

Natural Resources Advisory Board
Monday, February 8, 2021
3:00 pm.
Via Teleconference
Meeting Minutes

Board Members:

Marshall Douglas	John Fleischli	Tim Caughran
Mick Wanless	Joseph Mark	Lynn Gipson
Anthony Tindall	Kerry Leigh	

IDNR Staff:

Colleen Callahan	John Rogner	George Sisk
Lisa Cotner	Chris Young	Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko
Tim Schweizer	Tami Evans	

Roll Call was given; quorum was met.

Adoption of the November 30, 2020 Meeting Minutes – Marshall motioned to approve the November 30, 2020 meeting minutes; Anthony provided the second. **Roll call was given to accept the November 30, 2020 meeting minutes:** Marshall Douglas, John Fleischli, Tim Caughran, Mick Wanless, Joseph Mark, Lynn Gipson, Anthony Tindall & Kerry Leigh. **Absent:** Jerry Hiller, Scott Bryant, Darel Martin.

Adoption of the February 8, 2021 Agenda – Marshall motioned to adopt the February 8, 2021 agenda; Joe provided the second. **Roll call was given to adopt the February 8, 2021 agenda:** Marshall Douglas, John Fleischli, Tim Caughran, Mick Wanless, Joseph Mark, Lynn Gipson, Anthony Tindall & Kerry Leigh. **Absent:** Jerry Hiller, Scott Bryant, Darel Martin.

Amendment to NRAB Bylaws – Time Limit on Public Speaking/Maintaining Meeting Decorum – George Sisk –Prior to the COVID pandemic, the Board asked George to consider a draft amendment to NRAB’s bylaws creating a public comment time limit, and to create language allowing the chairman to better maintain decorum at meetings.

The Open Meetings Act expressly allows public bodies to establish a public comment time limit, pursuant to administer rule or by the board's bylaws.

George read the following:

“Any member of the public that wishes to speak at a meeting of NRAB is free to do so; however, he/she/they shall be limited to a public comment period of five (5) minutes. Said comment period shall begin upon being recognized by the chairperson. The chairperson, or the chairperson's designee, shall be cognizant of the time and advise the person when the five (5) minute comment period has ended, at which point the person shall promptly conclude.

In order to maintain the decorum of a meeting, thus ensuring a civil and orderly meeting, the chairperson may impose reasonable limitations on testimony, whether presented by a person or group, that is irrelevant, unreliable, immaterial, unduly repetitious, or cumulative in nature. For groups of people, a spokesperson should be designated, if at all possible, to represent and speak for the interests of a group.”

It's important to ensure that people exercise their right, but if individuals continually discuss the same issue/same evidence, or if the discussion doesn't pertain to the meeting you can ask them to wrap it up/reign them in. It is best if a group is represented by a spokesperson.

If the board decides to accept the amendment today, as is, the bylaw change will not apply until the next meeting. Anthony asked why a 5-minute timeline? The 5-minute timeline was previously selected by the board. Kerry added that it is a good idea to have a speaker that represents a group. Kerry Leigh motioned to approve the draft amendment; Marshall Douglas provided the second. **Roll call was given to accept the draft amendment into the Natural Resources Bylaws as read by George.** Marshall Douglas, John Fleischli, Tim Caughran, Mick Wanless, Joseph Mark, Lynn Gipson, Anthony Tindall & Kerry Leigh. **Absent:** Jerry Hiller, Scott Bryant, Darel Martin.

OSLAD Update – Lisa Cotner – IDNR's plan is to accept applications for the next round of OSLAD between May 3 through July 1, 2021, and to ask the legislature for \$29 million; the same amount of money that has been available for the last few rounds of funding. Until there is a state budget, we won't know for sure if we can proceed as planned. Funding for OSLAD comes from the real estate transfer tax revenue. Despite

the pandemic, the fund balance looks stable. Kathy Barker has retired; Judy Bauer will oversee the OSLAD program at this time.

IDNR's Diversity, Equity, Accessibility & Inclusion Plan – Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko –

Cinnamon is the Director of the Illinois State Museum and has been asked to serve as the Agency's DEAI coordinator because of her background in this area. Last year the Governor's office started an initiative working with Agency leadership to develop a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Plan. IDNR had already started discussions on DEI, in the form of DEAI through its strategic plan. A great plan is underway, thinking inclusively not only about those that work at IDNR but our audience and what we can do differently to think more reflectively and react more accurately in our relationships with the people of Illinois. Illinois is a very diverse state and our agency does not reflect the same level of diversity. DEAI refers to Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion. The Governor's initiative uses DEI, while a matter of semantics, IDNR wanted to include accessibility. Diversity is all the ways people are different and the same at individual group levels. Equity is the fair and just treatment of those members in that group. Diversity means you are invited to the party. Equity means invitations say the same thing. Accessibility is equitable access to everyone – the invitation is understood by everyone and all needs are accommodated. Once D, E, and A are addressed you can say that you are an inclusive institution. Inclusion refers to the intentional, ongoing efforts to ensure that diverse individuals fully participate in all aspects of the organizational work including decision making.

