



ROCK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Highways & Parks

3715 Newville Road, Janesville, WI 53545
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Public Works Committee Meeting – Parks
Tuesday, March 11, 2025 – 8:00 a.m.
Public Works Department – Committee Room
3715 Newville Road
Janesville, WI 53545

Call to Order: Chair Mawhinney called the meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 8:00 a.m.

Committee Members Present: Supervisors Homan, Mawhinney, Pennycook, and Woodman

Committee Members Absent: Supervisor Sutter

Staff Members:

Duane Jorgenson	Public Works Director
Nick Elmer	Assistant Director Public Works
John Traynor	Park Services Supervisor
Amy Friend	Parks Community Coordinator
Amanda McElroy	Administrative Professional III

Others Present:

Chuck Flynn	Citizen (attended in person and on Zoom)
Sheila Williams	Citizen (Zoom)
Randolph Terronez	County Administrator (Zoom)
Carl Lange	Friends of Rock County Parks
Carolyn Brandeen	League of Women Voters
Floyd Finney	Parks Advisory Board
Dean Paynter	Parks Advisory Board
Kris Ellis	Rock County Multi Use Trail Group
Jeff Johnson	Rock Trail Coalition
Evan Hoier	Vandewalle and Associates
Ben Rohr	Vandewalle and Associates

Approval of Agenda: Supervisor Pennycook moved approval of the agenda as presented, seconded by Supervisor Woodman. ADOPTED.

Approval of Minutes Dated February 11, 2025: Supervisor Pennycook moved approval of the minutes from February 11, 2025, as presented, seconded by Supervisor Homan. ADOPTED.

NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: Sheila Williams suggested obtaining a bid from Paradigm Buildings (Brodhead, WI) for the Sportsman's Park deer shelter and starting a parks endowment fund.

Mr. Traynor congratulated Mr. Finney on his recent Lifetime Achievement Award from the Wisconsin Horse Council. Mr. Traynor added that he passed out information regarding the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program (see attachments) and will be attending the County Board meeting on Thursday (3/13).

Parks Advisory Board Communications: Mr. Finney shared that the tack swap held on March 1 raised \$600 and introduced Kris Ellis as a possible replacement for himself on the Parks Advisory Committee.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS

Authorizing Application with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for Snowmobile Grant Funds: Supervisor Woodman moved the Resolution, seconded by Supervisor Pennycook. Mr. Traynor explained that all DNR grants are a two-step process and require a resolution to apply for the grant, and another resolution to accept the grant. ADOPTED.

REVIEW, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Discussion and Possible Action – Peace Trail Arch: Jeff Johnson, President of the Rock Trail Coalition, shared that the Peace Trail between Janesville and Beloit is almost complete. To bring awareness to the Peace Trail, an arch was recently installed at the Janesville terminus. The Rock Trail Coalition intends to apply for one more grant to install an arch at the Town of Beloit terminus, at no cost to the county. Permission is required to install the arch over the Peace Trail on county right-of-way near the intersection of CTH Q/Haborn Dr. Supervisor Pennycook moved the Peace Trail Arch, seconded by Supervisor Woodman. ADOPTED.

Discussion – POROS Plan Kickoff Meeting – Vandewalle and Associates: Ben Rohr, Vandewalle and Associates, gave a kickoff presentation about the Parks, Outdoor Recreation, and Open Space (POROS) Plan. The Rock County POROS plan must be updated every five years to be eligible for grant funding. The presentation highlighted the project timeline, Committee's role, plan components, 2020 recap, future goals, service area distribution, vision statement, and a data review. Discussion was had amongst the Committee about focusing on relevant ideas from the last plan that didn't get implemented, offering high quality and improved amenities, looking at underserved areas, and addressing staffing needs to maintain the parks.

Discussion and Possible Action – Issue Paper – Footville Rd Bridge – Consultant Rankings: Mr. Jorgenson explained that there are four bridge design contracts that must be approved and negotiated by the end of May. The Footville Rd Bridge is a full reconstruction project in

the Town of Center. Statements of qualifications were solicited from our consultant roster, with twelve submittals being received, reviewed, and ranked. EMCS, Inc. was selected as the top design firm, followed by Jewell Associates Engineers, Inc. and JT Engineering, Inc. The top three firms will be submitted to the Department of Transportation for authorization before negotiations can begin with the top firm. Prices are negotiated after reviewing qualifications and the contracts will be brought back to the Committee for approval. Supervisor Homan moved the Issue Paper, seconded by Supervisor Woodman. ADOPTED.

Discussion and Possible Action – Issue Paper – Stebbensville Rd Bridge – Consultant Rankings: Supervisor Woodman moved the Issue Paper (Michael Baker International, Jewell Associates Engineers, Inc., and Strand Associates), seconded by Supervisor Homan. ADOPTED.

