

Special Village Board Meeting

Wednesday, July 13, 2016  
6:00 p.m

Members Present: Tom Davies, Fred La Rosa, Steve Fritz, Orv Damrau, Anton Anday, Al Tessmann  
Members Excused: Andrew Timm

Others Present: Dan Mahoney, Karen Swanson, Debbie Sniadajewski, Bill Konkol, Roy Hopfensperger

1. Mr. Davies called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Mr. Davies explained that members of the audience will have 3 minutes to speak on each of the wish list items. He queried the board members as to whether they would like to just listen tonight and take action later or to listen and take action tonight.

- ✓ **Mr. Damrau moved to listen to commentary on the wish list items and take action at a later date. Mr. Anday seconded and the motion carried.**

Mr. Mahoney read each wish list item followed by his, Mr. Davies' and Mr. Anday's prepared responses. Commentary from the public follows.

**Wish List Item 1:**

Cancel remaining Forest Stewardship Management Plan and we respectfully ask that going forward that the Village of Plover does NOT sign any logging contract or do any in-house logging without at the very least a 1 year discussion period with residents and committee formed, e.g. Friends of the Little Plover River Park through new enhanced public notice.

**Response:**

President Davies, Trustee Anday and I don't see the need to cancel the Forest Stewardship Management Plan, however, we feel that revisions are necessary to address items that we have agreed upon, including text revisions, review of potential plant and wildlife issues, and timing of any work to be. This revision, and subsequent review and approval by the Village Board, will occur before any additional work is undertaken in Little Plover Park on the water utility owned land.

We feel establishing a year or more time frame is arbitrary. It also would prevent the Village from dealing with any emergency issues that could arise (i.e. dealing with the emerald ash borer which has now been found in Portage County and which will trigger action requirement by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources). While we agree that adequate time must be provided for public input, we do not support the implementation of such an arbitrary time frame.

Mr. Mahoney stated that the next Parks Development Committee meeting will be considering the Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan due to the emerald ash borer being present in Portage County. He stated that the next potential reforestation action in the Little Plover River Park, according to the DNR forester, will be 8 to 10 years away, therefore, the current board will not be planning now for what will happen 8 to 10 years later.

**Commentary:**

Wendy Allen, 2521 Golden Rd., questioned if trees will be cut in ten years and stated that the park is for animals and not just people.

Mr. Mahoney stated that, in 8 – 9 years, the plan will be reviewed by the board in place at that time. He stated that he cannot tell what they will recommend, but they will work with the public.

Mr. Davies stated that the plan for the Little Plover River Park was selective cutting and the forester did look for nesting areas. A reforestation plan has never been implemented for this park, but it was done for the longevity of the park.

Mr. Mahoney stated that the true goal was for the long term viability of the forest to deal with the number of diseased oak trees. As a result, diversity with respect to plant and wildlife would arise.

Liz Williams, 200 Black Forest Ln, questioned if the Village received money from the timber harvesting.

Mr. Mahoney stated that, when forest management discussion first occurred, it was a matter of how much would it cost. The logger was paid for his work and the Village received \$10,100 from the harvesting. He stated that the perception seems to be that the Village did this for money, but over the course of a 10 year harvesting plan, it comes out to approximately \$1,000 per year of revenue for the Village. Therefore, it was not about generating money.

Ms. Williams questioned what the money will be used for and why was the slash left

Mr. Mahoney stated that it will be placed in the Parks fund. He also mentioned that 80% of the nutrients for new growth come from the remains left in the park.

John Koutre, 2331 Rainbow Dr., discussed selective cutting, and mentioned conversations he had with Public Works personnel regarding unmarked trees being taken down at the discretion of the logger.

Mr. Davies responded that oak wilt involves a perimeter and, therefore, not all trees were marked.

Dave Hendrickson, 190 Black Forest Ln, questioned if the Black Forest reforestation plan was for commercial purposes and would it occur this fall.

Mr. Mahoney stated that they will re-look at the plant and wildlife and revise the plan based on recommendations received from the LPR park project. He clarified that that the property adjacent to Black Forest Subdivision is public property because it is owned by the Water Department, but is it not classified as park and is not for public use. The land could be put up for sale. He stated that forest management could convince future interest in the property to preserve its natural state.

Sandy Knoll, 231 Black Forest Ln., stated that they own two lots, more residential property than anyone else in the subdivision, abutting Water Dept. property. She stated that she saw pictures of the Little Plover River Park.

Dave Knoll, 231 Black Forest Ln, mentioned that land was set aside for park land years ago when subdivisions were developed, and questioned if it's possible that some of this property planned for reforestation could be set aside for park/recreation purposes.

