

## **Kickapoo Reserve Management Board**

**April 18, 2024**

Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center

In Person Attendance: Julie Hoel, Travis Downing, Scott Lind, Reggie Nelson, Dave Maxwell, Bill Quackenbush

On Zoom Attendance: AJ Mann, Barb Sarnowski

Staff in Person: Jason Leis, Jackie Yocum, Maggie Schultz

Audience: Lonnie Muller, Episcopo News; Tom Miron, Friends of KVR Board member, Marcia Bader, Friends of KVR Member

### I. Open Session – Call to Order 6pm by Chair Scott Lind

**Approval of Agenda – Motion by Downing, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Hoel; all in favor – motion carries.**

Land Acknowledgement Statement – Read by Lind

Public Posting Compliance – Leis: It was publicly posted

Public Input: No requests.

### II. Consent Agenda

Minutes from March: Mann – name spelled wrong. **Motion to accept as corrected: Hoel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Downing; all in favor – motion carries.**

### III. Decision/Discussion Items

- A. Announcement of newly appointed Board Member Kjetil Garvin & Introductions – effective April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024: will be new Ho-Chunk representative. Taking Tina Brown’s seat on board. 1 year term, will be renewed next year. Couldn’t be here tonight, will attend next meeting.
- B. Announcement of re-appointed Board Members – Luke Zahm and Reggie Nelson: new 3 year terms. Lind: Thank you Reggie and Luke.
- C. Discussion of ideas brought forward for Friends’ money: Leis: These funds were discussed at every committee (finance, land management, and education and tourism). There is about \$30,000 available. These funds should be used in support of the Friends’ mission, which is to support the mission of the KVR. The list of ideas is:
  - a. Website redesign: currently not mobile-friendly. Every committee in support of this idea. Will benefit all users. Website is getting more use than ever with all campsite reservations and passes going through. Website is difficult to use; users must enter their personal data three times to purchase a pass. Maggie had gotten a quote, and we think we can do it in \$10,000 or less. Something that’s needed, whether we use Friends’ money or not.
  - b. Using funds for matching grants on invasive control
  - c. Using funds for matching grants on highway 131 widening project
  - d. Visitor Center roof – not a good use of these funds, but a project that is needed
  - e. 24 hour reservation kiosk in entryway for campsites

- f. Offering bus scholarships for schools
- g. EV charging station – low cost; Maxwell: preliminary but basic numbers on wiring – will be less than website for sure.
- h. 2<sup>nd</sup> intern for education program
- i. Bike repair station
- j. Improvements to dark skies exhibit; there is money left in exhibit fund – about \$9,000. Dark skies exhibit is not great. Hoel: The sound is the issue. Lind: Light from exit sign interferes with star display. Leis: The exhibit fund should be used for this first. Lind: I would be opposed using Friends’ money when there is money in exhibit fund.
- k. Discussion: Hoel: would the website redesign include Friends’ website? Leis: It is a possibility. Miron: It was not discussed at the Friends’ board meeting. Leis: The staff has discussed the possibility of combining the two websites, or redoing both at the same time. Miron: The Friends’ website is currently WordPress, and is in need of updating. It is an interesting idea, but will need to be discussed with Friends’ board. Hoel: does KVR have money to invest in this as well? Lind: Yes, the KVR can put some money up for projects. Hoel: Would be a good combined project. Lind: I like the idea of having the websites integrated, but is there an issue with 501©(3) linked on a state website? Hoel: There must be a way to be two friendly platforms. Maxwell: Does Wildcat Friends link to Wildcat website? Lind: I made that site. It is not linked with the DNR site. Good idea, need to make sure it is ok. Yocum: KVR site is not a secure site, would need to be for collecting payment information or membership information. Right now, neither website does this. If we have users create a login, that would change. Lind: Friends’ website is secure, not hard to get. Yocum: That may be an issue with the state. Lind: Julie proposed the website should be a priority, would you like to make a motion? Hoel, not at this meeting, but put it on agenda for next meeting. Lind: other items from the list that we should consider? Downing: Matching grants should be priority, especially for invasives. Highway will be too large of an expense, and the roof I don’t know about. The website is a good idea, and the matching grants should be the top two priorities. Hoel: If we approve of all these ideas, can we submit this list to the Friends, and have them decide? Lind: It is ultimately their decision, they asked KRMB for guidance. We need an idea of some of the costs of these items. Downing: EV station takes up little space, bike station is good, all good ideas. Lind: EV station installation is relatively affordable, but what are costs of charging and maintenance? Maxwell: Vernon Electric has charging program so users pay for the electricity they use, but KVR as entity cannot sell energy. Vernon Electric would be the entity selling the electricity, and giving kickbacks to the KVR. The meter by the parking lot is school’s, where does the power come from? Lind: Dual meter socket – can by split; that may work without pulling power from VC building. Maxwell: I will need to find out, it may or may not work; there’s not much demand yet, but ‘if you build it, they will come’. Downing: how does the payment work? Maxwell: just like at a gas station, they put in their card and the electricity they use is charged

