

# LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

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## MINUTES OF THE MARCH 12, 2020, RIVERWAY BOARD MEETING

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB) met on Thursday, March 12, 2020, at the Kratochwill Memorial Building in Muscodia to conduct a regular monthly business meeting. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman Jerry Dorscheid. All members were present. (NOTE: One vacancy exists.) Acknowledgment that the meeting was properly noticed was provided by Mark E. Cupp, Executive Director. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Ritchie Brown, seconded by Gigi LaBudde. **MOTION CARRIED.** A motion to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2020, meeting was made by Steve Williamson, seconded by LaBudde. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Executive Committee report was presented by Chair Dorscheid. Cupp introduced Ben Robel who uses goats for control of invasive species and other unwanted woody vegetation for restoration or maintenance of native plant communities. He said the goats are a good tool for land management and can handle steep terrains as well as wet areas. He noted goats don't swim.

Cupp said the Pattison Sand Company had submitted their semi-annual report which indicated there had been no nonmetallic mining on lands within the Riverway in the Town of Bridgeport, Crawford County. He said Grant County is exploring construction of additional communication towers, some of which may be near the Riverway. Cupp said he has encouraged co-location rather than construction of new towers. Cupp noted Wisconsin & Southern Railroad has planned rehabilitation of some bridges not visible from the river in Crawford County. He said the Lower Wisconsin River Scenic Byway had celebrated 10 years. The potential for changes in response to the coronavirus may be forthcoming. Nothing is definite at this time. Cupp noted the terms of Ron Leys and Gigi LaBudde will expire on May 1, 2020. Leys said he will serve until a replacement is named but wishes to end his service to the LWSRB. Cupp said a vacancy for an at-large position continues to exist.

The Operations Committee report was presented by Chairman Leys who said a permit request had been received by Mike Finlay on behalf of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regarding a timber harvest in the Town of Boscobel, Grant County. The harvest will occur on lands not visible from the river during leaf-on conditions. Plans call for group selection harvesting to release swamp white oak and to encourage river birch regeneration. The area is located west of the Boscobel Airport. A buffer will remain between the river and the harvest area. A motion to approve a general permit with the following conditions was made by Leys, seconded by McFarlane:

- The harvest shall be limited to areas not visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions;
- 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.**

Cupp said there may be requests for variances to the time limitation on timber harvesting in the Bluff Zone and/or Riverview Zone in cases where accessing timber in "frozen or dry ground" conditions is impractical or dangerous. He said there are cases from the past where the board has issued variances as authorized under the law but the variance process is used sparingly. Leys said all variances should be

carefully scrutinized. LaBudde made a motion, seconded by Brown, to have a committee review variance requests and procedures before reaching the full board. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Cupp said he attended a meeting in Wauzeka with Department of Transportation (DOT) and local officials regarding a resurfacing project on STH 60 near Wauzeka. The activity will not be visible from the river. He said the STH 60 project between Gotham and Muscoda appears to be years away at this point.

The Budget Committee report was presented by Chair McFarlane who reviewed the status of the FY 20 budget. He noted LWSRB staff continue to do a good job on controlling expenditures and tracking funds. Cupp said he hopes to acquire new binoculars, which are an important tool of the trade. The pair he has now are over 25 years old.

There was no report from the Personnel Committee.

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

Under board members business, comments were made regarding the Endangered Resources checkoff on tax forms, comeback of pelicans in the Riverway, and a scheduled presentation at the Arena Manor by Dorscheid regarding an iron mine/bat hibernium project he worked on while at DNR.

During public comment session, comments were made regarding the cancellation of Canoeecopia, River Valley School Forests, government responses to coronavirus, and opportunities for disabled veterans to use the Riverway.

A motion to adjourn was made by Williamson, seconded by Leys. **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.