Discussion and Possible Action – Issue Paper – Milton Shopiere Rd Bridge – Consultant Rankings: Supervisor Pennycook moved the Issue Paper (Michael Baker International, Jewell Associates Engineers, Inc., and Strand Associates), seconded by Supervisor Woodman. ADOPTED.

Discussion and Possible Action – Issue Paper – CTH N Bridge – Consultant Rankings: Supervisor Pennycook moved the Issue Paper (EMCS, Inc., Ayres Associate, and Strand Associates), seconded by Supervisor Homan. ADOPTED.

Parks Report – See Attached: Mr. Traynor and Ms. Friend shared a PowerPoint presentation highlighting items in their report and answered questions from the Committee.

Parks General

- Maintenance Update – Burning, CDL Training, Equipment Maintenance- burning brush piles, Guadalupe is currently completing CDL training at Blackhawk Technical College, getting mowers ready for spring
- Staffing Update – FTE and Seasonals- Four seasonal employees are starting in May, an offer was made for the maintenance position, and interviews are tomorrow for the parks assistant position
- Boat Launch Fees April 15 – October 31- currently available for sale

Beckman Mill

- Memorial Bench Donation – 2- a second bench will be installed honoring Kirby Simpson, payment for both memorial benches received

Gibbs Lake Park

- Mowing Project- sidelined due to equipment issue and mud
- Weather Station – North Loop- installed by Wisconet to monitor weather and soil conditions
- Gathering Place Fishing Club – Fish Crib- last fish crib built and sunk on the same day

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Lee Park

- Hwy 140 Project – Tree Removal 140- started tree removal

Magnolia Bluff Park

- Ice Age Trail Meeting – February 12- will need to schedule second meeting
- Candlelight Hike – February 15- attended by over 200 people and raised \$370

Miller Farm Wetland Conservancy

- Tile Project Update- Land Conservation Department is working on submitting the application for the project

Rock River Heritage Park

- Break-In Incident – Repairs- notified of incident on 2/19, window repaired, need to order tables and chairs to replace what was damaged and fix locks
- Water Pumping Project Status- will be pumping water by the end of the day
- Property Maps and Brochure- complete and the website has been updated
- Memorial Shelter Update- hoping to have shelter built by the end of April
- Eagle Scout Project Update- Jacob Jorgenson will rehab the fire bowl seating area
- Candlelight Hike – February 22- attended by over 300 people and raised \$550

Sportsman Park

- Deer Shelter Replacement Update- plan was modified to keep the buck separate from the does, working with Country Barns to order shelter

POROS Plan Update

- Staff Kickoff Meeting – February 19- information and oversight provided by staff
- April 15 – Focus Group Meetings- Parks Advisory Committee/FORCP, Friends Groups, Trail Users/Groups, and Park Users

Events

- Hearts in the Park – Rock River Heritage County Park – February 1- promoted new map, had over 30 entries and two prize baskets were awarded
- Leprechauns on the Loose – March 7-21- most popular event, received over 50 entries already, there will be five prize baskets donated by Friends of Carver-Roehl
- Egg Event – Carver-Roehl Park – April 7 – 21- egg themed scavenger hunt
- Earth Day Trash Challenge April 9 – 23- two week trash pick-up challenge
- Earth Day Hike – April 22 – Carver-Roehl Park- will be led by Jim Hessenauer

Next Meeting Date and Time:

Highway Meeting: Tuesday, March 25, 2025, at 8:00 a.m. at the Department of Public Works.

Parks Meeting: Tuesday, April 8, 2025, at 8:00 a.m. at the Department of Public Works.

Adjournment: Supervisor Pennycook moved adjournment at 9:16 a.m., seconded by Supervisor Woodman. ADOPTED.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amanda McElroy, Administrative Professional III

THE KNOWLES-NELSON STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM BY THE NUMBERS

For 30 years, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program has funded our parks and trails, protected our lakes and rivers, and conserved special places across Wisconsin. It's how we take care of the outdoor places we love.

The governor and the Wisconsin state legislature must renew Knowles-Nelson in the 2025 budget or we'll lose hundreds of millions of dollars to care for our land, water, wildlife, and the Wisconsin way of life.

750,000 ACRES

throughout Wisconsin have been protected by Knowles-Nelson.

That's a \$1.3 BILLION

investment in Wisconsin's land, water, wildlife, and way of life.



90% OF WI VOTERS

support public funding for conservation.



\$11.00

is how much stewardship costs each WI resident each year - less than a fishing license or state parks pass. And yes, that includes debt service.



90% OF WI HOUSEHOLDS

are less than 1 mile from a Knowles-Nelson investment.

