

**Kickapoo Reserve Management Board
Meeting Minutes for January 16, 2025**
Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center

Board members present: Travis Downing (Chair), Kjetil Garvin (via Zoom), Julie Hoel, Scott Lind, AJ Mann, Dave Maxwell, Reggie Nelson, Bill Quackenbush (via Zoom), Luke Zahm (via Zoom)

Board members absent: Joel Charles, Barb Sarnowski

Staff members present: Jason Leis, Jackie Yocum, Amy Dvorak, Amber Burch

Others in attendance: Lonnie Muller (Episcope)

Chair Downing read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

Downing called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. The Zoom recording of the meeting was accidentally muted until Downing called for approval of the minutes.

Lind made a motion to approve the agenda. Maxwell seconded the motion, and the motion carried with all ayes.

Leis confirmed the agenda was properly posted.

Public input: None.

Consent agenda:

The minutes from the December 19, 2024 meeting were not provided prior to the meeting. Therefore, no motion was made. The minutes will be reviewed for the next meeting.

Friends of KVR Update:

No representative from the Friends of Kickapoo Valley Reserve were in attendance.

Yocum attended the last Friends of KVR meeting, which concluded just prior to the start of this meeting. She provided a review of their meeting.

The Friends recapped their success at the Winter Festival on January 11, 2025. They do not have the totals yet. They discussed creating their own strategic planning and being involved in the Master Plan for the KVR so they can stay in line with the KVR plan. The Friends discussed their events coming up including the poetry program.

The meeting was temporarily paused while Dvorak and Mann worked to get Quackenbush on the Zoom meeting.

Placement of Land Acknowledgment plaque outside Visitor Center:

An example of the plaque was shown on the screen to all participants. The quoted cost from Krause Monument from Viroqua for the 24 x 20 bronze plaque is \$3,280.00. This does not include the stone. Leis explained Bill Krueger would give the KVR a free sandstone boulder, which is the native stone in the area. Krause Monument does not like to mount their signs to sandstone because when they drill into it, the stone will often break. Leis said another option would be to put the plaque on one of the stone pillars outside the Visitor Center. Lind offered to mount the plaque.

Hoel asked if the boulder with the plaque could be on the ground near the signage for the previous owners that is already outside the Visitor Center and explains the names on the wall. Mann suggested getting the plaque first then choosing where to put it. Leis explained we would need to decide where to place it first as the final location will determine the size of the plaque. Lind and Downing said they would be able to mount the plaque.

Garvin indicated the word Hooçak is spelled incorrectly. On the plaque, it is Hooçak, but it should be Hooçak with the tail under the A, not the C.

Hoel made a motion reorder the land acknowledgment plaque as presented. Lind seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Land transfer update:

Leis reviewed the current situation. He has been going back and forth with the Governor's office for many months about the Mississippi Valley Conservancy land trade. Yesterday, he received an email that indicated the trade would happen before today's meeting, but it did not happen.

The Lisney Road land trade is still being handled by the attorney. The surveys and appraisal have been done.

KVFS facility use agreement update:

The facility use agreement with the Kickapoo Valley Forest School was signed, and all discrepancies in the original one were changed. The original agreement included the library and garage as part of the campus, but that was not correct. Bathroom cleaning was added to the agreement. Payment for the first semester's rent has been paid. The agreement for the classroom in the Visitor Center and Prairie Springs 1 and 2 ends June 1, 2025, and the agreement for the parking area in the parking lot ends June 30, 2025.

Hoel asked if the agreement could be extended. Downing said if the KVFS wanted to extend it for the next school year, they would need to contact the KVR. Hoel clarified that we would consider extending the agreement if the KVFS asked. Downing said yes, it would be reviewed at that time.

Property manager position update:

Leis said the position description is complete, and the request for staff has been sent to the state. We are waiting on approval from the DOA fiscal department that we are allowed to hire the position. Once approval is received, the position will be posted that day or the next. Leis said Nathan from human resources thought it may be posted as early as tomorrow. Leis believes

interviews will occur in the middle of February with the hopes of having someone hired by March.

