

MINUTES  
KICKAPOO RESERVE MANAGEMENT BOARD  
KICKAPOO VALLEY RESERVE VISITOR CENTER  
March 30, 2023

- I. 5:33 PM Meeting called to order by Chair Scott Lind.
- Board members in attendance: Travis Downing, Julie Hoel, Scott Lind, AJ Mann, Dave Maxwell, Reggie Nelson, Barb Sarnowski, Dick Wallin, Luke Zahm. Via Zoom: Bill Quackenbush. Absent: Tina Brown. Staff in-person: Erica Cronk, Lynn Kronschnabel, Jason Leis, Christian Malanka, Maggie Manke, Jackie Yocum. Approximately fifteen members of the public present and on zoom.
  - Motion by Maxwell/Hoel to approve the agenda. Unanimous. Motion carries.
  - Compliance with open meeting law: Kronschnabel -Yes, agenda posted in compliance with State law.
  - Public Input: none.
- II. Action Agenda (Decision Items).
- Next steps and longer-term arrangement for Kickapoo Valley Forest School (KVFS)/Kickapoo Valley Reserve (KVR). Lind: KRMB supportive of KVFS – now what to do in terms of infrastructure and how is that implemented. Cost to complete feasibility study by Wieser Brothers approximately \$24,000 for both visitor center and Corps Rd sites. Discussion. Zahm: Ho-Chunk Nation denied building on KVR property in the past, however now discussing another building on property – space is already tight at visitor center. Lind: emphasize need to have a plan. Concerned KVR not recovering costs, specifically in terms of staff time. Hoel questions what went into staff time related to KVFS. Lind: asked staff to estimate time spent on KVFS tasks. Hoel: questions alternative plans being considered by KVFS and what happens next year. Downing: questions what happens if another classroom is built at visitor center and then KVFS goes away. A large third building turns the visitor center area into a school and not the KVR visitor center anymore. Lind: does not feel school should be divided – Corps Rd site makes most sense – already surveyed and disturbed area.
  - Zahm: some security concerns with school. Kronschnabel: school district looked in to outfitting doors with security doors – estimated cost \$75,000 – not feasible. Concerns with full-time school and a visitor center that is open to the public. Safety plan at La Farge Schools does not address this unique situation of KVFS being sited at KVR. KVR Enforcement Officer Malanka completed vulnerability assessment. Maxwell: school safer at visitor center than Corps Rd. Gustafson: KVFS staff have been trained in emergency procedures. Prairie Spring classroom #1 and #2 are not identified in their emergency plan – will work on this. Malanka: school less safe at visitor center. There needs to be a plan in place - school children are vulnerable here. Wallin: Corps Rd. seems more secure. Nelson: Town of Stark building next to KVR maintenance building – consider voting days and increased traffic. Sarnowski: questions Wieser Brothers timeline. Lind: in the next month – four to six weeks. Keith Ashley-Wright (zoom): Chairman of the Town of Stark. Very supportive of KVFS - Town of Stark willing to offer up space at Town Hall – not long term but a short-term solution. Lind: as a professional engineer doubts building would meet code for educational facility. Hoel: can KVR septic handle additional kids. Lind: not sure but this will be answered in feasibility study. Bader (Friends of KVR Treasurer): funds remaining from PS#2 and funds raised for a third building total approximately \$24,000. Zahm: questions what the KVR is comfortable with. Zahm/Maxwell motion to keep KVFS adjoined to KVR at Visitor Center location. Discussion. Quackenbush: KRMB has transformed as management board. Most if not all time is spent on KVFS topics. Reserve not designed to house a school. Ho-Chunk cannot place structures on their 1,200 acres within KVR. Need to lessen the impact. KVR is a gem for Wisconsin and local community – adversely affected by adding more people. KRMB pulling away from preserve and protect. Speaking as an environmental representative. **Motion withdrawn.**
  - Members of the audience input. Joseph Rogan: Owner of nearby cabins. This school has a major impact – need to get them away from the public. This is our place, and it has become the kids’ place. His business has brought tens of thousands of people as well hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars in tax money. For the last three years hasn’t sent people here anymore – he doesn’t want them to come here because there are kids coming out of the bathroom with their pants down. Let it be a visitor center and not a school. Emily Schendel: Unfair to say this is a place for adults when KVR has honed an education program that brings children here. Rogan’s comments frustrating because as a parent kids have always been here. KVR programs are expensive and unattainable for some but can send her child to KVFS for free. It feels okay to