There are projects in all **72 COUNTIES.**



Access to open space improves our health. When we exercise in nature we become:

- Relaxed
- Less Anxious
- More Creative
- Better Problem Solvers



Regular exercise outside lower the rate of expensive health problems like cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

WHEN WE PROTECT NATURE, NATURE WORKS FOR US.

\$2.5 BILLION VALUE is returned to Wisconsinites every year through:



Air & Water
Filtration



Carbon
Sequestration



Recreation
Opportunities



Flood
Protection



4,200+ GRANTS

have been awarded to local governments and non-profits to support parks, trails, boat launches, and campgrounds.

KNOWLES-NELSON SUPPORTS A HEALTHY WI ECONOMY:



96,000

outdoor recreation jobs



\$24 BILLION

forestry economy

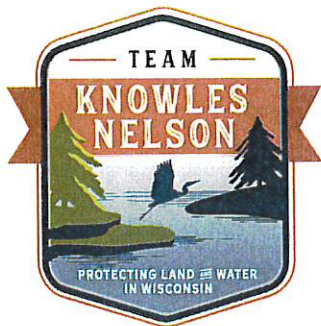
Non-profit conservation organizations, like land trusts, and local governments apply for Knowles-Nelson matching grants - every dollar Wisconsin invests in a conservation project is matched by another dollar raised elsewhere, effectively doubling the program's impact. The DNR also uses Knowles-Nelson funds to support land purchases around the state. These local-led projects create trails, boat launches, parks, and protect the natural areas that make our communities special.



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For 30 years, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program has been protecting our lakes and streams, securing critical wildlife habitat, and providing world-class recreational opportunities.

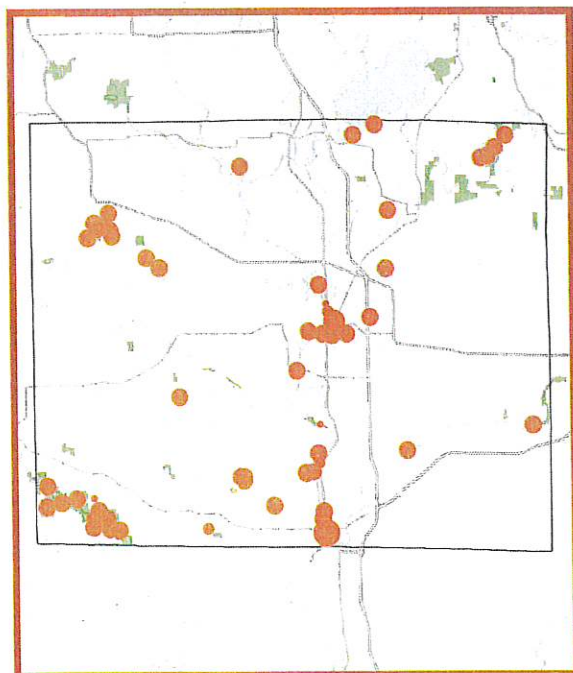
Non-profit conservation organizations, local governments, and the DNR have made thousands of investments in land protection, parks, trails, campgrounds, and more.

BUT THERE'S MORE WORK YET TO BE DONE.

A renewed Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program will help Wisconsin adapt to a changing climate, ensure that everyone has access to parks and green space, and will conserve critical areas that provide us with clean air and water.

THE KNOWLES-NELSON IMPACT ON ROCK COUNTY

# OF PROJECTS	INVESTMENT	ACRES PROTECTED
82	\$10,878,664	4,000+



- **\$546,901** City of Janesville - river wall repairs, downtown green space, public river access, utility upgrades, pavilion & picnic tables at Town Square
- **\$518,003** Groundswell Conservancy - 356 acres of farmland protection, wildlife habitat & public hunting access at Footville Wildlife Area
- **\$305,370** City of Beloit - trail construction, picnic shelter, landscaping, scenic overlooks, seating & expansion of Riverside Park
- **\$237,490** Town of Beloit - boat launch repairs, parking lot, trail construction & utility upgrades at Preservation Park
- **\$204,900** Rock County - trail development, shelter, parking, utility upgrades, fishing pier, footbridge & expansion of Beckman Mill County Park
- **\$176,625** Pheasants Forever - 270 acres of wetland protection & public hunting access near Footville Wildlife Area

Stewardship costs each Wisconsin resident just **\$11.00 each year**, less than a fishing license or state parks pass. And yes, **that includes debt service.**

Wisconsin's outdoor recreation economy provides **\$5.4 billion in wages** and contributes **\$11.2 billion** to the state's GDP.

Nature works for us every day. Knowles-Nelson lands **filter our air, clean our water, and protect against floods.** That's worth more than **\$2.5 billion every year.**

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