The heart of the DEAI Plan includes four goals that revolve around people, culture, audience, and structure. The plan was created with IDNR's leadership team, consultation from the Morton Group and has the support of the Governor's Office. This plan is a plan for the entire agency including all advisory groups and bodies attached to the agency. The committee will be working to amplify and make sure these goals are met. Marshall asked what results have been seen, does it carry over to hiring and has it been an internal process or have we brought in any outside groups to help guide us. Cinnamon stated that it's still early, but people are interested. All DEAI committee members have a title block, and when an email goes out you see DEAI. The biggest outcome has been enthusiasm; they are hungry for training and hungry to know they are supported in difficult conversations, and it does translate into recruitment and hiring. The Museum has brought in an external consultant to help on Museum issues, but the agency as whole has not. Kerry stated that she has really read through this plan and the Morton Group is impressive. If the narrative expanded to include more about

how you are working with that group and put it into context a bit better, maybe there would be a better understanding of the barriers and challenges that we face. As an example, Kerry noted one challenge under Objective 2 - 1, number 5 where we have qualified candidates – she understands that an agency has a lot of people who stay in the job for a long time, and diversification can be difficult because there's not a lot of turnover. Staff diversification can also be difficult because of state budget issues. In that section there could be another objective that is more proactive and focuses on internship, actually building experience levels with people. Kerry's organization is partnering with a local organization to send promising, talented, and underprivileged kids to college. They will be promoting internships to get them interested in the kind of jobs that they are looking for, whether it's environmental engineering, biology, etc. Could we be more pro-active in expanding an internship program, not to just reach qualified candidates but to actually create an internship program? Cinnamon stated that there has been talk about the importance of internships. As staff become more engaged in DEAI you are going to see that come to life. In reference to the Morton Group, the plan provided to the board was approved by the Governor's Office, so we are not able to really change it, but we are creating a stoplight updating process where we report to them regularly. View this as a start and that its evolving. Kerry stated that this could be an overarching document and possibly doing a deeper dive into DNR for programs/sites, etc., and even looking at it programmatically.

In Kerry's organization they are setting up an Equity Task Force and she likes that the committee is not just working with the Senior Management Team but with all staff at DNR. One of her struggles has been how to create a common language within the organization not just with the Equity Task Force, but with staff and their board. What does it actually mean, what does it look like? One of the things that they are starting to look at is the doctrine of discovery and displacement of people owning land, and how only land in itself is a privilege of white people. As we drill down and develop in the future, one thing to think about is equity & diversity questions and how it is it congruent with climate change. It could open some new doors. Where could conservation meet the community needs - how are we planning to go out and have community conversation's and is there someone who could be part of the statewide organizations that are starting to have these conversations. You might consider in Goal #3, #4 translating the website into Spanish or any other language. Taking a look at how the DNR messages is going to be really important. Creating a common language within the organization but how is that language expressed into the community. Kerry added there's an opportunity for IDNR to be more visionary about how you can develop

authentic community relationships and listening and finding synergies. The Morton Group had a video about how to get diverse people on your board. What people general think is that you get a diverse set of people who think like you do. When we open ourselves up to this diverse, inclusive concept, there will be people who think differently and have different priorities. There needs to be mechanisms for honoring those different priorities as we do a deeper dive. Kerry would like to see more in the narrative. The first bullet point is 95% white within the agency. It would be nice to match that, do a comparison – what are the state demographics. Overall, Kerry was impressed with the plan. Cinnamon added that she is excited about the conversations the leadership teams are having; it's only going to get better.

Anthony Tindall stated that he is thankful DNR has started working on this; it's promising and exciting that it's going in this direction. Anthony works for The Forest Preserve District of Cook County and they have also started doing its own Racial, Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Plan. They consulted with the University of Illinois Chicago and it has similar goal's, but they have included a land acknowledgement component. Having something similar at IDNR would also be impressive. Cinnamon stated that those conversations have been held – what is the nature of tribal outreach at DNR and what are the relationships we hope/need to build. There are a lot of moving parts. Cinnamon is interested in land acknowledgement and tribal acknowledgement language. DNR doesn't have a huge network of tribal relationships, although we hope to in the future. The Director stated that she hoped the board could see what was presented by Cinnamon today is that we are sincere about this initiative. It's clearly a work in progress and we appreciate the boards input. Cinnamon has strengthened our efforts here and is the right person for us in taking this leadership role and helping us become more comfortable with the conversation. Because of Cinnamon we are meeting with Chief Harper the Chief of the Peoria Tribe; we are making progress but have a long road ahead of us.

Anthony will email their plan to Cinnamon, and to Kerry Leigh.

