

Wood County Wildlife Area Citizens' Advisory Board (WCWA CAB)

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: October 14, 2024 5:30pm

Meeting Location: Sandhill Wildlife Area Outdoor Skills Facility, Babcock, WI

Present:

- Sophie Figueroa (Member)
- Ryan Haffele (WI DNR)
- Larry Isensee (Member)
- Leo Kedrowski (Member)
- Scott McAuley (Member)
- Curt Pluke (Member)
- Dennis Polach (Wood County Board Appointee)
- Fritz Schubert (Wood County Forest Administrator)
- Dale Weis (Chair)
- Jim Winkler (Vice Chair)
- Mike Wipfli (Member)

Absent:

- Vacant (Dawn Schmutzer; Secretary)

Agenda & Minutes:

1. Call meeting to order

- Meeting called to order by Weis at 5:32pm.

2. Declaration of Quorum

- Quorum declared by Weis.

3. Welcome New Member

- Welcome to Sophie Figueroa! She is replacing Nathan Voit.

4. Approve minutes of July 15, 2024 meeting

- **MOTION** made by McAuley to Approve the 7/15/24 Minutes; seconded by Winkler. No discussion. Unanimous vote in favor; **MOTION CARRIED.**

5. Correspondence

- No correspondence received.

6. Elect Officers

- Nomination made for Isensee as Secretary. **MOTION** made by Pluke to Elect Isensee as Secretary; seconded by McAuley. No discussion. Unanimous vote in favor; **MOTION CARRIED**.
 - Weis delivered to Isensee the Secretary briefcase.
- Nomination made for Winkler as Vice Chair. **MOTION** made by Weis to Elect Winkler as Vice Chair; seconded by Pluke. No discussion. Unanimous vote in favor; **MOTION CARRIED**.
- Nomination made for Weis as Chair. **MOTION** made by Winkler to Elect Weis as Chair; seconded by Pluke. No discussion. Unanimous vote in favor; **MOTION CARRIED**.

7. Public Comments

- No public comments.

8. Mission and Goals Discussion

- Isensee distributed and presented a WCWA CAB North Star proposal document (attached). The purpose of the North Star is not to be bylaws or binding, but rather guide future decision making by the CAB.
- **MOTION** made by Isensee to Approve the WCWA CAB North Star Document as Presented; seconded by McAuley.
- Discussion:
 - Haffele and Schubert noted that there are errors on the WCWA and CAB slides.
 - **ACTION:** Haffele and Schubert to send corrections to Isensee.
 - Haffele made the following comments:
 - There are parcels in the Wood County Wildlife Area that are not part of the WI DNR lease and management of these is not within the scope of the WCWA CAB.
 - DNR priorities for management of the WCWA are as follows:
 1. Terms of the WI DNR / Wood County lease.
 2. The DNR Management Master Plan.
 3. Funding Requirements and Forest Certification Requirements.
 - Several members questioned if there is redundancy between the WCWA Rules of Order and this North Star document. Weis provided Isensee with a copy of the Rules of Order from approximately 1992.
 - **ACTION:** Schubert and Weis to provide Isensee with the most recent copy of the Rules of Order.
 - Several members noted that the WCWA CAB's first responsibility is to the Wood County Board and feedback should be addressed there first.
 - Several members expressed concern that the listed priorities are too restrictive and/or may be construed as commitment to accomplish them.
- **MOTION WITHDRAWN** by Isensee. He will incorporate all feedback, update the document, and re-present it at the next meeting.

9. Sandhill – Meadow Valley - Wood County Updates

- Haffele provided the following update:
 - \$5,000 (first half of the 2024 allotment) is earmarked for the Stuart Marsh repair. This work will start in November or December. This portion of the allotment will get used this year.
 - \$5,000 (second half of the 2024 allotment) is earmarked for double tubes on South Bluff. This will not happen this year as the bids came back much higher than expected.
 - There are three alternative projects for the unused portion of the allotment:
 1. Brush removal from the Wood County barrens. This removes biomass from the barrens so they can be managed with burns.
 2. Buckthorn removal on the west fence.
 3. Mowing dikes
 - **MOTION** made by Pluke to Reallocate \$5,000 of the 2024 Allotment from Double Tubes on South Bluff to Brush Removal from the Wood County Barrens; seconded by Winkler. No discussion. Unanimous vote in favor; **MOTION CARRIED**.
 - First Impoundment drawdown continues in hope for good weather conditions for tree removal this winter.
 - The WI DNR is seeking internal approval to apply for a grant with the Nature Conservancy and may request that the WCWA CAB apply its 2025 allocation towards matching funds for this grant. There are 75-85 acres within the WCWA that benefit from this grant.
 - **ACTION:** This will be included on the agenda for next meeting.

10. 2025 Allotment

- Haffele made the following recommendations for the 2025 allotment (\$10,000):
 - 27 acres of old aspen removal. This improves grouse habitat as they need young (< 25 year) forest to thrive.
 - Brush removal from barrens. This improves grassland development which is good for turkey habitat.
 - 3rd and 4th Impoundment tree removal. Removal of the trees opens the landscape for better waterfowl production.

11. Member Matters

- McAuley noted that the Wisconsin Trappers Association will become a sponsor of the WCWA and may do its own projects.

12. Set next meeting date

- Next meeting is set for Monday, February 10, 2025, at 5:30pm at Sandhill Wildlife Area Outdoor Skills Facility, Babcock, WI.
 - **ACTION:** Haffele to confirm that Zak Knab is available at that time.

13. Adjourn

- **MOTION** made by Pluke to Adjourn; seconded by Winkler. No discussion. Unanimous vote in favor; **MOTION CARRIED**. Meeting adjourned at 6:59pm.

Minutes Take By: Larry Isensee, Secretary

Minutes Validated By: Dale Weis, Chair

These minutes are draft until approved at the next meeting.