

Kickapoo Reserve Management Board
Meeting Minutes for October 24, 2024
Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center

In Person Attendance: Travis Downing, Scott Lind, Reggie Nelson, Luke Zahm, Julie Hoel

On Zoom Attendance: Barb Sarnowski, Joel Charles, Dave Maxwell, AJ Mann, Kjetil Garvin

Staff in Person: Jason Leis, Jackie Yocum, Amy Dvorak

Audience: Margaret Farley, Lonnie Muller (Episcope)

I. Open Session – Call to Order by Chair Travis Downing at 6:00 pm

- Leis introduced Amy Dvorak, the new Executive Assistant. All board members in attendance introduced themselves.
- Approval of agenda: Downing requested to add the Friends of Kickapoo Valley Reserve report to the agenda. Lind made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition. Hoel seconded the motion, and the motion carried with all ayes.
- Land Acknowledgement Statement – Read by Downing
- Public posting compliance: Leis confirmed the agenda was properly posted.
- Public input: No requests.

Margaret Farley provided an update on the Friends of Kickapoo Valley Reserve. They are working on all future events and working on keeping the books straight. Yocum provided the names of the new officers and new members. The president is Ashley Baker, the vice-president is Katee Heisel, the secretary is Beth Thayer, and the treasurer is Marcia Bader. The new board members are Karen Theis and Katee Heisel.

II. Consent Agenda

The minutes from the August 15, 2024 meeting were provided. Lind motioned to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Downing, and the motion passed with all ayes.

Zahm explained he would be abstaining from voting during meetings until his reappointment to the Kickapoo Reserve Management Board is approved by the Governor's office.

III. Decision Items

- Recommendation from Land Management to relocate Campsite V
A map of the current and potentially future locations of Campsite V was provided. Leis explained this is a river access site. The existing site is on top of a rock overlooking the river. Currently, patrons must climb a steep hill to get to the campsite, and it goes through a sensitive area. It is out of the floodplain. People with mobility issues are camping down by the river because of the steep climb. The proposed campsite would be near Winchell Valley Road and would be where State Road 131 used to be.

Zahm asked if there were any worries about the site being vulnerable to high water activity. Leis said prior floods did not make it to the proposed site. Hoel asked if there was a stream near the site. Leis said it is a small spring.

There was a discussion on how to get to the site from the river, which would be to take it out by the bridge then walk to the site. Zahm said it is currently a tough campsite to access. Leis said the relocated site would also be vehicle accessible. Downing said the distance from the river wouldn't be any more than it is now, but it would be easier. Leis explained an archaeological survey would need to be completed. Zahm said paddlers would appreciate the new site.

Hoel made a motion to move Campsite V as suggested as long as the archaeological study has been completed. Nelson seconded, and the motion passed with all ayes.

- Recommendation from Land Management to keep fees the same for 2025 and Recommendation from Education and Tourism Committee to keep fees the same for 2025

Downing shared a summary of the discussion from the Land Management Committee regarding fees. He said they did not feel it was worth increasing the fees. Leis explained the Education and Tourism Committee made the same recommendation. Hoel said the Education and Tourism Committee did not talk about class fees. It was explained this was only for building and use fees. Hoel said the cost per student for a school group should be discussed in the future.

Downing motioned to keep the fees the same in 2025 at the request of the Land Management and Education and Tourism Committees. Sarnowski seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

IV. Discussion Items

- Budget report

Leis said we got a budget report from the state; however, the budget for fiscal year 2025 has not been loaded into the system. The state finalized the budget from fiscal year 2024, and there is an approximately \$300,000 budget surplus. This will be used to pay for the new roof and new heat pumps, which are estimated to cost \$100,000 each. Downing and Lind discussed the cost of the roof. Leis said the roof will likely be replaced in the spring. The surplus comes from vacant positions and an increase in revenue from things like camping. Leis said it will be nice to have the excess money in the event of a flood.

- Staffing update

The Executive Assistant was hired.

Education Coordinator interviews were conducted. Background checks are being done.

Leis has been working with human resources in Madison to get the job posting completed for the Property Manager position. The state has a hiring deadline of December 2, 2024. This position likely won't be filled until the beginning of 2025.

- Land Trade update

The land trade with the Mississippi Valley Conservancy is sitting at the Governor's office. This is for the land between Bridges 5 and 6. It is approximately 16 acres.

Regarding the Lisney Road land trade, we got information back from the appraisal that what we are getting is more than what we're giving up. All information has been given to the attorneys.

- Law enforcement update

Law enforcement presence has increased due to the more popular hunting seasons starting. Pheasant season started, so there are a lot more people on the Reserve. We are trying to put more enforcement on especially during the weekends. Leis, Chris Malanka, and Ken Frye are working. Leis received an applicant for the open law enforcement officer position.

V. Education and Tourism

Maxwell was unable to attend the Education and Tourism meeting, so Sarnowski provided a summary of the last meeting. They discussed the Education Coordinator interviews as well as Rose, who is LTE for 20 hours per week to help with organization. The committee discussed keeping the fees the same for next year. The Dam Challenge was reviewed. There were 210 people, the great weather was helpful, and the financials seem to be fine. Winter Festival will be January 11, 2025. The committee talked about getting things going for the 25th anniversary and doing events all year with June 7, 2025 being the special event and rededication.

The next Education and Tourism Committee meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2024, at 5:30 PM at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center.

VI. Finance Committee

Lind provided a summary of the last meeting. The committee went through the budget surplus and that it makes sense to apply those funds to the roof and heat pump replacements. Lind indicated he would like to see some of the surplus money also be used for grant matches since we got a donation from the Friends of Kickapoo Valley Reserve targeting grant matches and because there are many grant opportunities available now.

The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2024, at 9:00 AM at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center.

VII. Land Management Committee

Downing provided an update of the last meeting. The committee discussed everything we talked about during this meeting except some boards are getting bad on some bridges on Old 131. They will replace single boards as necessary. The bridges don't need to be redecked. The committee also talked about the land trade situation, campsite V relocation, fees, staffing update, and law enforcement update.

The next Land Management Committee meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2024, at 5:30 PM at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center.

VIII. Other Issues

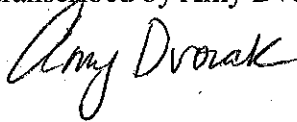
Hoel asked for Marcy West's presentation of her new book, *Protecting Paradise in the Driftless*, to be put on the calendar. The date is November 9, 2024.

XI. Adjournment

Lind made a motion and Nelson seconded to adjourn the meeting. It passed with all ayes. The meeting adjourned at 6:31 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 21, 2024, at 6:00 PM at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center.

Minutes transcribed by Amy Dvorak, 10/25/2024

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Dvorak".