

DRAYTON PLAINS NATURE CENTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2021, 6:30PM
VIRTUAL MEETING

- I. **Call to Order:** Murray Day, called meeting to order, 6:35pm
- II. **Introduction of Members, Staff and Guests:**
 - a. **Members Present:** Linda Zabik – Linden, MI, Aubrey Golden – Waterford, MI, Marie Hauswirth - Waterford, MI, Murray Day – Burton, MI, Jim Zampol – Waterford, MI, Terri Chapdelaine – Waterford, MI
 - b. **Not Present:** Sandy Pulk, Gerard Couture
 - c. **Also Present:** Alison Swanson – White Lake Township, MI, Tori Heglin – Rochester Hills, MI, Josh Lumsden, Waterford, MI, Lori Champagne – Waterford, MI, Michael Steward – Waterford, MI, Ian Ableson, Stewardship Manager, Six Rivers Land Conservancy – Orion Township, MI
- III. **Review and Approve Agenda:** Motion made by Murray Day to approve the agenda, support by Terri Chapdelaine. Motion approved.
- IV. **Review and Approve Minutes from November 2020 Meeting:** Motion made by Terri Chapdelaine to indicate that the Friends of Drayton Plains Nature Center paid \$1,450 for a portion of the brush removal contract. Alison Swanson also noted that the Waterford Parks and Recreation Department contributed to cover the other half of the expenses. Motion by Terri to approve the agenda, support by Aubrey Golden. Motion approved.
- V. **Reports:**
 - a. **Director’s Report: Alison Swanson**
 - i. Review of ice-skating project: Thanks to all that met including Todd Somers, DNR Fishery Division, Josh Lumsden, Murray Day and Ian Ableson, Six Rivers. There is enough water, and policy will be *skate at your own risk*. This is a trial year to see if we will do this in the future.
 - ii. Alison Swanson met with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the USDA Forest Service to discuss the property, and any funding opportunities and possible grant project cooperation. At this point, Parks and Recreation does not have a project to bundle and the funding does not focus on invasive removal. There is some US Fish and Wildlife funding and the representative from the Army Corps of Engineers is willing to walk the property with us.
 - iii. This summer we hope to bring on someone to work inside the Interpretive Building. We could either bring another person on or allocate one day when the nature interpreter works with the mapping system through FISMA to map the invasive species. Documentation is needed for invasive species funding or grant opportunities.
 - iv. There has been some vandalism at the Nature Center and the Police Department investigated. The individual is going to be paying some restitution for supplies and time.
 - v. In regards to the parking lot, we did have the larger hole filled by the parking lot entrance with some gravel to keep the integrity of the asphalt apron. Alison is working with Facilities and Operations to see if we can put some asphalt millings down when the weather breaks.
 - vi. Staff has been busy figuring out the re-opening of the recreation center on a partial basis starting later this month.
 - b. **Parks and Recreation: Tori Heglin**
 - i. There are two RAPP events (Revenue Assistance Partnership Program through Oakland County Parks and Recreation) scheduled. *Oaks on the Road Cabin Fever* on February 19 at Hess-Hathaway Park and *Habitats, and Movement* on March 21 at Drayton Plains Nature Center. The program at the Nature Center includes snowshoeing (snowshoes are available for all ages). If the weather does not cooperate, this portion of the program becomes a hike. Both programs are outdoors and free.
 - ii. Due to COVID restrictions, our traditional department dances for the children will be replaced with a virtual dance. The fee is per household and the dance is enjoyed at home (includes a fun activity box).
 - iii. Unplugged Event is scheduled for sundown Friday, March 5 through sundown Saturday, March 6. This is a national program and encourages all of us to put the cell phones down for 24 hours and get outside and connect with loved ones. We are interested in offering guided nature hikes at the Nature Center.
 - c. **Caretaker: Josh Lumsden**
 - i. Working on the observation towers. Will be installing new slate and reinforcing them.
 - ii. Slowly working on cleanup from the trail trimming. Planning to help Murray get the brush hog tractor attachment working for trail cleanup and ongoing trail maintenance.
 - iii. Talking to Todd about borrowing a loader from DPW and dealing with woodchips.
 - iv. Winterizing equipment in the barn.
 - v. Community Service workers are not available due to COVID.

