

**Walworth County Board of Supervisors
Park Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 18, 2021
Walworth County Government Center, County Board Room 114
100 West Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin**

Chair Nancy Russell called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Roll call was conducted and the following members were present either in person or by remote attendance: Chair Nancy Russell; Vice Chair Daniel Kilkenny; Supervisor Brian Holt; and Citizen Members Merilee Holst and Mariette Nowak (became audible at 2:01pm). A quorum was declared.

Others in Attendance:

County Staff: County Administrator Mark W. Luberda; Director-Public Works Richard Hough; Deputy Director-Asset Management (PW)/Park General Manager Matt Mortwedt; Corporation Counsel/Director of Land Use and Resource Management (LURM) Michael Cotter; and County Engineer Joseph Kroll.

On motion by Supervisor Holt, second by Citizen Member Holst, the agenda was approved with no withdrawals.

On motion by Supervisor Holt, second by Citizen Member Nowak, the November 16, 2020 meeting minutes were approved.

Public comment – Steve Ducommun of N7622 State Park Dr., Whitewater, WI spoke in opposition of the Town of Richmond’s plan to install a drainage system from Lake Lorraine into Natureland Park.

Consent Items

7a) Reports

- 1) Park Summary Report – January 2021

Deputy Director-Asset Management (PW)/Park General Manager Matt Mortwedt gave an overview of the Park Summary Report. He highlighted the top five projects, upcoming work, and a summary of completed projects. Discussion followed.

- 2) 2020 White River Trail Year End Trail Pass Information

New Business

8a) Review and discuss the Town of Richmond application for DNR and USACE permits to drain down Lake Lorraine that may potentially affect Natureland Park and Whitewater Lake.

The Committee discussed their concerns regarding how the information on this project thus far does not provide adequate details on the potential negative effects of this proposed plan, as it relates to Natureland Park. It was inquired what roll the committee would play in this situation and what could be done. Director of Public Works Richard Hough recommended the committee provide direction so more information could be gathered and then it could be determined where to go from there. Corporation Counsel/Director of Land Use and Resource Management (LURM) Michael Cotter stated Walworth County has nothing to do with the permitting for this project, but he was not sure if there had been any other contact made to Walworth County pertaining to water discharge. Hough and Mortwedt noted their department had not been contacted, but they have reached out to a representative at the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to see what sort of opportunity the County would have to provide input on this process. It is possible there will be public hearing on this matter, but a date and time is unknown. **Citizen Member Nowak offered a motion, second by Chair Russell, for Michael Cotter to find out whether a public hearing will be held and to let the**

committee know as soon as possible and also to know whether the DNR has considered the consequences and how the committee can provide input on the permit process.

Cotter requested clarification if Walworth County is objecting to the discharge of water on Natureland. Hough commented by stating due to the political nature of this matter and the numerous Townships and Lake Districts involved, any action to be taken would need to be directed by the Committee. **Citizen Member Nowak amended her first motion, second by Chair Russell, that the Park Committee objects to flooding of Natureland and believes Natureland is a resource for the whole county and we should not be harming a county park because of this issue.**

Discussion continued. It was determined this issue should remain at the Park Committee level until further information is obtained. Since the timeline of this project is unknown, the potential for a special meeting was evaluated, as the next committee meeting is not until March. It was agreed the previous motion should be withdrawn and restated so it better captures the intent to gather information prior to making any objections as it relates to this project. **Citizen Member Nowak withdrew her amendment and the original motion, Chair Russell withdrew her second. The motion died.**

Further discussion included what could be done if the information gathered results in a negative impact to Natureland Park. Cotter explained if we disagree with the findings, then Walworth County, as a property owner, would have a potential cause of action. The involvement of the Intergovernmental Cooperative Committee was suggested, but it was determined that it should be considered as a possible agenda item for a special meeting. **Holt offered a motion, second by Holst, to direct Michael Cotter to contact the DNR and find out when there is a public hearing for the Lake Lorraine diversion; to obtain any information about Lake Lorraine that the DNR has; to research what the proposed impact is on Natureland Park; and as soon as Cotter obtains the information and the public hearing has been set, that the Park Committee have a meeting prior to the public hearing. Motion Carried 5-0.**

Reports/announcements by Chairperson- There were none.

Confirmation of next meeting: The next meeting was confirmed for Monday, March 15, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment

On motion by Supervisor Holt, second by Citizen Member Holst, Chair Russell adjourned the meeting at 3:09 p.m.