to their card. If they leave it plugged in and go for a hike, it may prevent other users from accessing the charging station. Hoel: It's a good idea, and worth looking into. Maxwell: Another reason to have one here, there are none nearby. Downing: Not in Ontario, La Farge, any towns nearby. Do Kwik Trips have them now? Maxwell: Some do, not all. Lind: Jason, can you research the costs of the items on the list? Maxwell: I will look into the EV charging station. Lind: That way we can pass that information on to the Friends. Maxwell: Also about a solar array, we have money to donate for it, if you are willing to build one here. Looking at a 5kW to 10kW system, with a display to show how much energy it is generating. Lind: Would that require matching funds? Maxwell: the donation is for a set amount, it will cover everything up to that point, and then KVR would be responsible for remaining costs. Lind: I have nothing against the website, but we should use the money for leverage, to maximize what we can get. Leis: Many prices will vary, grants also vary, we can use some money for the website and the rest for grants. Hoel: what is the cost of a reservation kiosk? Leis: It would require a touchscreen for the entryway, and changing the locks so the inside doors would lock, and outside doors remain open. Lind: Need to consider egress from building; check measurements to make sure there's space and it meets ADA requirements. Leis: may need to be put in the corner or against the glass. Lind: Just put as good of numbers as you can, we'll come back and vote next meeting. Leis: What did you have in mind for the bike repair station? Hoel: It can be a post with tools and an air pump attached. Lind: Bluedog can help with estimate. Hoel: Has Bluedog brought one here before? Yocum: Bluedog has served as the bike repair station for the Dam Challenge in the past. Leis: It's just a post with tools? Lind: and an air pump. Hoel: Who's looking into costs? Lind: Staff, not board members.

- D. Vernon County Comprehensive Plan: Lind: I would like to contact Vernon County regarding their comprehensive plan to address increasing light pollution. The deadline for public comment was April 15, but if we write a letter with joint partners for Dark Sky Area project initiative, they will listen. I would like to ask them to consider dark sky concerns when creating their plan. Are you opposed to the idea, or are there any other issues we should address to them? Downing: That's a good idea, to put this issue in their minds. Would we be asking for an ordinance? Lind: Probably not a good idea for a state entity to ask a county for specific ordinances, but a general request for their consideration. Hoel: I haven't looked at their plan, have we missed our chance? Lind: Public input is closed, but a letter from an organization will probably be accepted. Downing: It's a tall ask, having them spend more money. Leis: We should give them example ordinances, so they have an idea what we are asking. Lind: I have examples, over 17 years from every level. Quackenbush: at the county level? Lind: County, city, etc. Maxwell: how many towns in Vernon County already have ordinances? Lind: One, Liberty that I know of. Maxwell: Does Whitestown? Lind: not yet. Sarnowski: a comprehensive plan is what we want to see for the future; no ordinances or zoning. Zoning ordinances have power, Vernon county is working on a zoning ordinance. Plan is different, and will take time. It is not too late, and we can have influence. Lind: I agree,

thank you. Plan has no enforcement rules, but a plan to move towards. Any other issues to include? **Quackenbush: Motion to draft a letter to the county, asking to consider dark skies issue. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Downing. All in favor – motion carries.**

a. Lind: if you think of other issues that should be added to the letter, let me know.

IV. Friends of KVR update – Miron: Quick rundown of earth day activities: roadside cleanup happening Saturday, 4/20. Poetry contest Saturday. Volunteer appreciation 6/14 at La Farge park. Garden tour – attempting to expand outside Viroqua, possibly include Friends garden at KVR. 4<sup>th</sup> of July hospitality event, for new members. Discussion of funds transfer to board. Not a formal stipulation, but Friends’ board would like something there isn’t money for otherwise. Matching grants are good. Bader: We are just waiting for a proposal, please let us give you some money! Lind: Sorry we’re so slow, we will vote next month.

