

Parks, Tourism and Economic Development Committee Minutes

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, September 20, 2016

1. **Call to Order:** The Parks, Tourism and Economic Development Committee (PTEDC) meeting was called to order at 9:03AM in the County Board Room of the Trempealeau County Courthouse located at 36245 Main St, Whitehall, WI by Jon Schultz, Chair.
2. **Certification of Open Meeting Law Requirements:** Kirstie Heidenreich certified that the Open Meeting Law Requirements have been met.
3. **Roll Call of Committee Members:** Members present: Jon Schultz, Jean Galasinski, Chuck Walek, Curt Skoyen, Michelle Haines. Members absent: Jeanne Nutter, Sara Ecker, Ron McKernan. Also present were Department of Land Management staff Kevin Lien, Becky Arneson, and Kirstie Heidenreich, along with Elsa Kulig, Rian Radtke, Dick Miller, Kathy Zeglin, and Bob Pietrek, Gale Gabriel, and Lois Taylor.
4. **Adoption of Agenda:** Jean Galasinski made a motion to approve the agenda. Chuck Walek seconded. Motion carried.
5. **Adoption of Minutes (8-23-16):** Motion to adopt the minutes from August 23, 2016 by Chuck Walek; seconded by Curt Skoyen. Motion carried.
6. **Approval of Department Structure for Parks, Tourism, and Economic Development:** Kevin Lien presented the Committee with a proposed organizational structure based on the last Committee and Sub-Committee discussions. The new PTED Coordinator would be under the PTED Committee, and then oversee the two Parks LTE employment positions. The PTED Coordinator would answer to Kevin for day-to-day matters such as time sheet issues, etc. There would be occasional joint meetings between the PTED Committee and the Environment and Land Use Committee. This would all be within the Dept. of Land Management as a “transitional” phase, per the Environment and Land Use Committee as their last meeting. Kevin stated that sometime in the future this could be broken out in to its own stand-alone department in the county, and it would be easy to separate it out. Chuck Walek made a motion to approve the proposed department structure for the Parks, Tourism, and Economic Development positions, with the understanding that it is transitional in nature. Jean Galasinski seconded. Motion carried.
7. **Approval of Job Description for Parks, Tourism, and Economic Development Coordinator:** A Sub-Committee was formed to continue to research and discuss department structure and job descriptions for Parks, Tourism, and Economic Development. Jon stated that the Sub-Committee Members (Jon Schultz, Jean Galasinski, and Chuck Walek) worked hard and did a great job coming up with solutions and a proper job description. He stated Elsa Kulig has been a huge help as well. Kevin went through the five-page handout of the job description with the Committee which was very detailed and broke down what responsibilities will be specifically assigned for the Parks, the Tourism efforts, and Economic Development pursuits. Jon Schultz stated that this person would be supervised by Kevin but ultimately work closely and be governed by the PTED Committee. Michelle Haines made a motion to approve the job description for the Parks, Tourism, and Economic Development Coordinator. Chuck Walek seconded. Motion carried. An enthusiastic

round of applause and cheers followed. Chuck stated he would like to thank Kevin and his staff for all of their hard work on these projects and others.