Mr. Mahoney referenced the 140 acre conservancy area that is being developed north of the Black Forest Subdivision.

Roberta Johnston, 1921 Brookridge Dr., described the logging trucks taking cut huge trees from the Little Plover River Park. She stated that she was part of a group in the 1980's that wanted to preserve the LPR park and referred to a newspaper article praising the Village of Plover for purchasing land and preserving it for park purposes. She feels that the path through the park is in worse condition and that all forest management should be stopped.

Bill Seybold, 2421 Golden Rd., stated that he saw the forest management plan for the Black Forest area and feels that there should be public review of plans and input before any implementation.

Lynn Seifert, 2001 Chippewa Dr., stated that she bought her property in the 1980's because of all of the trees. She stated that she walked the trails in the park and saw the marked trees and figured only a few

would be taken out. She stated that perhaps a few trees had to be taken out but admits that she doesn't understand the process. She referenced the towering pines and felt that, with the cutting of the trees, the park is noisy now and not as peaceful.

Ed Miller, 2300 Plover Springs Dr., felt that the park looked awful, mentioned the cell tower in the park and questioned what was next.

Konrad Chojnacki, 1451 Mulberry Dr., discussed trenching. Mr. Davies responded that the process requires trenching 75 feet away from the tree, is only good for one year and was not supported by the forester.

Mr. Chojnacki mentioned the blue marks on the trees not creating a stump. Mr. Mahoney stated that they will take that into consideration in the future.

Mr. Knoll proposed another meeting before anything takes place on the water utility property. Mr. Mahoney concurred.

Dave Hillier, 2410 Magnolia Dr., expressed his concern when he walked through the LPR park.

**Wish List Item 2:**

We respectfully ask that the Village of Plover officially establish procedural changes:  
Enhanced Public Notice.

- Please, no more just 24 hour notice regarding LPR Park.
- Regular updates to citizens regarding LPR and all parks by mail, e-mail, newspapers and social media; specifically regarding LPR Park to all residents within a 3 mile radius.

**Response:**

The Village of Plover will continue to follow State Statutes as it relates to meeting notices (which requires a minimum notice of 24 hours). Unless there has been a need for an emergency meeting, the Village has always provided meeting notices on the Friday prior to the week of scheduled meeting (Village meetings are typically held on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday evenings). In addition, all meeting/agenda notices will continue to be published on the Village's website and will be posted in three public places (outside of the Village Municipal Center, outside of the Public Works Department building, and outside the Boys & Girls Club building), consistent with Village policy for at least the last 2 decades.

During our conversations on May 17<sup>th</sup>, President Davies, Trustee Anday and I agreed that we would address the issue of Parks Committee meetings held the same day of Village Board meetings to address your concern that time be given between the Parks Committee meetings and Village Board meetings (to allow the public to consider agenda items/recommendations of the Parks Committee and provide input if they so desire). We will look to change Park Committee meeting dates to address this concern.

Your request for increased notification and updates/newsletters to Village residents regarding Little Plover River Park would have staffing and financial impacts. As such, this item will be addressed by the Village Board. Also, you may not be aware, but your request to provide information and notices to residents within a 3 mile radius of Little Plover River Park means that all Village of Plover residents would need to be notified, as a 3 mile radius encompasses the entire Village.

**Commentary:**

Wendy Allen suggested collecting residents' emails and distributing information.

Mr. Mahoney stated that this could be looked into.

Janice Seybold, 2421 Golden Rd., suggested checking out the system that the City of Stevens Point utilizes.

Lynn Seifert questioned how long before the last newsletter went out that the Village knew about the LPR park forest management and stressed it being brought to the residents' attention.

Mr. Mahoney responded that, the Village felt forest management impacted adjacent property owners the greatest. Letters were sent to property owners adjacent the LPR park, even though this wasn't required. It was expected that the neighbors would talk to each other and spread the information by word of mouth, but this obviously didn't happen.

**Wish List Item 3:**

Village Park Development Commission should meet at least 6 times a year.

**Response:**

Village President Davies, Trustee Anday and I would agree to schedule a minimum of quarterly Parks Committee meetings annually. At least one of those meetings would be devoted to long range and capital improvement planning consideration. If there is no pressing business for the Parks Committee, however, additional meetings will not be scheduled.

**Commentary:**

Konrad Chojnacki mentioned meetings addressing the LPR park, but questioned the Village's other 17 parks. Mr. Mahoney stated that the Village will be updating the Village's Park Plan and each park will be updated.

