliminate board member reimbursement and per diems was taken. **MOTION FAILED.** A vote on the original motion to support the measures as presented was taken. **MOTION CARRIED.**

There was no report from the Personnel Committee.

The Executive Director's report was presented by Cupp who reviewed the materials in the board members' packets.

During board members business, Martin noted there will be an autumnal equinox observance at Frank's Hill in southern Richland County on September 22nd. He then described the mission and function of the Three Eagles Foundation that manages the site.

There was no DNR report.

During the public comment session, Timm Zumm, FLOW President, thanked the board for their continued discussion of the lack of scenic easement purchases in the Riverway. Professor Nee noted he is working on a book on plants of the Riverway. Jim Dickey, Cross Plains, asked if the board could utilize outside funds if raised and donated. Cupp said the use of such funds by the agency would be difficult.

A motion to adjourn was made by McFarlane, seconded by Cary. **MOTION CARRIED.**

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