



Minutes for July 12, 2025 Board Meeting

2:00 p.m. at Ross Shrago's - 43014 Patton Rd, Gays Mills

1. Meeting called to order by Becky Fernette at 2:10 p.m.
2. Roll call - Bob Costanza absent. Guest: Bob Retko
3. Approval of minutes from May 10, 2025 - Jack made the motion to approve, Roger seconded. Motion carried.
4. Treasurer's report - Steve
 - Reviewed April & May 2025 Cash Balances reports
 - Unrestricted cash: \$52,399.28, Restricted cash: \$20,002.75, Endowments (DOS, Sylvan Rd, Land Mgmt): \$500,257.
 - Cost share to Chapter Support is \$5,974.00 each month starting in April 2025.
 - Becky reviewed the updated budget spreadsheet and noted that April and May reports have expenses not included in our budget: Electric bill for Borah Creek, Millville property tax, tractor registration & insurance. Will need to create line items in next year's budget for these expenses
5. Chapter Support Representative report - Kay
 - Cost-share was approved.
 - Chapter Support is updating their information about the sites, e.g., trail length, difficulty, terrain, bathroom, parking, dogs allowed, ADA accessibility, hunting/fishing/hiking allowed, etc.
 - Resignations at Chapter Support
 - i. Sarah Barron - will remain on contract to produce The Promoter\
 - ii. Rob Schubert - will stay until a replacement is found
6. Committee updates
 - Land Management - Jack reviewed the Kussmaul property proposal that was emailed to Board members re: donating his land to TPE.
 - i. Chapter Land Management committee approved the proposal.
 - ii. Steve motioned to approve the proposal, Gary E seconded. Jack abstained. Discussion about access. Jack will arrange for a survey to place an access road on the west side of the site. Motion carried.
 - Events
 - i. Prairie Discovery Event: Becky & Jack
 - June 28, invitation only, with 3 additional : 9 people total attended
 - It went well, attendees were engaged
 - Becky followed up with thank yous and outreach, shared process with Chapter Support
 - Planning another PD event at Eldred next year

- ii. Upcoming events - Kay
 - July 19 - Iris Drive prairie walk from 10-Noon. Jim Rogala and Melinda Knutson from Coulee Region will be guides, neighbors/land owners near Iris Drive invited
 - July 26th - Second part of Burn School taught by Steven Winter (MN Driftless). Only 2 people signed up - Kay will reach out to Chapter Support for help with recruiting. She added that we need to schedule this training soon after the February annual conference.
 - July 27 - Summer gathering at Glacial Prairie Chapter to celebrate the purchase of Mukwanago River Barrens site.
 - July 29 - Group of prairie fans visiting from W. Dundee, IL - touring Iris Drive, Borah Creek, Feist, and Sylvan Drive.
 - Aug 2nd - Prairie walks at Jack's and Marjie Bennett's
 - Aug 16th - Minnesota Oak Savanna Chapter launch celebration, Richardson Nature Center, MN
- Scholarship - Lynnette: Recipient selected, to be notified.
- Barn - Becky:
 - i. Masonite panels received, will paint them on both sides to protect from moisture. Plan is to put up a plastic vapor barrier on east and south walls, and ceiling, before putting up the panels on walls & ceiling
 - ii. Roger has added outlets in the barn
 - iii. Steve to coordinate with cement contractor to stabilize the corner

7. Site steward updates

- Borah Creek: Steve, Gary E, Gary A
 - Mowing fire breaks, paths, invasives, spot spraying
 - Mississippi Valley Conservancy plans to monitor easement in the near future
 - Cleaned up area around the parking lot and kiosk
 - Weevil bio- control for spotted knapweed plans are moving forward, need to get the permit to DNR, discussion for timing, continued use and release
 - Sign needs to be replaced. Chapter Support has contract with sign company. Needs to be included in next year's budget. Discussion on what should go on the sign tabled until this winter
- Bush Clover: Gary E
 - Removed and treated invasive woodies
 - Plan to put in fire breaks this summer to prepare for a burn
- Double Oak
 - i. Site steward needed
- Eldred: Jack
 - The prison crew spent 2 days digging parsnip, bracken fern mowed once, second cutting in August. Spot sprayed largest area that was forestry mowed, will need to repeat forestry mowing on 1/3 of the area