Liz Williams suggested breaking down notification to residents by Trustee, i.e. have them talk to their constituents.

**Wish List Item 4:**

We feel that the integrity of the LPR Neighborhood Park has been changed forever far beyond its original intent especially in the last several years. As a direct result of the above, we request that the Village of Plover Board officially recognize the formation of the Friends of the Little Plover River Park as a 501(c)3.

- One Village Trustee (or an alternative) should represent the Village of Plover on the Friends of the Little Plover River Park Committee and the Village Parks Development Commission to ensure good communications.

**Response:**

Without knowing the intent, bylaws, and policies of the 501(c) 3, it is not possible to commit support to the proposed organization. In addition, support – especially financial support – would set a precedent that may require the Village Board to offer financial support to other 501(c) 3 organizations.

Also, it is unclear as to why there needs to be two groups (501(c) 3) and Parks Committee that would oversee Little Plover River Park.

If a citizens group wished to form a 501(c) 3, that would be entirely up to you, including if you wish to ask Village Board members or staff to serve on a Board (This is what the Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association did. They created a 501(c) 3 in order to raise funds for development of the Little Plover River Conservancy area. The Village President and Administrator were asked to serve on the Board. The Village has not and will not be asked to make any contributions to this 501(c) 3 organization).

**Commentary:**

Bill Seybold read the Mission Statement of the Friends of the Little Plover River Park as follows:

The Little Plover River Park is a unique 56 acre urban park with a class 1 trout stream running through it. Our mission is to work with the Village of Plover and village residents to support, encourage and foster the preservation, care and management of the forest, water, and wildlife of Little Plover River Park. We promote a harmonious relationship with the parks native wildlife and encourage the community to protect the parks delicate ecosystems. All forest and river management must take this holistic approach and reflect the importance of wildlife habitat, aesthetics, protection of native plants and animals, water quality, soil erosion and compatible forest recreation.

**Wish List Item 5:**

Formation/structure/procedures of Friends of the Little Plover River Park Committee

- 3 citizens, members of this group should sit on the Village Parks Development Commission.
- These members will be selected by the Friends of the Little Plover River Park Committee.

**Response:**

By Village Ordinance, all appointments to any Village Committee are recommended by the Village President and must be approved by the Village Board. President Davies, Trustee Anday and I do not recommend changing this Ordinance for one Committee.

Also the Parks Committee has 7 members, 2 of which are Village Board members. Your request would be that 3 of the 5 citizen members would be from one special interest group. That would not provide the balance we prefer on this Committee. That being said, President Davies would be open to suggestions for appointments to the Parks Committee (as occurs with the Springville Pond Committee). The Village President would retain the right to make final appointment recommendations to the Village Board.

**Commentary:**

Bill Seybold stated that because, by ordinance, appointments are made by the President or Village Board, which he feels allows little possibility to get representation other than those candidates preferred by the Village, they will attempt to make appointment recommendations when possible.

**Wish List Item 6:**

Financial Structure of the Friends of the Little Plover River Park Organization:

We request from the Village of Plover, that since there is a great deal of direct income from the Little Plover River Park (e.g. monthly cell tower income and the recent logging of the Little Plover River Park), that 60% of such income be deposited/transferred into a "restricted account" by either one of the two mechanisms listed below. In either case the Village would have representation on the "board" and financial committee of the Friends of the Little Plover River Park organization.

- a. The FLPR Park organization could be established as a 501(c) 3 under Golden Sands RC&D. Deposits and disbursements would reside there; the FLPR Park would have a separate code number from other Golden Sands account plus another code number for tracking any grants received.

The Village is aware that the national/state organization is well established and has a large Board of Directors with County representation plus others. The Village of Plover has also utilized Golden Sands RC&D's expertise for years.

- b. The second scenario could be set up within the Village of Plover budget structure as a "restricted" account within the Village Park Development Commission structure. The Village would have to provide, as would Golden Sands RC&D, separate accounts for the FLPR Park and Grants received; it is important that all grant funds be separately tracked. NOTE: in both scenarios we feel that a portion of the fund should be used to plant shade trees in other Village parks. We have heard that would be welcomed by those attending games and during practice sessions. This might also help meet your Tree City requirement standards but does not exclude other uses.

**Response:**

Currently, income from the cell tower lease is placed in a segregated park reserve fund for use in all Village Parks. President Davies, Trustee Anday and I feel that this is the best use of that income. Also, income received from the Little Plover River Forestry Management Project (approximately \$10,100) has been placed in the Parks Reserve fund.

