

1000 ISLANDS ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

1000 ISLANDS COMMITTEE

City of Kaukauna

Nature Center Building

1000 Beaulieu Court, Kaukauna



Thursday, September 18, 2025, at 6:30 PM

MINUTES

Members Present White, Breitzman, Eggleston, Manion, Pautz, and VanBerkel

Not Present Rumbuc, Hietpas, West, and Jakel

Also Present Brad Garrity and Cassie Kohls

White called the meeting to order at 6:46 PM. A quorum was present.

Public Appearances None

August 21, 2025, Committee Meeting Minutes

VanBerkel moved to approve the meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Manion. Motion carried.

Financial Reports

Pautz motioned to adjust the agenda to review the July Financial Report prior to the August report. Seconded by VanBerkel. Motion Carried.

The Committee reviewed the July Financial Report. VanBerkel noted that the balance sheet has not been shared with the Committee for some time. All 1000 Islands certificate of deposit (CD) accounts, along with the Golden Investment account, have been closed, and the funds were transferred to the Community Foundation Endowment. To align the operational budget with the balance sheet, \$98,684.07 was removed from the operational budget under account 5499 (Miscellaneous). Pautz moved to approve the July Financial Report, with VanBerkel seconding the motion. The motion was carried.

The August Financial Report was reviewed. Eggleston motioned to accept the August Financial Report. Seconded by Pautz. Motion carried.

Donation Report

Pautz stated Jakel created goat cards to be sold in the Nature Center gift shop. Pricing is \$3/each and 2 for \$5. Funds will go towards the goat project. Eggleston motioned to accept the August Donation Report. Pautz seconded. Motion carried.

Friends of 1000 Islands Report

In Hietpas' absence, Garrity presented the Friends Report. The recent Friends meeting focused on budget discussions, including the 1000 Islands budget, which depends on projected donation revenue.

Garrity is collaborating with Finance Department staff to reduce this reliance. Historically, the Friends covered 1000 Islands donation shortfalls, but they now intend to phase out that practice.

The proposed Friends budget includes a \$5,000 contribution toward operational expenses, along with continued support for Eagle Days, the bussing subsidy fund, and other projects. The annual donation request is expected to gradually decline over time. Garrity encouraged the Friends to stay engaged in fundraising and sponsorship efforts, noting a general decrease in visitor donations to 1000 Islands.

VanBerkel added that as the Community Foundation endowment grows, interest earnings could help offset the donation obligation or be reinvested. Garrity concluded by noting that the Friends will vote on the budget at next month's meeting.

Garrity reported that several bussing subsidy requests have been received from Kaukauna schools. The Friends remain committed to supporting the bussing subsidy fund. If demand exceeds available resources, staff will seek alternative funding options.

Naturalist's Report

Garrity and Intern Maddie attended Public Information Campaign (PIC) training with Outagamie County. Recent programs at the Nature Center included a Daisy Scout clinic and a bird feeder building workshop. On August 22, Assistant Naturalist Berge and Garrity attended the NEWNA meeting at Maywood Nature Center. Highlights included:

- Custom Projects, maker of swamp pans, could be a resource for future boardwalk projects.
- University of Wisconsin-Green Bay presented a senior lifelong learning initiative and internship design seminar.
- Lake Michigan Bird Observatory shared a carbon sequestration project to promote tree health and bird habitat.

Signage Update: Signage will be the final phase of the Capital Improvement Plan siding project. The wooden lettered sign will be replaced with metal (aluminite) signs by Eagle Graphics. New signs will be installed at the main entrance and bus stop entrance. While no building lighting will be added, garden bed lighting may be used to illuminate the signs. A no-cost signage permit is required; Garrity is working with the City's Planning Department staff to secure it.

Garrity recognized volunteer Ross Schuh for purchasing, planting, and tending the gardens daily, including ongoing watering. Manion praised his efforts to remove invasive species. Garrity also noted that Ross donated the Nature Center's library.

Admin and Finance Sub-Committee - No report

Education Sub-Committee

Pautz reported that fall field trip dates are filling quickly. Berge is enhancing programs to meet standards by adding literacy components. Pautz suggested gathering teacher input, and Garrity recommended targeted evaluations to collect feedback on the revised programs.

Exhibit/Display Updates:

- Pollution Runoff Display: Site Manager Gonnering is updating the pollution/runoff display.
- Pelt Display: Gonnering is reviewing the pelt hallway inventory to determine what to keep or replace. Animal skulls and tracks could be added to enhance the pelt display.
- VR Sandtable: This display been decommissioned due to high repair and maintenance costs. The equipment will be sold, and the table repurposed.
- Hunting Display: Restricted funds are available for this project. Ideas include showcasing the history of the Kaukauna Sportsman Club or illustrating how hunting supports conservation.

Eagle Nest Camera: Challenges include securing electricity and internet access on Island 3. Garrity and Pautz are exploring solutions.

Weekly Column – *Kaukauna Times*: Topics will rotate, such as “What can you do to help the environment?” Discussion included article frequency and dividing the workload.

Goats – Arriving Sept 22: The incoming goats are “teenagers,” which are typically easier to manage. Co-op student Lilah has been assisting daily and will help with goat care. The Goat Watcher Sign-Up is 70% full, with openings in the second week. Goats will be moved between 5:00–5:15 PM due to earlier nightfall.

Building and Grounds Sub-Committee

Property Walk – September 10:

Garrity, Breitzman, White, and Manion toured the Upper Woods. Suggestions included:

- Adding a handrail to the staircase
- Installing a bench in the survival skills area (existing logs have rotted)
- Considering a selective canopy thinning to improve forest health, though concerns were raised about increased invasive species due to more sunlight
- Implementing a switchback on the Valley Trail for better stroller and wheelchair access

Additional Updates:

- Spancrete bridges are holding up well
- A striped crosswalk will be added on Dodge Street; signage has been ordered
- A lit stop sign is being requested for the crossing area

Old Business - None

New Business

Committee Membership Update: VanBerkel noted the Committee should consist of 11 members. Jakel, Manion, and VanBerkel will continue for another term. Pautz will conclude her term on October 15 but will remain active as a volunteer. The Committee thanked her and acknowledged her service. Two vacancies remain, and members are encouraged to submit recommendations.

Good for the Center - None

Next Committee Meeting

The next Committee Meeting will be on Thursday, October 16, 2025, at 6:30 PM in the Nature Center building.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Manion moved to adjourn the September 18, 2025, Committee Meeting at 7:57 PM. Seconded by VanBerkel. Motion Carried.

Cassie Kohls