

Lakeshore Nature Preserve Committee

Tuesday February 11, 2014

2:15-3:45PM

Memorial Union TITU

APPROVED MINUTES

Present:

Mike Amato, Gary Brown, Jacob Hahn, Rhonda James, Gisela Kutzbach, Ken Raffa, Sissel Schroeder, Phil Townsend, Alan Turnquist, Mattie Urrutia, Chloe Wardropper

Also Present:

Kris Ackerbauer (FPM), Janet Batzli (Biocore), Cathie Bruner (Preserve), Ann Burgess (Friends), Kennedy Gilchrist (Friends), Adam Gundlach (Preserve), Galen Hasler (Friends), Seth McGee (Biocore), Marcia Schmidt (Friends), Bryn Sriver (Preserve), Will Waller (Friends)

Minutes:

Townsend moved to approve the minutes from the November 21, 2013 meeting. Amato seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Public Comment Period for Items not on the Agenda:

At the last meeting Ken Raffa offered to obtain clarification on UW's policy regarding pedestrians carrying guns on campus, specifically whether it is legal to park in a UW lot and carry a gun along the trail to Picnic Point. He contacted Officer Radtke who told him, "...The only people that can open carry on UW lands is law enforcement. You can also not carry concealed on UW property." Brown said that his understanding of the policy was different. [The day after the meeting he got clarification from both Officer Radtke and Assistant Chief Bridges that open carry is only allowed by law enforcement officials, and concealed carry is only allowed for someone with a permit.]

Biocore presentation (Janet Batzli)

The goal of the Biocore Prairie is to establish tallgrass prairie for teaching and research opportunities for undergraduate students. Biocore works closely with the Preserve and collaborates with the Biocore Bird Banding Station, other researchers and the public. Biocore

uses summer interns led by Seth McGee, Biocore Laboratory Manager, to manage weeds and encourage growth of native plant species.

Two areas have not yet been planted—the south central area (2 acres) and the west inset (0.5 acres) (see map on *Biocore Prairie Restoration Project Report*). They want these future plantings to diversify the plant species that students can study.

The south central area was used as a dump site for biomass from Lake Mendota. The west inset area was once part of Eagle Heights Community Gardens.

Planting preparations in these two areas have focused on ameliorating nutrients so that the future prairies sustain prairie species not weeds. The management strategy for these areas has been reverse fertilization. They see three ways to do this:

- 1) Nitrogen immobilization using a carbon amendment (see *Comparison of soil nitrogen levels in north and south central section of Biocore Prairie—2003*).
- 2) Using a cover crop and taking the nutrients off with harvest. Batzli said they have received help from Tom Wright and the West Madison Agricultural Research Station with planting and harvesting oats to try to remove nutrients. Batzli says this is costly and they are looking for suggestions on how to continue doing this.
- 3) Remove the top 12-14 inches of top soil to remove excess nutrients (in small experimental plots?). This method was used successfully in the south east area of the prairie where a dirt pile was removed prior to planting.

Batzli said she is looking to this committee and other land managers for input.

Discussion continued with questions/suggestion for getting rid of excess nutrients: burning versus harvesting, not plowing the field to prevent future weed invasions, and flooding the field to leach out nitrate. There was also concern over the amount of top soil that would have to be taken off and the cost.

Schroeder asked if Biocore had the resources to carry out the practices they are considering. Batzli said it depends on whether they can partner with others who can provide services at reasonable costs. It cost \$950 to remove the biomass in the south central area last year; they are waiting to see if the West Madison Agricultural Research Station is going to forgive or reduce the cost. The funds they have for supplies and expenses are minimal. The number of student they hire each summer to work in the prairie depends on how much money is leftover from the Biocore Program which takes priority. Batzli said they have enough money to do one more round of planting and removing oats in 2014.

Turnquist asked what the new areas would do for Biocore programmatically. Batzli said they could broaden the types of plant communities and organisms depending on those communities for study—specifically wet-mesic prairie in the south central area. Turnquist pointed out that

removing the soil in that area would change the plant community. McGee said the new techniques would increase the possible questions that students could ask.

Waller said it might make more sense to repurpose land to some other use.

Batzli said Biocore Prairie was never intended to be only for Biocore. It's for the entire UW community and public enjoyment. Many people are using it and want it to be in prairie.

Schroeder said the committee will continue the discussion at a future meeting.

Project Updates

1) Rec Sports Master Plan (Gary Brown)

There was a meeting about the Rec Sports Master Plan at the Shorewood Hills Village Hall on January 28 that was attended by more than 100 people. The major concerns were lighting, noise, and traffic.

Students will vote on the referendum March 3-5 which asks students to fund the SERF, the Nat, and playing fields east and west of the Nat. The University Bay Fields are not part of the student referendum since they will not be student funded.

The UW will start an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process for all open fields since there has been so much concern about the possible environmental impacts. It may take 2-3 months to get a consultant on-board to do the EIA. There will not be any info before the student referendum but there should be a draft by the end of the semester.

Gisela asked how suggestions on the master plan will be incorporated into the final plan. Brown said that no official body will approve the master plan document; it's a sub campus master plan. The plan will continue to be tweaked and alternatives will be evaluated in the EIA.

