

REC Steering Committee Minutes 2017 05 29

Members present: Dev Quandt, Cece Rudolph, Jerry & Patricia Stoltz, Mike Martin, Megan Spatz, Linda Wagner, Mary Wagner, Dan Smet, Wes Ebert, Steve Schmidt

Guests: Tina Stoltz, Matthew Beck (NCHS Freshman), Doug Beck,

ACTION STEPS needed are highlighted

The meeting was opened with prayer at 3:30pm.

Old Business

1. Previous meeting minutes were approved (motion – Dev; second – Mike)
2. Don Rudolph Memorial grant
 - a. Cece thanked those who applied for the \$500 grant. Those included Brianna Wright, Stephanie Loderbauer and Dev Quandt.
 - b. Congratulations to Dev Quandt whose project will be to install trail signs which point out places significant to the Rudolph family.
 - c. Dev has contacted Mr. McIntyre at Greenheck to help produce the signs.
 - d. Steve asked Dev to send the plans via email for the committee to review.
3. Deer Management Plan
 - a. Steve reviewed Phase 1 of the process, which was a test hunt in fall 2016. Mike Martin harvested a buck and doe with his crossbow during the gun season. Father Kuhn also hunted a few times during the bow season.
 - b. Steve read some of the many considerations that will need to go into the plan.
 - c. Mike Martin told the committee that we need to have the REC surveyed to know our exact boundaries. This is especially important because some of the neighbors are using the land for storage.
 - d. Steve will complete a draft and send it out to the committee.

New Business

1. Dev Quandt's service to the REC was recognized as he prepares to retire with 44 years of service to NCS. Steve presented him with a certificate at his retirement gathering last week and another one at the REC meeting. Cece Rudolph baked and decorated a cake in his honor. [Link to the Wausau Daily Herald article by Nora Hertel](#)
2. Student visits – State School Forest Data
 - a. 894 student hours were tallied as of the meeting. After further numbers came in, the official total is 996. This is double the 2015-16 total of 487, but less than two and three years ago when 1179 & 1217 hours were recorded.
 - b. Mike asked why the numbers were lower than a few years ago. Steve pointed out that all of the hours were from visits in October and May. Mary mentioned that it was a poor year for snowshoeing. There were also two trips cancelled due to weather—an early childhood trip (NCEECs St. Therese and St. Michael) in August and the NCMS conservation club trip in May.
3. Eagle Scout Project Proposal by Matthew Beck, Life Scout of BSA Troop _____
 - a. Proposes to woodchip the trail and possibly build a grotto/shrine.
 - i. Matthew will seek donation of wood chips from Menzner Hardwoods of Marathon City. CEO Philip Menzner's children are all NCHS grads.
 - ii. Matthew thought that the pond would be a good location for a grotto, but expressed concern over possible vandalism.
 - iii. Matthew will email his proposal to the committee for approval & then seek Mr. Sullivan's or Mr. Martin's signature before submitting to BSA.

- b. Much discussion followed. Here are some of the highlights:
 - i. It was agreed that the wood chips were necessary, especially to help mark the trail for young students and parents.
 - ii. Mike Martin pledged NCS support on the purchase of a statue for the grotto. He also made it clear that potential vandalism will not hamper efforts to improve REC programming and facilities.
 - iii. Cece Rudolph thought that a statue of Our Lady Fatima would be quite appropriate considering how this is the 100th anniversary of the appearance and message of the Blessed Mother at Fatima, Portugal.
 - iv. Many expressed concern that this could be two projects.
 - v. The grotto could be a simple space with wood chips, Leopold benches, and the statue.
 - vi. Mary Wagner thought that a NCS St. Mark school group might be interested in building a small covering to protect the statue.

4. Deer enclosure – Steve & Wes will remove this in the next few months. It has clearly shown that deer are heavily browsing young trees or branches that they can reach. Just outside the enclosure, the poplars are no taller than 3 feet and the trees inside the fence are 10-12 feet. The fence was initially installed in summer 2015. Maintenance is not worth the expense as the posts continue to sink into the ground due to wind and moist soil.

5. Future projects...need volunteer(s). Please let Steve know if you would be interested in leading any of the following:
 - a. Invasive species removal – This is a top priority in order to promote forest regeneration and biodiversity.
 - b. Clean up event – It has been some time since this has been done. However, it requires work near the water and would work best when water levels are lower.
 - c. REC Use Policy Update – Our last update was in 2003-04. Teachers need a guide to follow in order to prepare for and carry out successful field trips.
 - d. Snapshot Wisconsin – This is a program of citizen science supported by the WDNR. Trail cams are placed in a location and then teacher and students analyze the data at least once every 3 months.

6. Summer happenings – PLEASE watch for and respond to emails related to the following:
 - a. Matthew Beck Eagle project proposal
 - b. Dev Quandt's trail project
 - c. Deer Management Plan

7. Brief social – Thanks to Cece for the treats, milk, and snacks and Steve for the hot water drinks.

8. Chores
 - a. Ramp (scrub mildew and algae) – post poned
 - b. Inspect/Clean toilet, including sweep up peat from floor – Mary Wagner did this.
 - c. Removal of the dead oak tree near the path between the pond & marsh was deemed unsafe. Many dead branches could fall as the tree is cut. It is also on uneven ground with no easy escape routes. Eventually, it will fall on the trail and parts will end up in the pond. It has and is currently providing habitat for insects and the various birds that eat them.
 - d. Steve used a trimmer around the building, ramp, and front gate.

9. Meeting ended 5pm – next meeting in fall.