8. **Update from CapX2020 Sub-Committee on Kloss Shelter Improvements:** Kevin Lien stated he has received the completed plans for the Kloss Shelter remodel project and is now waiting on a few further design details from an architect, as items need to comply with commercial code. Kevin asked the Committee to make a motion to bring this situation forward to the Executive Finance Committee and ask them to extend the CAPX2020 funding in to 2017. He said construction can start this fall and finish early next year. Michelle Haines made a motion to have the PTEDC give the Executive Finance Committee a monthly status report on the Kloss Shelter Improvements in order to gain an extension in to 2017 with construction and CAPX2020 spending. Chuck Walek seconded. Motion carried.
9. **Debrief on Ashley for the Arts Weekend Activities at Pietrek Park:** Becky Arneson stated that she spoke with Darren from Pape Bus Service and according to their numbers, they had more people riding the shuttle buses this year from Pietrek Park to the event than any other year in the past. Becky said that 47 out of 73 campsites were still utilized despite the weather and flooding events. Almost 70% of campers still showed up to camp, even with road closures and rain. She said Pietrek Park did not do any refunds due to the weather, which was stated that would not be an option ahead of time. The Park's Facebook page, voicemail, and cell phone were constantly updated briefing on the flooding events, and DLM staff were interviewed by a local news station, which aired a segment on the Park stating it's still open. Pietrek Park brought in \$3,080 and \$85 in (firewood) donations during Ashley for the Arts Weekend. Last year during this event, \$3,015 was brought in.
10. **2017 Trempealeau County Economic Development & Tourism Organization Memberships:** Kirstie Heidenreich reminded the Committee that last month there were discussions on what memberships Trempealeau County should be involved with that promote tourism and economic development. She stated that last month the Committee was leaning towards joining 7 Rivers Alliance for \$300/year and Southwest-ITBEC (International Trade, Business, Economic Development Council) for \$2500/year and dropping the \$1400 Wisconsin Indian Head Country membership. Kirstie said that Indian Head Country has offered a 2017 membership at a discounted rate of \$1000, since she let the Indian Head know the Committee would likely not renew. Jon Schultz made a motion to withdraw membership from WI Indian Head Country, Chuck Walek seconded. In discussion, Bob Pietrek said he would stick with Indian Head, and he is a voting member of their organization. He said as a small business owner in Trempealeau County, he has never seen so many people coming through our County heading to the north. Kirstie stated that SW-ITBEC allows two County Board Members to be voting members of the organization and also provides access to many more grant opportunities and funding. Jon Schultz said it may be appropriate to join SW-ITBEC, but it also may be premature. Chuck Walek made a motion to join WI Indian Head Country at \$1,000 level and 7 Rivers Alliance at \$300 level. Curt Skoyen seconded. Motion carried.
11. **Private Donation for the Development of an Interpretive Trail at Pietrek Park:** Kirstie Heidenreich gave a PowerPoint Presentation to the Committee informing them that the Maliszewski family has contacted the Dept. of Land Management with a desire to donate \$1,000 in memory of their father, Arnold Maliszewski, with intent to improve the Pietrek Park trail system

and begin an interpretive trail on site. She said DLM will apply for the DNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant in the spring with intent on using the donation money for matching funds; there is also \$4,000 budgeted for 2016 for “Park Improvements.” Kirstie said she has been in contact with a well-known private company named Wildlife Exhibits who does interpretive signs for the Trempealeau Refuge and showed the Committee pictures of what has been done at other sites. She suggested beginning a county-wide stewardship campaign in the future for a complete interpretive trail and signage system at the Park. Donors could have a plaque on the sign with their family or business name honoring their donation. She stated she will keep the Committee informed as progress is made on trail design and funding, but the initial design and ideas have already been put in to place by DLM staff, with the help of Jon Schultz. Bob Pietrek mentioned that the stewardship campaign would be a good fit, due to the fact that his family and others have been considering making donations to the Park and others would likely be interested.

12. **2016 Official Closing Date of Pietrek Park:** After very brief discussion, the Committee agreed to continue forth with the pre-existing official closing date of November 30th for Pietrek Park.
13. **Involvement of Pietrek Park in “Snapshot Wisconsin”:** Kirstie Heidenreich informed the Committee that Pietrek Park is the first participant in Trempealeau County of Snapshot Wisconsin, which is a partnership to monitor wildlife using a statewide network of trail cameras. It is an unprecedented collaboration between the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), NASA and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Pietrek Park’s trail cam was installed on September 12, 2016, and Kirstie showed the Committee some examples of trail cam pictures that have already been gathered. She stated the pictures would be used for youth education and also be uploaded regularly to Pietrek Park’s Facebook page. Benefits include the use of a high-quality trail cam for free, gives everyone an idea of a wildlife census at the Park, and opportunities like these open the door for further grant opportunities.
14. **Discussion of Potential Land Donation in Sumner for a Park:** Gale Gabriel, the landowner who is considering donating land to the County for a Park, was in attendance and shared his intentions with the Committee. He stated he originally offered four different parcels of land for donation and the Chimney Rock parcel was likely the most desirable for a park, which ended up being shot down and he totally understands the reasoning behind it. Gale went on to say that the more that he’s thought about it, he thinks the property in Sumner is not suitable for a park and is impractical. He said he’d hate for the County to sink a large amount of money in to it and then have it not work out. If the County could not or would no longer maintain it, it would come back to him or his heirs. Gale said that means the County is left with two parcels in Unity to choose from, both of them being in pine stands. Kevin Lien told Gale that after the tours of the three parcels in August, the PTED Committee voted to pursue the land in Sumner for a park; he asked if Gale was saying that it’s no longer on the table. Gale said there are very steep hills going up and down the property – he said he can’t imagine people packing up their tents and backpacks and hiking down there. Jon Schultz stated that out of all four properties, the Sumner property would require the least financial investment for Trempealeau County to use as a park. He said there would be potential for the public to use it immediately, while allowing the County to take some time to slowly add improvements. Kirstie Heidenreich asked Gale if he would consider allowing the Committee to present him with a few “rough draft” plans of a park at the Sumner Property before he completely makes up his mind to take it off the table. Jon Schultz asked Gale to also consider this and added

that he'd ask Gale to create a list of specifications he would put on this agreement as well. Gale said that would be fair to allow review of the plans, but he is very skeptical. He said he will write up a list for the Committee to consider and Kevin can stop and pick it up.