V. Education and Tourism Committee Update – Schultz: We discussed the summer camp registration continues to fill, more than half of the spots are filled. Spring programs are continuing, school program schedule is filling for spring field trips. Backcountry Basics registration is open, new program for adults. Dam Challenge registration also open (much earlier than usual), and Dam Challenge planning has begun. Getting an earlier start this year to help lighten the load in the fall. Yocum: Earth day (poster on screen) is Monday 4/22, our celebration runs from Saturday to Saturday, 4/20-4/27. Stewardship events all week; including roadside cleanup which will be encouraged everywhere. Vernon County Waste is sponsoring a dumpster for it all week. Also many school groups coming throughout the week to collect garlic mustard. Saturday events include 10 Friends members will be here cleaning their roadside, poetry reading and awards, the poems are all posted in the lobby. An instructor will be leading a childrens’ craft, at 3:30 a guided hike to see spring ephemerals, 5pm zero-waste pot luck, at dusk a lighting tour to learn about dark sky-friendly lighting (led by Jason), 7:30 froggy starry walk and the inaugural ‘Stars and Sips’ program with telescopes and beverages on the deck. On 4/27 there is a Driftless Dialogue on Invasive Jumping Worms. Let’s hope the weather holds this week! Lind: we need as many people as possible pulling garlic mustard. Leis: Forest school already has been.

VI. Finance Committee- Leis: Budget Report: (Report on screen) Account 121 – revenue; that fund carries over. 121 had \$215,000 from last year, added \$30,000 so far this year. Doing well right now. 25% of fiscal year left, and the state accounting people are moving money around to balance the accounts. Account 161 – is lost at the end of fiscal year, expenses will be moved from 121 to 161 to use up. 121 will grow; not having executive director or property manager for part of year is where much of extra money came from; it will not grow as much in the future. 122: Gifts and Grants - \$45,000. 124: Law Enforcement, at \$14,000. May need to be added to, more expenses coming out that weren’t budgeted for (new cameras, increasing law enforcement). 161- can’t carry over, taxes come out of. Other expenses will be added. Overall, budget is doing ok, have things coming up like new roof. Lind: Shingles are failing, leaks inside for years, will need to do work under shingles. Easily spend \$400,000 on new roof. Leis: estimate started today. Downing: Can estimate shingles, not underlay. Lind: Get bids, but also get unit prices for other items that might be added (underlay materials). Downing: In order to bid job, that is necessary. Lind: Concealed conditions, asking unit prices gives a starting point. Downing: We are committed once the shingles are removed. Hoel: Minimum of 3 bids. Leis: bidding process changes if over \$100,000, have to pay someone else to get

bids. Hoping it comes under \$100,000. Lind: Just want to prepare board for it possibly being bad, it might not be. Downing: It's going to be bad; it's leaked since the beginning. Leis: The leaks have shifted. Downing: Continued leaks will have damaged the structures underneath. Sarnowski: Our church just did a metal roof with insulation, it was \$110,000. Downing: That makes me feel better. Hoel: is a metal roof a possibility? Lind: Maybe. Downing: Shingles give a 20 year warranty. Sarnowski: Went through Culpitt Roofing, 30 year warranty. Leis: Metal roof is more money, will affect snow fall and runoff. Downing: Will have to get other snow blocks. Lind: Worth considering if longer life for roof. Leis: Asphalt shingles have 30 year warranty – same length. Downing: If warranty is the same, then re-shingle. Would cost just as much. Lind: Solar doesn't work as well on a roof as on the ground, but could be used on the roof. Now is the time, if we want to consider it. Maxwell: Yes, can be done if you're already re-doing the roof. Lind: Ground mounting is more effective. Maxwell: And easier to fix. Lind: It's more moveable. Downing: Sun tracking? Lind: Very expensive.

VII. Land Management Committee – no update. Next meeting: May 14 at 5:30pm.

VIII. Law Enforcement Update – Leis: more patrols, more campsite usage, turkey season coming up. Learn to hunt event occurred on the reserve, no word on how it went. More enforcement will continue with nice weather, no major problems. Recovered backpacks that were stolen north of Minneapolis. Belonged to coin collector, found at landing 5. Probably someone fished out of river, most likely thrown in the river by the thieves. Hoel: How many enforcement officers do we have? Leis: Still 3, accepting applications. On the website for law enforcement jobs, there are pages of jobs hiring. Our position is posted in wisc.jobs, indeed, and other job sites as well.

IX. Other Issues/Future Agenda Items: Quackenbush: Found a morel and saw a turkey by Blackhawk Rock. Lind: Elections for officers at July meeting; I will not be accepting nominations for officer positions to focus on dark sky and endowment effort for state natural areas. Keep it in mind, we will need nominations for Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. Downing: Got it, no nominating Scott. Lind: Not going to stop working for the Reserve, just in a different capacity.

**Motion to adjourn: Quackenbush. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Maxwell. All in favor – meeting adjourned.**

Minutes recorded by M. Schultz 4/26/24