vi. We need to limit the amount of wood chips we receive.

d. **Friends of the Drayton Plains Nature Center: Terri Chapdelaine**

- i. Installation of security camera is complete. The Friends paid for this asset at a total expenditure of \$3,134. Alison expressed appreciation and stated that the cameras should have an impact on reducing problematic behaviors.
- ii. Terri Chapdelaine reported on the annual census of birds on the 138 acres of parkland. Five new species were added (Least Bittern Cerulean Warbler, Connecticut Warbler, Hooded Warbler and Peregrine Falcons). Birders have come from as far as Flint to see some of our species. 128 species were documented for 2020, 109 was the previous high. Terri would like to see an inventory of mammals, vegetation and insect species. She suggested Sue Greenlee for the insect inventory.
- iii. Water level of pond designated for ice skating was discussed. Success of ice rink depends on the weather. There is approximately 8-10 inches of water now. Alison mentioned Township's Risk Management and Insurance indicated an interest in keeping the water to no greater a depth than 2 to 2.5 feet. Alison also indicated that there were staffing concerns for programs and maintenance.
- iv. The Friends are planning for Halloween Hayrides on October 8-9. Hay wagons will be available from Hess-Hathaway Park.
- v. Michael Stewart requested information about the Friends and suggested it should be on the Township's website.

VI. **Old Business**

- a. **Vote on President for 2021, Murray Day was nominated at November 2020 Meeting:** Motion made by Marie Hauswirth to nominate Murray Day as president for 2021 for a one-year term, support by Terri Chapdelaine. Motion approved.
- b. **Vote on Committee Vice-President for 2021, Terri Chapdelaine was nominated at November 2002 Meeting:** Motion made by Linda Zabik to nominate Terri Chapdelaine as vice-president for 2021 for a one-year term, support by Murray Day. Motion approved.

VII. **New Business**

- a. **Vote on 3-Year Term Renewal-Jim Zampol:** Three-year term renewal for Jim Zampol: Motion made by Murray Day to renew Jim Zampol as a resident representative for a three-year term, support by Terri. Motion approved.
- b. **Earth Day**
 - i. It is a community-wide effort, Township and the schools are involved.
 - ii. Gary Wall, Township Supervisor will be consulted and there might be designated areas as in the past.
- c. **Ponds**
 - i. Updating our website information on Drayton Plains Nature Center and was researching the history of the ponds. Ian Ableson explained that technically we have rearing ponds.
 - ii. Murray Day shared history and the DNR website was suggested as a resource (history and current practices).

VIII. **Roundtable**

- a. Terri Chapdelaine mentioned that the DNR had discussed passing the land back to Parks and Recreation. The ponds could revert to Parks and Recreation. Last time Alison spoke to Todd Somers about this, he indicated that there is not a plan for a change in the near future. A report found that the water in the ponds is of outstanding quality. Murray suggested that the community should know that we really have high quality water. Murray also mentioned that Todd Somers talked about rebuilding the dikes. Alison indicated that work on this might be proceeding in the next week or so. Michael Stewart mentioned as an engineer he is amazed by the longevity of the project. History of the park was shared.
- b. Alison Swanson said that Gerard Couture communicated health issues and she would reach out to him. Committee may need to replace this resident representative position.
- c. Aubrey Golden indicated that we should have an agenda item for public comment.
- d. Terri Chapdelaine mentioned addressing the management plan sometime this year. Alison indicated that before the next meeting she would send out an email to see who is interested in forming a subcommittee.
- e. Introduction of Marie Hauswirth as newly appointed Trustee Representative.

IX. **Public Comment**

Michael Stewart will be donating to the Friends.

X. **Adjournment**