

Kickapoo Reserve Management Board
Meeting Minutes for May 21, 2026
Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center

Board members present: Travis Downing (Chair), Dan Catherman (via Zoom), Scott Lind, Reggie Nelson (via Zoom), Bill Quackenbush (via Zoom), Kelly Rueckheim, Damian Thundercloud, Lyndsey Winchel, Luke Zahm (via Zoom)

Board members absent: Kjetil Garvin, Barb Sarnowski

Staff members present: Jason Leis, Amy Dvorak, Jackie Leis, Jesse Haney, Danae Gardner

Others in attendance: Kristina Ralph, Jonel Kiesau (via Zoom)

Chair Downing called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Downing read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

Lind made a motion to approve the agenda, and Thundercloud seconded. The motion passed with all ayes.

Leis confirmed the agenda was properly posted.

Thundercloud motioned to approve the minutes from the April 2026 regular and special meetings. Rueckheim seconded the motion, and it passed with all ayes.

Chairperson and/or Executive Director report:

Leis said we received the Ditch Witch. The Friends of KVR pledged \$20,000 toward the purchase of it. Our portion was \$19,000. He thanked the Friends of KVR for their generosity.

Budget Report:

The KRMB Revenue Expense Summary was shared on the screen. The 12100 appropriation has a healthy balance. The shortfall in the 12400 appropriation will come out of this account. There was \$90,000 in the 12200 gifts and grants appropriation. We will be about \$9,500 over budget in the 12400 appropriation.

Lind asked for an update on the roofing project. Leis said a state employee is coming next week to review the project. The state employee believes the roof may need to be redesigned due to some ventilation issues.

Friends of KVR Update:

No representative was in attendance.

Public appearances:

None.

Revisiting the future of the outdoor classrooms:

Thundercloud said he hasn't received a letter back from legal yet. There was no discussion on the buildings.

Hiring update:

We are in the process of hiring for the education coordinator. Danae Gardner is back for the summer as the education intern. A field crew employee will be returning next week. There have been a few interviews for additional field crew members.

Education and Tourism Committee:

There was no update.

The next Education and Tourism Committee meeting is scheduled for June 11, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center.

Finance Committee:

There was no update.

The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for June 1, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center.

Land Management Committee:

Ryan Latterly came to the last meeting. He runs an outfitter business that takes people out hunting, fishing, and cycling. It is also advertised as archaeological tours, but none have occurred on the Reserve. Downing said the land management committee will likely draft a policy on doing archaeological tours on the Reserve.

All campsites have been full. Trails opened to horses and bikes on May 1, 2026. There has been a lot of tree clearing from past storms. Downing said anyone who wants to volunteer to pull garlic mustard is invited. The new pump for the garage has been ordered.

The next Land Management Committee meeting is scheduled for July 7, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center.

Board Member Matters:

Lind said the first Natural Resources Foundation dark sky tour occurred last weekend. There were 16 people. Lind is working with the Ho-Chunk Nation on street lighting. He is working with other cities on 2200 kelvin streetlights. He will install controls to the lights at the Visitor Center.

The Friends of KVR volunteer appreciation event is Friday, June 12 from 4-6 p.m. at the Visitor Center. Lind said the board needs to have a presence there to show appreciation.

Request for future agenda topics:

The next meeting is a field trip and election of officers. Downing asked for suggestions on where to go for the meeting. It was decided on a tour of the outdoor classrooms and a hike to the new

tree planting on Jug Creek Trail. Zahm asked to visit the Hay Valley prairie that was visited last year as well. Leis will invite Brandon Bleuer or Randy Poelma with the Ho-Chunk Nation to present, per Quackenbush's suggestion.

Closed session:

Lind made a motion to convene in closed session pursuant to Wis. Stat. 19.185(1)(c): Considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility. The purpose is for discussion of personnel and employment issues. Winchel seconded the motion, and the motion passed with all ayes. The meeting was convened into closed session. All members of the public and non-Board members left the room and Zoom.

Lind made a motion to reconvene into open session, and Thundercloud seconded. The motion passed with all ayes.

Adjournment:

Rueckheim made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Thundercloud seconded, and it passed unanimously with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center.

Minutes transcribed by Amy Dvorak, Executive Assistant