Endangered Species Update – Chris Young – The two biggest news items are at the Federal level, one being the Monarch butterfly. The Monarch was under review from the Fish & Wildlife Service who have rendered a decision to preclude listing at this time due to other priorities. They have resolved this until FY2024 with the idea that there will be more time to get conservation efforts on the ground nationwide. Illinois is part of a much larger organization of stakeholders, conservation organizations and other

government agencies who are working on Monarch conservation. This will give us an opportunity to see if conservation efforts are working.

The Grey wolf was extirpated in the 1860's/1870's. However, on occasion, a young wolf will wander in Illinois for a period of time; historically we've had about 11 occurrences. The Grey wolf was delisted by the federal government earlier this year but was immediately challenged in court. All federal species are automatically added to the Illinois list of threatened & endangered species. The Illinois Endangered Species Protection board have met and has decided not to take action until it's played out in court.

Wildlife Update – Chris Young - Most of IDNR Wildlife staff, with help from other divisional staff are in Northern Illinois and engaged in Chronic Wasting Disease management & surveillance. Samples are taken from deer that are provided by our hunters or by those that we remove during our management, then they are tested. Each year our positivity rate hovers between 1 & 2 percent.

Due to the pandemic, we have had to reinvent a lot of programs and I'm very proud of our staff, and our lands staff who have kept all of our hunting programs this past fall. Hunting has a very social aspect. We didn't have site or daily drawings. We had people stay in their cars and had them come in one by one. A lot of protocols went into each and every activity. It was all to keep our programs going and to give people the opportunity to be outside, and to also keep staff and the members of the public safe.

Board Comments:

Anthony Tindall asked for confirmation that the Monarch will be listed by 2024. Chris stated that there will be another opportunity for them to consider a potential listing.

Marshall asked if DNR is doing any programs that set up habitat for the Monarch? Chris stated that the Conservation Reserve program, CRP is a federal program that has many programs within CRP. On the state level there are small grants that are available. Chris offered to help Marshall connect to someone that could help.

Marshall asked if there had been any movement on the Rend Lake lodge? Director Callahan stated that it is a major process, and in so many ways the facility needs reconstructed. The Capital Development Board has selected an

engineering/architectural firm and they have been on site to evaluate what exactly needs to be done. Once they are done it will go out for bid. We don't know if anything will happen in 2021 but we are hopeful.

Tim Caughran added that since our last meeting, IDNR held the Illinois Pheasant Fund Grant Hearing and the Illinois Habitat Grant Fund Hearing. They were professional meetings that was conducted and administered virtually at a very challenging time. Tim complimented IDNR staff, Chris Young and Mike Wefer for all of their efforts.

Director Callahan thanked all staff for their efforts at today's meeting. John Rogner, Assistant Director joined the call and has been working on a variety of opportunities for our state natural resources. Including a Student Conservation Association where we are in on-going conversations about being actively involved in the Association. We have been in conversations regarding legislation on the 21st Century Conservation Corps. At the state level, legislatively, bills are being introduced and we are reviewing the impacts that they will have on our agency. You may have seen press regarding The Perfect Catch Campaign pointing out the invasive Asian carp species that will soon get a new name, likely in June. The Office of Law Enforcement has put out an on-line survey for input on what we do, what we need to be doing, along with a park survey and it has been very well received by the public.

Kerry stated that she's heard a lot of legislator's have signed on to the federal 30X30 bill, which is 30% of our habitat & natural areas protected by 2030. The Illinois Environmental Council is currently trying to figure out what that means for the state because this is an international initiative and they are saying that the Biden administration is going to promote this initiative. What does that mean for having funding for land acquisition for the State of Illinois? Any thoughts on that? John stated in terms of federal funding, it's too soon to tell. There is a task force the President has charged with figuring out what this looks like at the federal level, and we will have to see how it steps down to the state level. At the state level, there is high school teacher in Pontiac who connected with his representative in the Illinois House and they have sponsored a task force whereby a number of state agencies along with high school teachers and high school students that would be charged with a number of things related to the 30X30 Initiative. It is still in the draft stage, but It's exciting and will help bring young adults into conversations and engaged. Director Callahan added that it's Senator Bennett's bill. Chris added that the definition is yet to be worked out; 30X30 brings a lot of plans together but there's a lot of work ahead.

Kerry asked about the Chairmanship since John's term ended in January. John stated that it will be discussed at the next meeting. Chairmanship is voted on at the second meeting of the year which will be May 24, 2021.

Public Comments: None heard.

Marshall Douglas motioned to adjourn at 4:10 pm.; Tim Caughran provided the second.

Roll Call was given to adjourn. Those in favor: Marshall Douglas, John Fleischli, Tim Caughran, Mick Wanless, Joseph Mark, Lynn Gipson, Anthony Tindall & Kerry Leigh.

Absent: Jerry Hiller, Scott Bryant, Darel Martin.