Lind asked about getting the position into protected retirement. Leis said we were waiting on an answer from the state, but the state said they would not give an answer until someone was in the position.

Update on Board per diem payments:

Payment to the Board members for their per diems has not been submitted for a while. Leis explained he has not done that before, so he is working on learning the process. He has reached out to the DOA fiscal department for instructions so he and Dvorak can learn how to do it. Downing said their biggest concern was the taxes showing the amount earned each year. Hoel asked what they are paid for. Downing and Leis explained it is for each Board or committee meeting attended (in person or on Zoom) plus mileage if attended in person. A discussion ensued.

Education and Tourism Committee:

Maxwell turned the discussion over to Burch.

Burch explained at the last meeting, the prior education portion of the Master Plan was reviewed. Many of the goals were completed. Some were completed but need to be revisited. The Ho Chunk language and Dark Sky Initiative were added. The committee incorporated their goals for the next Education Management Plan.

Lind asked if they were done with their portion of the plan. Maxwell explained they reviewed the goals and projects from the last plan to determine if they were completed. If the goal or project wasn't completed, they discussed whether it should be continued into the next plan. Burch said the next meeting will look at the next set of objectives.

The next Education and Tourism Committee meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2025, at 5:30 PM at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center.

Finance Committee:

Leis said there was no finance committee meeting since the December 2024 Board meeting.

The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2025, at 9:00 AM at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center.

Land Management Committee:

Downing said the last meeting was on Tuesday. The committee went through the previous land management plan deciding what should be continued. Each goal was reviewed. At the next meeting, the committee will set priorities. Downing said the meetings will occur monthly now.

Lind said the committee did not review the cultural resources management plan yet. Downing confirmed and told Quackenbush that they were waiting for his assistance, Quackenbush asked if there was a Word document version of the plan. He said he would like to be at the next meeting.

There was a discussion on the best way to review the cultural resources management plan. Lind suggested Quackenbush review the cultural resources management plan first then bring his changes to the committee. Quackenbush agreed. Downing asked him to send some information prior to the next meeting.

The next Land Management Committee meeting is scheduled for February 11, 2025, at 5:30 PM at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center.

Other issues:

Lind provided an update on the Kickapoo Dark Sky Initiative. It is now its own standalone 501(c)3 group. During Dark Sky Week, they will relaunch and send information to everyone who supported the initiative in the beginning. Lind shared his optimism that in 5-10 years, all existing light installations that are unshielded or are 4,000K are going to be looked at like, "What were we thinking," because the research continues to show how much it affects the environment and sleep. The manufacturing standards have changed letting companies create better light fixtures. Lind is presenting to multiple groups on the importance of dark skies and the changes in manufacturing standards. He offered to show everyone an example of the new standard after the meeting.

Hoel asked when the Dark Sky Week is scheduled. She asked if the KVR would do anything for it. Yocum said John Heasley does a lot of good Facebook posts about it, and we do some activities.

Hoel said it is hard to see the entrance to the KVR at night and on a cloudy day. She asked if we could put up reflectors. Lind said one of the lights failed on the entrance, but it would be better for the dark skies to have reflectors. Leis said the battery in the light is dead, and it just needs to be changed.

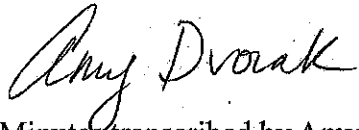
Yocum said Dark Sky Week is the same week as our Earth Week Celebration, which is April 21 to April 28, 2025. She said we have a lot planned for Earth Week already.

Yocum asked if the Board would like to view the Wisconsin Life episode on the Dark Sky Initiative at the KVR. It was shown on the screen for all in attendance.

Adjournment:

Maxwell made a motion and Hoel seconded to adjourn the meeting. It passed with all ayes. The meeting adjourned at 6:51 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 20, 2025, at 6:00 PM at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center.



Minutes transcribed by Amy Dvorak, 1/22/2025