15. **Approval of Vehicle Purchase for Park Use:** Kevin stated that in past meetings, the Committee approved the purchase of up to \$5000 for a park vehicle. Kevin said he has sold the two older trucks at the Park but suggested holding off purchasing a vehicle until the spring, as it will simply just sit around until spring anyway. He said the County has a purchasing policy for vehicles already in place and will let potential sellers around the County know that if they get any good values in trade-ins, to contact him and he will continue to keep the Committee informed. Bob Pietrek suggested it would be beneficial to have some type of a gator or UTV available at the Park to use and Kevin said that is something they would love to have in the future.
16. **Discussion and Approval of Plan for Park Manager Building at Pietrek Park:** Kevin Lien informed the Committee that \$20,000 has been allocated in the budget for 2017 to construct a park manager building on the pre-existing concrete slab that previously had the manager's camper on it. Kevin said they would like to have a small cabin similar to the cabins that are available to rent at Stoney Creek Campground in Osseo. The cabin would be just for county employees and not be for public use/rental. Its intent would be to have an office area for campers to check in and also a small sleeping area in case the park manager would need to stay overnight. Kevin said this is just an update on where things are headed, and he will be coming back to the Committee in the future to with plans and timelines. Jon Schultz stated that there is no motion needed, but encouraged Kevin to keep moving forward.
17. **Discussion of Recent Conferences Attended by Committee Members and Staff:** Jon Schultz shared that he and Kirstie were able to attend a Small Town Forum in LaFarge, WI a few weeks ago. He said he thought it was good and there were good presentations, especially by Organic Valley. Kirstie said that Jenny from the WI Economic Development Corporation and Lisa from 7 Rivers Alliance both talked to her and asked to attend the next PTEDC meeting to become more involved with tourism and economic development in Trempealeau County. Chuck Walek said that organic farming is something Trempealeau County really needs to tap in to, similar to the LaFarge area. Chuck said that a new Economic Development Coordinator could really work on being a contact point for this issue and bring more of it to the County.
18. **Economic Development, Recreation, and Tourism Update:** Kevin said that he and Jon have talked recently with Paul Syverson regarding the Motor Coach Tours and about \$2800 had been set aside in 2016 for the creation of a bus tour brochure/map. Kevin stated that currently no one is doing the tours and if the money is not spent by the end of the year, it would go back in to the General Fund. Jon said the PTED Committee could perhaps ask Executive Finance Committee to extend the money in to 2017. Kirstie mentioned that one idea would be to use that money for a dual-purpose map that could be used for both bus tours and as a scenic roadways map of the County, which has been formally requested by the public at previous meetings. She said that the Land Records staff has already agreed to create a scenic roadways map in response to the PTEDC's request, and Land Records has also stated that they could complete this by the end of 2016. Jon Schultz said he does not see this being a major conflict in any way, other than the fact that the bus tours do not currently exist. Kevin said that he will bring this idea up at the next Executive Finance meeting to make sure they approve of the use of the funding. Jean made a

motion to use the Bus Tours 2016 money budgeted for brochure creation for the creation of a Scenic Tours Map by the Land Records Department. Chuck Walek seconded. Motion carried.

19. **Opportunity for Public Comments:** Lois Taylor, a member of the Village of Trempealeau Board and Chairperson of their Water and Sewer Committee, made an appearance to state that excess phosphorus is a problem for their village's economics, tourism, and survival. She stated that Phosphorus Trading is something their village is exploring but she is concerned that more action has not been taken more quickly. There has been problems with green water and potential tourists/fishing enthusiasts in the area who are turned away due to the color and smell of the water. She would like to see the County get involved with helping them apply for a Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) grant. She stated they need half a million dollars just to upgrade their filtration systems and face huge obstacles, along with many other municipalities that are in the same boat. Jon Schultz said it was appropriate for her to share these concerns with the Committee and recommended she also follow up with the Environment and Land Use Committee, who is over the Land Management Department.
20. **Set next meeting date:** The next meeting will be on Tuesday, October 18th at 9:00AM in the County Board Room of the Courthouse.
21. **Adjourn:** Meeting was adjourned at 11:43AM by Jon Schultz.

Submitted by: Kirstie Heidenreich, recording secretary