Asylum Lake Policy & Management Council Meeting
Thursday 13 October 2005
7:00 p.m.
Gibbs House
4503 Parkview Avenue

" The recorded comments below are expressions of council members and are not approved policy until voted on. The statements were not recorded verbatim and cannot be used as quotes. "

AGENDA:

I. Call to Order
   Meeting was called to order at 7:04p.m.

II. Roll Call
   a. Sign-In Roster
      Council Members Present: Paul MacNellis, Duane Hampton, Charles Ide, Michael Nassaney, Patricia Klein, Ann Paulson, Tim Holysz, Cam Vossen, Steve Kohler
      Guests Present: Cari DeLong, Kevin Smith, Kay Chase, Sherry Sims

III. Adoption of Agenda
   Ann Paulson moved to adopt the October 13, 2005 agenda. Steve Kohler seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes
   a. June 09, 2005 Meeting Minutes
      Michael Nassaney moved to approve the June 09, 2005 meeting minutes. Ann Paulson seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

   b. August 11, 2005 Meeting Minutes
      Michael Nassaney moved to approve the August 11, 2005 meeting minutes. Ann Paulson seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

V. Old Business
   a. Well Capping Project Update
      Duane Hampton, Kevin Smith
      - Kevin Smith and Ben Offerink finished capping 35 wells and abandoning 26 wells.
      - Papers listing the abandonment of the wells were filled out and filed with the county.
      - Pictures were taken and shown to the council.
      - All wells have been GPS surveyed so they can be found again.
      - There are 3 more wells to be capped.
      - The project should be completed on Tues. Oct 18, 2005.
      - If the wells are capped, they can be used again.
      - The abandon wells are sealed.
      - All wells, even capped wells, were cut flush to the ground.
      - Many of the wells were pulled out of the ground.
      - Duane Hampton was very pleased with the work done by these two students.
b. Maintenance Spending
Tim Holysz

- Tim passed out papers describing Asylum Lake maintenance done by WMU Landscape Services.
- Work orders were explained to the Council. Council will receive work orders from now on.
- A quarterly report was passed out and explained. The total came to 77 labor hours at an hourly rate of 38.94 equals a total of 2,998.34 dollars.
- There was question as to whether these amounts were keeping within the budget. Yes they are. Maintenance will taper off soon until snow removal begins.
- This total amount will be subtracted from the Asylum Lake fund.
- There was a request to produce a copy of the funds from the Foundation with the amount subtracted. This can be done.
- The list given to the Council includes the most prevalent tasks, however it is not comprehensive.
- There was question as to what triggers maintenance on the preserve. Currently, Asylum Lake maintenance is performed following maintenance done on WMU’s campus. Landscape Services also receives phone calls and emails requesting maintenance tasks.
- There was suggestion that the Council needs to determine what constitutes reasonable maintenance at the property. This should be discussed further.
- Removal of snow from the sidewalks is mandatory by the city and the cost does not come out of the Asylum Lake funds.
- There was general agreement that salt should not be used at the property.
- Trails within the preserve are not plowed—only sidewalks and parking areas.
- There was question as to how Asylum Lake property is kept separate from other WMU property as far as cost. Landscape employees record the amount of time spent at the property. Very reliable employees. System has been in place for a long time.
- Duane Hampton motioned to support the routine removal of x amount of snow from the preserve. Ann Paulson seconded. Motion was not voted on.
- There was general agreement that maintenance should be left up to the best judgment of Landscape Services for now. The Council can review work orders and make changes if necessary in the future.
- It was mentioned that Landscape Services has had to clear the steps from the Winchell entrance. They are legally bound to do this. There was suggestion that this entrance should be redesigned in the management plan.

VI. New Business

a. Preserve Management Plan Progress
Paul MacNellis

- Information including a map, definitions of ecosystems, conservation targets, and a management plan from the Kalamazoo Nature Center was handed out.
- The management plan is in the beginning stages. The committee has started by identifying and drawing boundaries of management areas.
- Will not be making huge changes to the landscape—most areas are already present.
- One change will be to take the old field and incorporate it into the existing features. It will become part of forest 1 and also a savannah.
- The Kalamazoo Nature Center management plan was followed as an example.
- The information given to the Council was an incomplete draft. The purpose was to get input from the Council. The plan will be seen by the Council again.
- There was question as to what defines a management area. A defined feature according to the natural features inventory.
The point was made that this preserve is not exclusively a nature preserve but also has cultural importance that needs to be addressed.