The Parks Capital Improvement Fund is 100% funded by sources other than the tax levy. Park impact fees, a portion of hotel/motel room tax funds (although State Statutes require that we reduce the contribution to the Parks Reserve Fund over the next several years), grants, and income from the cell tower lease are the sole funds available for funding park improvements. President Davies, Trustee Anday and I are not supportive of diverting 60% of cell tower funds and logging funds to one specific park.

Given the limited funds available for all parks and that not taxpayer dollars are used to fund the Parks Capital Improvement Fund (\$139,000 for all Village parks), it is critical that funds not be diverted from the limited income sources we have.

**Commentary:**

Lynn Seifert questioned if logging has taken place in any other parks in the Village or if any of them have a cell tower. Mr. Mahoney stated that Forest Pines Park and Plover Pines park have been logged in the past. Woyak Park has a cell tower but it was sold to a private company by the previous owner of the Royal Sports Center (n.k.a. the Boys & Girls Club) before the Village acquired the property.

Mr. Davies stated that, hopefully in a few years, people will see how much better the LPR park will look.

Mr. Mahoney asked what the residents would like to see the logging/cell tower money spent on.

Lynn Seifert felt that the road leading into the LPR park could be cleaned up and new plantings established.

Wendy Allen stated that she is in favor of leaving the slash and questioned how much income the cell tower in the LPR Park generates. Mr. Mahoney stated that the Village receives \$500 per month.

Jim Gast, 1520 Ashwood Dr., questioned why the logging remnants couldn't be removed and ground up. Mr. Davies stated that, leaving the slash was the Forester's recommendation.

Mr. Mahoney discussed Village of Plover Public Works Department staffing issues and having them devote more of their time and resources to the LPR Park will take away from other services provided to Village residents.

Margaret Hillier, 2410 Magnolia Dr. questioned how the logger was chosen. Mr. Mahoney explained that the DNR Forester recommended a contractor with whom he has had previously work with.

Bill Seybold referenced the Forest Stewardship Management Plan recommending that "care should be taken to limit damage within reason to the existing seedlings/saplings that are established on the forest floor" with no recommendation of replanting due to sufficient undergrowth.

**Wish List Item 7:**

We request that the Village of Plover adhere to the "Tree City" designated 4 standards and show "good faith" in its future tree plantings which must be diverse to promote habitat. In other words, if it doesn't feed or house something, don't plant it and avoid modified stunted trees whenever possible.

"Tree City" designation Standards 1, 2 and 3 were totally ignored. We request that in the future before any tree is removed that a forester is consulted in absolute conjunction with an ornithologist and a biologist along with appointed citizens.

We also request that before any planned changes to plant life in the LPR Park and Little Plover River that a biologist be consulted along with appointed citizens. This includes the potential use of any pesticide or herbicide to deal with something such as expected invasive species explosion. We are going on record that we oppose ANY use of chemicals in the LPR Park and anywhere on the Little Plover River and its watershed without public input and full discussion.

**Response:**

President Davies, Trustee Anday and I have discussed the Village's designation as a Tree City with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Urban Forester Don Kissinger, including the criteria used to designate the Village a Tree City. Mr. Kissinger has informed the Village we meet the required standards. The Village will continue to communicate with DNR staff to ensure we are meeting all Tree City standards and requirements.

As previously stated, President Davies, Trustee Anday and I agree that we will consult with plant and animal biologists as we revise the existing Forest Management Plans, or develop new plans. Such consultations will be completed prior to any tree removal recommended in such plans.

**Commentary:**

Konrad Chojnacki stated that, with regard to the Tree City USA standards, there was no information about \$2 per capita being put into the Parks fund. Mr. Mahoney explained that a portion of the parks fund goes toward the Public Works Department staff annually preparing and implementing a tree care management plan, which in turn is submitted to the DNR.

Bill Seybold feels that, to meet the requirements, a citizen lead advisory board working with professionals to develop a plan should be pursued.

Janice Seybold stated that she had a hard time with the word "thinning". Mr. Mahoney stated that they will clearly communicate intentions with the public.

Than Grosse, 2210 Plover Springs Dr., questioned if there is a contract for logging in 8 to 10 years. Mr. Mahoney stated there is not. He explained that any forestry management occurring in 8 to 10 years will be dealt with the board and staff in place at that time.

Than Grosse stated that he would like to know how each of the Village Board members individually feel about the future of forest management.

**Al Tessmann:**

Stated that he has voted numerous times to enhance the Village's parks. It is a balancing act with a public works staff of 10 and the numerous request for services. He feels that, in 10 years, the Village will have a beautiful parks system expanding on what we have now.

