

# 2024 Meeting Minutes

## March 28, 2024, 4:00 pm West Iron District Library Minutes of the Iron County Watershed Coalition

"ICWC works to ensure the highest possible water quality in Iron County lakes, streams and wetlands by educating and engaging our communities in projects that will restore and preserve our watersheds for future generations."

### **Call to Order at 4:00**

**Attending:** Bette Premo, Rich Sloat, Doug Felger, Dodi Felger, Jim Fogarty, Dorien Howe, Dave Martwick, Maggie Scheffer

**Review and Approval of minutes of previous meeting, October 19, 2023.**

### **Agenda:**

Doug and Jim; passed. Minutes of previous meeting tabled until sent to members.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Awaiting payment from EGLE for Dober work (Watershed Council Support Grant); Money has been received for the reimbursement of expenses for the MEF Musky project. Jim Fogarty proposed initiating a scholarship fund for students going into Environmental Science, to be given annually to Forest Park and/or WIC seniors. Criteria: GPA of 2.0; intent to go into the environmental field; extracurricular involvement in outdoor environmental work. \$500 to one from each district in I.C. Rich supported the motion; all approved. Essay questions to be formulated and announce the scholarship to both Iron County schools.

### **Correspondence:**

Grant opportunities given to Maggie to be filed.

### **Old Business:**

- **Dober Ponds Project Update - Watershed Council Support Grant:** ICWC has submitted all reports and our part is complete. EGLE will have to apply for funding to proceed with the dredging proposal submitted by Brennon Company. Rich proposed to contact EGLE for permit to withdraw water from the Hiawatha shaft. The water would have to be disposed of or a use be found for it. Then the water wouldn't be discharging from Hiawatha to the Dober pit, and the water that is currently diverted from the Iron River could be shut off, allowing the Dober pit to dry up and the settling

ponds wouldn't need to be dredged. The idea will be explored with EGLE (Rich and Bette).

- **Wild River Road Project Update:** Bette provided an Engineer's Opinion of Costs for the project. We have met the requirements to submit a full proposal to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for \$500,000 needed to complete the project. Bette will submit the proposal before April 18th. Added to the \$638,000 already dedicated, all that's necessary is DNR approval for holding off with the work until 2025. Jim moved and Dave seconded to submit the full proposal and apply to NFWF for the additional funding. Motion passed.
- **Miskwaagamiwiziibi Park Shelter:** The sod roof grew well in its first season. Caulking may be needed to address contraction/expansion between the mortar and cordwood. An outhouse will be built in close proximity to the shelter, and a canoe launch has been started, to be completed this year. A girl scout troop has offered to blaze trails.
- **Board Members/General Membership Drive and Annual Meeting:** Annual meeting will be held in conjunction with the Purdue students' presentation. Membership forms and ICWC materials will be updated and prepared to hand out at this meeting as well as upcoming summer events.
- **MEF Musky Project Update:** Money received from MEF for ICWC role as fiduciary. Project has been extended for 2024.

### **New Business:**

**Bob Rivera:** Former member of ICWC passed away in March. He lived a life dedicated to art and activism, particularly the labor movement, nuclear waste sites, and Project ELF in the Upper Peninsula. His concern in Iron County was with keeping the water safe and clean.

### **Summer Activities:**

- Maggie will approach Sara Basso about being involved with planning a River Cleanup.
- We would like to team up with IC Lakes and Streams Partnership to sponsor Erick Elgin (MSU Extension) as a speaker on "Smart Shorelines" in August.
- Discussion about changing "Float the Paint" to a lake event at Lake Ottawa, with refreshments at the pavilion to follow, scheduled for Wednesday, August 7th, 5 p.m. launch. Bette to make reservations; Maggie will arrange P.R.

- Offer to sponsor Bill Ziegler with a program at Covenant Point Bible Camp for the Purdue students in May. Rich will discuss with Marisol when contacted by her. Maggie will follow up with Bill Ziegler.

### **Date of Next Meeting:**

To be determined when Purdue's schedule is known.