invite all the kids to KVR that are paying to be here but not okay for the others. Her child is much more respectful since joining KVFS. Disrespectful to school staff to say the kids are running around wild when they are working very hard to make sure the kids are respectful. Cronk: visitors overwhelmingly love KVFS and the fact there is a school sited here. KVR has school groups throughout the year that are loud, noisy and at times take over the visitor center. David Jablonowski: lives just off the Reserve – has seen a fundamental change. This should not be a school campus. Biggest elephant in the room is safety. The school should be moved to Corps Rd. location. Shawn Donovan: lived here her whole life - was here before the Reserve was here - grandparents lost their land to the Dam project. Knows what it is like to have people move in on your territory. As the years have gone on – come to realize there are a lot of acres out there and room for everyone. The land has been fought over for 50 years. Understands safety concerns but that can be controlled. Moving the school to another location would be very costly. The community should be involved in this. The visitor center is a public building sponsored by the government – it does not belong to any one person. The KRMB needs to find room for the school.

- Zahm: should KRMB continue relationship beyond June 2025. Downing: should continue but school be sited at Corps Rd. site. AJ, Lind, Quackenbush agree. Brown, not in attendance, echoed that at the last KRMB meeting. Downing/Wallin motion feasibility study be done to evaluate sites on Corps Rd. and the visitor center location would not be considered for future structures for use by KVFS. **Motion withdrawn.** Downing/Wallin motion to relocate KVFS to Corps Rd. site. Yes – Lind, Wallin, Quackenbush, Mann, Downing; No – Maxwell, Nelson, Hoel, Zahm, Sarnowski. **Motion fails.** Wallin/Sarnowski motion to have feasibility study completed at both sites; visitor center and Corps Rd (4 separate sites) – not to exceed costs. Unanimous. **Motion carries.**
- Hoel: questions who pays for feasibility study. Kronschnabel: money fundraised by KVFS. Zahm: The mission of the Reserve is to preserve and protect – still ambiguity if this relationship is going to continue in the future. Hard time sacrificing finances of KVR without the KRMB being all in on the relationship between KVFS and KVR. Supports KVFS – thinks it is important for the community, the valley, and for our identity as a region going forward. However, having dealt with the inner workings for a year and a half, KRMB not well suited for allocation of time, financial considerations, and fundraising – still 8,600 acres to focus on – need to shift back to that place. Room for both entities to exist and thrive. Question if we are the right host for the school. Quackenbush: the original concept of KRMB and creation of the Reserve itself was to focus on educational component by hiring an educational outreach coordinator who would oversee people coming in groups and taking them out on the Reserve and provide educational tours. Never discussed turning the Reserve center into a school. Need to get back what were originally designed to do or change the KRMB and the Reserve. Losing site of our mission to protect and preserve. Lind: agrees with both Zahm and Quackenbush. A path forward is to make a clear distinction – we are a landlord for a separate entity. Would like to see the school hosted here but KVR not involved in day-to-day operations of school and not involve KRMB and KVR staff – other areas we need to focus on. Wallin: does not feel KVR should put money towards feasibility study. In general, KRMB is supportive of continuing relationship beyond 2025. Lind: feels school is good for community, good for school district, and good for KVR – also strongly feels visitor center is not the right place for it – not opposed to long term agreement. Maxwell: KVR will own these buildings and bear some responsibility in paying for the study. Zahm/Downing motion no KVR money used in execution of feasibility study. Unanimous. **Motion carries.**
- Gustafson (La Farge Schools Superintendent): The Friends of KVR are holding the funds that were fundraised – would like members of Governance Council to be present for finance meetings. Not sure all remaining donations given for KVFS should be used on study. If in the end, it turns out not to be feasible, all money would be spent. Understand the need for study but concerned for potential if it is not feasible. Would like KVFS to have a say in how those funds are spent.
- Lind: next step Finance Committee will discuss and provide recommendation for how study gets paid for without using KVR funds.

III. Next KRMB meeting April 20, 2023. Wallin/Maxwell motion to adjourn, motion carries. Meeting adjourned 7:37 PM.

Recorded by: Erica Cronk