**Anton Anday:**

Stated that his son is an Urban Forester and he took his brother-in-law, who is a logger, through the park. He has listened carefully to the comments and sees a need for more communication. They will take a look at leadership from the Parks Development Committee and take a look at the Parks Plan over the next 10 years as it relates to each park for the good of the community.

**Steve Fritz:**

Stated that he is currently the Parks Development Committee chairperson and that he has a background as an arborist. He discussed his family's background and the WCC being the foundation of forest management. He used the analogy of the need to split hostas every five years. He stated that it is not a pretty sight to split hostas, but they end up producing healthy plants. He stated that he has a comfort level with work that he has done with foresters and arborists and supports the Village's forest management plan.

Orv Damrau:

Discussed growing up on a farm near forest land. He believes in cutting down the dead trees instead of just letting them fall in order to promote new growth.

Fred La Rosa:

Stated that he doesn't know what the next 10 years will bring but does know that the Village of Plover has the best park system second to none and the board is doing what they think is best for the community. He stated that the board, staff and community need to work together. He used the analogy of a construction site looking disastrous until the beautiful building is finished and standing. He stated that they are not perfect, they make mistakes, and they learn from them.

Than Grosse feels that the audience desires a "cutting as you need to" approach.

Tom Davies:

He apologized for more trees being taken from the LPR Park than intended. He discussed the shock factor and the intention to promote new growth. Any further reforestation shouldn't be as upsetting as this was the first one ever for the LPR Park. He stated that the publics' comments and concerns are not falling on deaf ears. They are listening and we must go forward from here.

Liz Williams suggested that, with regards to developing future forestry management plans, the community be involved before being logged.

Mr. Mahoney stated that an Urban Forestry class from UWSP may be used to mark trees on the Village owned property.

Dave Hendrickson, 190 Black Forest Ln, stated that he supports utilizing the forestry class for marking trees and suggested that they be marked in two places. He also discussed closer monitoring of the logger.

Bill Seybold mentioned that UWSP's Wildlife Management Program may be a helpful resource as students are required to complete a project for the program.

Jerry Knuth, 911 4<sup>th</sup> St., suggested that, going forward, other invasive species such as buckthorn should be looked at closely.

Mr. Mahoney stated that the Forester already looks for invasive species on a regular basis and monitors such.

**Wish List Item 8:**

We request that the Village of Plover adhere to the "Bird City" designation that was also awarded in "good faith". Please not criteria Basic Requirements...especially (c) "existing bird habitat has legal protections". Which we believe was violated by the recent logging. This existing habitat was severely compromised with likely the loss of nesting owls and chicks and the nests of other returning cavity dwellers.

**Response:**

Village staff will contact the appropriate Bird City representative to ensure the Village of Plover is meeting Bird City standards and criteria.

**Commentary:**

None

**Wish List Item 9:**

We request that the Little Plover River Park never have baseball night lights and that no additional baseball diamonds be added.

**Response:**

The only "field" lighting that occurs in Little Plover River Park is for the tennis/pickle ball courts. There are no plans (neither Village nor Plover Whiting Youth Athletic Association) to add lighting to the baseball fields in this park. In addition, there is not adequate physical space to add another baseball diamond in this park. Lastly, the Village adopted Park Plan shows no improvement for baseball facilities in this park.

**Commentary:**

None.

**Wish List Item 10:**

Springville Pond is the LPR and those living along the river from its headwaters to the east to the Wisconsin River to the west also need to be included in meetings for whatever happens to the land upstream affects the river and pond downstream. We believe a mailing database exists with the County if the Village does not have it. We feel identifying all affected landowners is possible.

**Response:**

Please see Item 2, as the response for this is contained therein.

**Commentary:**

Sandy Knoll questioned if notifications will be made by email.

Mr. Davies responded that the Village website is the most reliable source for meeting information. Agendas are offered to the media, but it is their choice to whether or not they publicize the information.

Janice Seybold questioned if wood chipping the trails after the trees have been taken out is something the Village has considered.

Mr. Hopfensperger stated that if trees are considered hazardous, they will be removed and they do chip them. He discussed the trees they've taken down because residents call about them being hazardous.

Kent Hall, Stevens Point, stated that a bird census was not taken prior to the LPR Park being logged, however, he does have a bird census for the Village owned property (Twin Towers Dr) for anyone that is interested.

Mr. Davies stated that the next step will be to set another meeting.

Mr. Mahoney stated that staff will compile the comments and forward to the Village Board.

3. Mr. Tessmann moved to adjourn at 7:32 p.m. Mr. Fritz seconded and the motion carried.

Submitted by: Karen Swanson, Clerk  
Dan Mahoney, Administrator