

LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

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MINUTES OF THE JULY 13, 2023, RIVERWAY BOARD MEETING

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB) met on Thursday, July 13, 2023. The meeting was conducted at the LWSRB office in Muscodia and was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chair Gigi La Budde. All members were present with the exceptions of Lara Czajkowski Higgins and Meredith Beckman. Acknowledgment that the meeting was properly noticed was provided by Mark E. Cupp, Executive Director. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Dan Hillberry, seconded by Kim Cates. **MOTION CARRIED.** A motion to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2023, meeting was made by Randy Poelma, seconded by Cates. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Executive Committee report was presented by Chair La Budde. Correspondence was discussed. Cupp said the appointments of George Brandt and Robert Cary to the LWSRB had been made by Governor Tony Evers. Brandt will fill a vacant recreational user slot that will be subject to Senate confirmation. Brandt hails from Trempealeau County. Cary will represent Grant County and will fulfill the remainder of Steve Wetter's term, which will expire on May 1, 2024. Cary has served twice previously on the board but has said he will only commit to filling out the remainder of Wetter's term.

Election of officers for fiscal year (FY 24) was held. The election for the post of Secretary was first and the name of Meredith Beckman was placed in nomination. La Budde thrice called for additional nominations from the floor. A motion was made by Brandt, seconded by Cary, to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Beckman for Secretary. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The election for the post of Vice-Chair was next and the name of Randy Poelma was placed in nomination. La Budde thrice called for additional nominations from the floor. A motion was made by Hillberry, seconded by Brandt, to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Poelma for Vice-Chair. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The election for the post of Chair was last and the name of Gretchen "Gigi" La Budde was placed in nomination. Poelma temporarily assumed the role of Chair and thrice called for additional nominations from the floor. A motion was made by Brandt, seconded by Hillberry, to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for La Budde for Chair. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Committee assignments for FY 24 were discussed. Cupp explained that a draft proposal was formulated with a full board on hand for the first time in several years. Assignments were distributed to members with officers filling out the Executive Committee, and then individual members serving as committee members or alternates on the Operations, Budget/Office, and Personnel committees. The draft committee assignments were reviewed by the board. A motion to approve the committee assignments for the new fiscal year was made by Cary, seconded by Brandt. **MOTION CARRIED.**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Gigi La Budde (Chair)
Randy Poelma (Vice-Chair)
Meredith Beckman (Secretary)

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:

Dan Hillberry (Chair)
Randy Poelma
Ritchie Brown
Bob Cary (Alternate)

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

Ritchie Brown (Chair)
Lara Czajkowski Higgins
George Brandt
Kim Cates (Alternate)

BUDGET & OFFICE COMMITTEE:

Meredith Beckman (Chair)
Bob Cary
Kim Cates
Lara Czajkowski Higgins (Alternate)

Cupp then reported on the board's voyageur canoe trips. He said most trips had been filled with waiting lists and, as usual, the trips have been well-received by the public.

The Operations Committee report was presented by Chair Hillberry. Cupp reported progress on the Lone Rock bridge is in full swing and low water conditions have assisted in accelerating the pace after high water slowed progress in the spring. A stakeholders meeting was held with the Iowa County Highway Commissioner and Jewell & Associates regarding reconstruction of CTH C in Iowa County for the segment between Hwy. 23 and Hwy. 14. The portion of the road east of the Hwy. 23 intersection is highly visible from the Wisconsin River. A presentation on the project is expected at the September LWSRB meeting. Cupp said the Boscobel boat landing reconstruction is nearing completion and is open for public use.

A number of citizen contacts occurred since the May meeting, not permit related. Cupp met with a landowner in the Town of Eagle, Richland County, to discuss planting of native plants along the shoreline. He also met with two landowners outside the boundary in the Town of Orion, Richland County, to discuss voluntary compliance with the Riverway law in regard to structures along the river as well as a bluff top property owner in the Town of Buena Vista, Richland County, regarding a potential prairie restoration and timber harvest. Cupp met with Terry Askevold at Trader's Island in the Town of Arena, Iowa County, to review removal of hazardous trees at the campground and approved removal of dead, diseased, insect infected and storm damaged trees that are creating hazardous conditions. Askevold is working with DNR foresters on a replanting plan to replace some of the trees slated for removal.

Cupp said he had issued five permits since the previous meeting. A general permit was to Carlin Martin for a timber harvest on a small bottomlands parcel at the intersection of STH 133 and Bigelow Hill Road in the Town of Clyde, Iowa County. The harvest area is not visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions. A structure permit was issued to Laura Helm for addition of a screened porch to a house in the Town of Spring Green, Sauk County. A general permit was issued to Matt Smith for construction of a deck on lands not visible from the river in the Town of Prairie, Sauk County. A general permit was issued to Brody and Jenna Stuetgen for construction of a shed on lands not visible from the river in the Town of Troy, Sauk County. A timber harvest permit was issued to William and Sheryl Borrer for a harvest on lands not visible from the river in the Town of Buena Vista, Richland County. The consultant is Mark Berg.

The Budget Committee report was presented by Acting Chair Bob Cary who reviewed the status of FY 23 budget.

There was no report from the Personnel Committee.

Under Executive Director's report, Cupp said he assisted DNR Wildlife Biologist Travis Anderson with a Natural Resources Foundation field trip in May at the Siamese bird effigy mound group in the Town of Pulaski, Iowa County. He and Timm Zumm, President of the Friends of the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway (FLOW), teamed up for a presentation on river safety for a group of Riverdale summer school students. Cupp reported he is working with the Muscoda Chamber of Commerce on a signage project that will include information on the Wisconsin River. He noted river flow has been near record low for many weeks.

Under board members' business, LaBudde said local interest remains high in acquisition of Wintergreen for use by the Riverway or other educational purposes. Ritchie Brown said there is hope that the Giant Ghost Eagle Mound in the Town of Eagle, Richland County, will be surveyed in October.

The DNR report was presented by Jesse Kellogg, DNR Riverway Property Manager, who discussed activities of Riverway staff.

During the public comment session, Bruce Moffat noted the new Cross Currents Heritage Center, now known as Tippesaukee, in the Town of Richwood, Richland County, would be unveiled in the fall. A number of exciting projects are planned for the important historic site just west of Port Andrew.

A motion to adjourn was made by Brown, seconded by Brandt. **MOTION CARRIED.**