- Steve inquired if prison crew could be used at other sites. Jack will let us know when we can request the crew; they can use backpack sprayers and chainsaws, but we provide the tools, will work up to 50 miles from Prairie Du Chien
 - Seed collecting day on July 16th and July 30, & every Wednesday from 9-12 as long as there are seeds collect
 - Feist: Becky
 - Pale purple coneflower blooming. Recent work party removed invasives, girdled trees, some clearing. Joann Wiederholt, Feist's daughter participated and shared the history of the farm
 - Iris Drive: Bob R.
 - Reminder about prairie tour on July 19 from 10-Noon
 - Managing bracken fern to prevent spread, reed canary grass starting in a corner of the property, has been cut and sprayed
 - No update on EQIP funding
 - Sylvan Road: Becky
 - i. Water Quality Trading (WQT) update
 - Approached by Town of Hollandale as we are one of the property owners along the Dodge Branch to modify streambank to reduce phosphorus runoff into stream. Town would reimburse TPE for the work and materials.
 - Draft agreement being revised by Land Management staff/committee at Chapter Support
 - Tom has completed the River Planning Grant Report. (attachment)
 - Thomas Wet: Becky
 - Kristin is meeting with member in another chapter that stewards a wet prairie to learn new management strategies, esp. re: reed canary grass; researching the crayfish that live in the prairie
8. Other business
- Review of 2025 goals & 3 year plans
 - i. Need to revisit joint work parties
 - ii. Met goals for publishing articles
 - iii. Membership has increased due to outreach & following up with lapsed members
 - iv. Making progress toward Events goal - need more committee members
 - v. Need to explore fundraising opportunities
 - Reminder to stewards to schedule work parties
 - Coulee Region Summer Gathering - update by Becky
 - i. Reminder: Glacial Prairie Chapter, 7/27 in Eagle, WI
 - Wish list report out - Becky
 - Will revisit, look for an email
9. New business - Discussion/Decision
- Discussion re: merch and use of logo, need to discuss with chapter support
 - Gary E. expressed concerns about Dan Carter writing management plans. Discussion about having management plans that are consistent across the chapters and properties, we need written management plans to maintain certification, stewards have input into draft plans.

- Gary E memoirs: Chapter Support has arranged for a review of the book that will be published in The Prairie Promoter. Discussed strategies for marketing the memoir - book reads at local libraries, newspaper articles. Gary offered that a percentage of proceeds could benefit the chapter after author is paid for his work.
 - TPE monthly email - Becky is putting out a call for volunteers and writers for our chapter for newspapers, magazines, etc
10. Action items review: Becky will follow up with Chapter Support re: merch, Bob R. to follow up with EQIP
11. Adjournment
- Jack motioned to adjourn, Gary E. seconded. Meeting adjourned at 4 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Lynnette Dornak, Secretary

2025 Goals

- #1 We will continue to make improvements to the barn at Borah Creek to make it suitable to hold events there and to safely and cleanly store Chapter equipment.
- #2 We will investigate having joint work parties with other groups.
- #3 We will apply for and be awarded two grants this year.
- #4 We will publish 2-3 articles in local or online publications.

Three-year Plan

1. Holding 6 events/programs per year.
2. Getting 2-5 new members at each event.
3. Adding QR codes on our signs.
4. Holding fundraising events.

Upcoming meetings:

- September 14 (Sunday) at Borah Creek Barn, 11949 Mt. Ridge Road, Fennimore - annual meeting at 1 p.m., Board meeting to follow
- November 19 via Zoom at 6 p.m.
- January 21, 2026 via Zoom at 6 p.m.
- March 18 via Zoom at 6 p.m.
- May 9 - location TBD