### **Adjournment at 6:00 PM:**

Jim moved to adjourn; Rich supported. Motion passed.

**Submitted by Secretary, Maggie Scheffer**

## **July 18, 2024, 4:00 pm West Iron District Library Minutes of the Iron County Watershed Coalition**

"ICWC works to ensure the highest possible water quality in Iron County lakes, streams and wetlands by educating and engaging our communities in projects that will restore and preserve our watersheds for future generations."

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### **Call to Order at 4:00**

**Attending:** Bette Premo, Rich Sloat, Doug Felger, Dodi Felger, Jim Fogarty, Dorien Howe, Dave Martwick, Maggie Scheffer

**Review and Approval of Minutes:** Minutes of two previous meetings, March 28, 2024 and October 19, 2023. Jim moved, Doug supported to approve both meetings' minutes; motion passed.

### **Agenda:**

Amended, and Doug moved to approve; seconded by Dave Martwick.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Dodi moved; Jim supported to accept and all approved.

### **Correspondence:**

Bette posted on Facebook the Aug. 7th float on Ottawa. Will repeat two more times with RSVP request. Hot dogs, chips, soda and sparkling water, and dessert bars will be provided afterwards in the campground pavilion.

## Old Business:

- **August 7th Float on Lake Ottawa:** See above in Correspondence.
- **Sept. 7th River Cleanup:** Bette moved and Doug supported to contribute up to \$400 to the event. The Iron River DDA will support with \$1100. All arrangements will be covered by the committee (Sara Basso, Louisa Kniivia, Chris Kent, and Maggie).
- **Wild River Road Project Update:** Bette has been able to delay the grant from the State of MI, and TU has delayed MEF funds. Approval of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant is still pending.
- **Miskwaagamiwiziibi Shelter:** Outhouse is completed and the ramp is under construction. Next year a take-out sign will be suspended over the river, paid for by Bates Township.
- **Board Members/Membership Drive:** Maggie will draft a membership reminder of payment; Bette will edit and it will be sent to our current members.
- **MEF Musky Project Update**
- **Status of Cooks Run Cabin and Property:** Bette reported White Water has received MEF funding to monitor effects of the rearing pond on Cooks Run downstream. Rich reported that the County is supportive of all proposals from the Recreation Committee. The State of MI stipulates that nothing can be done with the site because it is a designated Historic Site. Iron County owns the property on condition that it is used strictly for public purposes. It was suggested that an estimate for necessary repairs be obtained and an effort to solicit public support might be a start that could lead to the completion of the preservation of the site.
- **Dober Clean-up:** Rich will apply for a permit from EGLE to draw down the water in the Hiawatha shaft. Andrew LaBaron at EGLE is who he will be contacting. There will need to be a plan for discharge of the water that is withdrawn.

## New Business:

- **E-waste Disposal:** Rich reported that MI under EGLE had a program for collection of electronic waste. Jen Johnson initiated collection in the townships, but the state will not come to get the 4,000 lbs. of solid waste which is being held on private land. Rich suggested taking it to Wisconsin recyclers/disposal facilities. Rich will get more information for our next meeting.
- **Porcupine Mtn. Mining Activity:** Legislature denied Copperwood their request for \$50 million in grant money to get a mine going. Private investors will be approached.

- **Zoning Ordinance Discussion:** Bette reported on efforts by the C.F. township to "relax" zoning ordinances to allow lake property owners to add certain percentages of footprint on to existing non-conforming structures within 100 feet of shoreline. Proposed new zoning stipulates that expansion will have to be away from the lake and septic would have to be approved by the Health Department. Any new construction will still follow existing zoning restrictions. Bette, Dean, and Kent Premo lobbied for lake health, pointing out the wisdom of the former zoning ordinances to protect the value of the shoreline and aquatic health.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

To be determined.

### **Adjournment at 6:05 PM**

Jim moved, Dodi supported, and all approved. The group went outdoors to see the sign that will be installed at the Apple Blossom Trailhead in Caspian.

**Submitted by Secretary, Maggie Scheffer**