Brown reminded the committee that the Rec Sports Master Plan is online if they haven't seen it.

2) Temporary art proposal (Gary Brown)

The Preserve has received a proposal from an art sculpture class to temporarily install student sculptures in the Preserve. Staff has decided to limit the installations to lawn areas within 5 feet of the main Picnic Point path. The art can be displayed for a maximum of 2 weeks.

Last year an MFA student installed some artwork in the Preserve for a final project class critique.

Brown explained that we are being more deliberate about planning and permitting for temporary art exhibits to ensure safety of people and the resource including how things can be attached, staking, lighting, sound etc. before approval.

3) Drake fox-coyote research (Cathie Bruner)

David Drake and his student have captured and collared 2 coyotes. They set cable traps for fox in Muir Woods and tried using box traps around a fox den near Van Hise but so far without success.

4) Eagle Heights Woods implementation (Adam Gundlach)

Invasive woody shrubs in the Eagle Heights Woods mounds zone have been cut and treated. About half of the cut brush still needs to be picked up. We hope to get a chipper up to the top of the hill before the ground thaws to chip the brush for use on the trails.

5) Volunteer Program (Bryn Scriver)

Drop-in volunteer workparty dates and times have been set through August. We had 5 volunteers who braved the cold last weekend to remove buckthorn and honeysuckle at Frautschi Point, and we have another opportunity for volunteers to work on Picnic Point this Sunday from 1-3pm.

Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve report (Gisela Kutzbach)

The Friends Board approved their 2014 budget. They raise money through donations, most of which is used to fund the summer interns, planting and other projects in the Preserve. Some additional money goes into education and outreach activities. As much money as possible goes directly into supporting the Preserve.

The Friends have worked with Preserve staff to plan three Friends workdays including a garlic mustard fundraiser. They will also offer 10 field trips this spring and summer which are open to the public.

The Friends have also created an ad hoc committee to consider the Rec Sports Master Plan. Dave Mickelson will head the committee and John Magnuson will serve on it. They are still looking for other people to serve on the committee.

Townsend pointed out that the University Bay Fields depend on private funding and that the committee should be thinking about something that will likely happen 10 years out and not tomorrow.

ACTION ITEM: Approval of FY14 Budget & Work Plan documents (Gary Brown)

Brown introduced the final drafts of three budget documents. No changes had been made to the 2014 work plan since the committee saw it at their last meeting. In the operating budget and capital budget “Audubon prairie partners” was changed to “prairie partners” at the request of the Friends of the Preserve who fund the interns at the Preserve.

Townsend moved and Schroeder seconded a motion to approve the budget and work plan; the motion passed unanimously.

Subcommittee Reports and Discussion

1) Information Dissemination /Education (Mike Amato)

The education subcommittee sent a survey last semester to instructors who have used the Preserve for undergraduate teaching and research. They asked how the instructors used the Preserve, what barriers they encountered, and what the committee could do to facilitate or assist their educational or research needs. No barriers were identified; some respondents went on at length to say how helpful the staff are. Instructors did want to see more support for students and wanted collected data to be made publicly available.

Amato presented a draft *Student Engagement Grant* proposal. Students or instructors could apply for a small grant up to \$1000 to cover the cost of supplies or student stipends. Grants would be funded by the Academic Fund which the committee has spending authority over. This endowment accrues about \$3300 a year.

A motion was made to bring the *Student Engagement Grant* proposal to the committee for action.

It was decided that the education subcommittee would take the lead on reviewing the proposals and bring their decisions to the full committee. It was also decided that the committee does not need to spend all the available money every year. Research results should be presented publicly. Data should be submitted to the Preserve. A thank you letter should be sent to the Academic fund donors (Bob Goodman and Henry Hart) including a description of how they used the funds.

It was decided to advertise the request for proposals now with an April deadline. Schroeder suggested that if not all the money is spent we could also do a fall submission.

A motion was made to approve the *Student Engagement Grant* proposal. The motion passed.

2) Communications /Archives

No report

3) Planning & Implementation

No report

4) Development (Gary Brown)

Brown drafted a white paper and presented it to Bill Elvey and Darrel Bazzel to recommend the creation of a \$3 million dollar endowment as part of the next UW Capital Campaign. It is hoped that the endowment would generate enough income each year to cover the on-going maintenance of the Preserve which is currently spent out of the Stewardship account. We are down to just enough money to cover 2.5 to 3 years of stewardship costs. Brown hopes we'll have an endowment by the time the fund runs out; he thinks the UW would extend the Preserve some bridge funds if necessary. The UW has really stepped over the last couple years by covering staff costs which has allowed the Preserve to stretch its gift funds.

Other Topics

Jacob Hahn announced a new educational focus for Outdoor UW the Union's new umbrella brand that covers Hoofers and Outdoor rentals. He has been working with Preserve staff to develop an outdoor themed series in the Preserve including a weekly "Paddle with a Prof" and plant identification courses. They are trying to get people who come to their new space on the Memorial Union Terrace to get out into the Preserve. Some ideas include binocular and field guide rentals. He would like to hear from committee members if they have other ideas for educational or rental offerings.

A motion was made to adjourn. The motion was moved by Townsend and seconded by Raffa.

Adjournment

Submitted by Bryn Scriver