There was question as to whether the management committee will include other components in their plan other than natural features. Yes, one of the conservation targets includes cultural uses.

There was suggestion that the management recommendations included in the archeological assessment of Asylum Lake be incorporated into the plan.

Since this property is relatively small, the Council will have to manage these ecosystems. Management goals will have to be actively pursued.

The Council has the funds to carry out a management plan on this property.

There was suggestion that the management plan committee educate the council on relevant topics including controversies. The committee will do so.

There was suggestion that the Council read materials already available to them such as the KNC natural inventories and the archeological assessment.

It was stated that Cari DeLong will be part of the committee and will be spending more time on the management plan. She will be getting in touch with contacts and resources.

It was suggested that the Council should know what the old field property was previously in order to better determine what it should be in the future.

The old field was turned into forest and savannah in order to increase the area of prairie and also add a connector to the two forest areas. It is a good transition area.

Handicap accessibility will be an issue addressed by the management committee.

There was comment that the trail system will be very important as far as cultural and natural features.

These topics will be discussed again in the future.

b. Use of Preserve by ROTC
Pat Klein

Pat Klein wanted to discuss whether ROTC activities are within Asylum Lake documents. A document containing sentences copied from AL documents that Pat believed were incompatible with the ROTC activities was passed out.

ROTC had recently used the property for training purposes.

ROTC is a class at WMU.

There was question as to whether they used vehicles on the property. No, they didn’t have a key to the gate.

There was question as to how many keys to the property are available. None available. Geosciences has 2 keys, and Landscape Services supervisors have keys.

There was a report in the Kalamazoo Gazette about the ROTC activities on the property. Paula Davis wrote the story. One of the gazette editors came across an ROTC student with a weapon on the property and was angry. Story was rather benign. The students were using the property for patrolling skills.

Paul did not know about it beforehand. They are required to notify the campus police.

It was stated that the police are not aware of the protocol for use of the property.

There was comment that their activities were not changing the landscape.

There was question as to whether the weapons were real. They are not, but they look real.

It was stated that they should be allowed since a major purpose for the preserve is for education.

There was comment that even if an elementary class wanted to visit the property they should have to fill out a form for the first visit to make sure their activities are consistent with the Conservation Restrictions.

There was concern that requiring every group visiting the property to fill out a protocol would be unnecessary and too restrictive.
It was stated that it would be important, even for just a visiting elementary class, for the Council to know what they will be doing at the property.

There was comment that this was the reason the Council was set up.

It was suggested that the topic of dogs on leashes should be discussed in the future.

There was question as to where the Council is supposed to draw the line as far as who needs to fill out a protocol to use the property.

There was suggestion that distinctions should be drawn between activities.

There was comment that the use of weapons is a concern.

It was stated that the ROTC usually performs at Fort Custer. This is not a routine.

There was question as to whether the management plan would address these issues. No.

There was general consensus that the Council would like to know the activities taking place at Asylum Lake.

There was suggestion that in order to keep track of activities a form should be posted on the web for visitors to fill out. This form should be publicized. There was general agreement from the Council.

Paul will talk to the ROTC and request that they fill out a protocol.

There was suggestion that general rules should be posted on the website.

There was suggestion that if there are going to be activities that might be alarming to the public there should be some type of notice posted at the property to inform the public. This also may be good publicity. There was general agreement from the Council.

There was question as to whether campus police patrols the property. No, but they will answer to a call.

VII. Project/Special Committee Reports
   a. Research/Education Committee
      Committee has not received any proposals.

   b. Operations Committee
      Committee has not met.

VIII. Public Comments
      None.

IX. Council/Staff Comments
   a. Discuss Meeting Schedule
      It was agreed that the Council will meet on the second Thursday of each month.

X. Adjournment
   Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.