I. CALL TO ORDER AND ZOOM ROLL CALL.
- A quorum of members was present and the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. EDITING AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA FOR JANUARY 13, 2022.
- There were no changes to the agenda.
- Mr. Kohler, supported by Mr. Scott moved approval of the Agenda as submitted. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

III. EDITING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 11, 2022.
- There were no changes to the Minutes.
- Mr. Kohler, supported by Ms. Holmes, moved approval of the Minutes as submitted. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

i. Election results from December 2, 2021 E-mail Communication.
- The election of officers to the ALPMC board took place via e-mail. The following appointments were approved by the Council: Pete Strazdas, Chair; Sharon Dever, Vice Chair, and Kay Chase, Council Secretary.

ii. Recognize Council Vote from December 6, 2021 to Support the Stormwater Sub-Committee’s Recommendation to Not Accept the Project Bid.
- The Stormwater Subcommittee recommended that the Council reject the bid from the contractor for work on the stormwater plan because the bid went over budget. The Council voted via e-mail to accept the recommendation from the subcommittee.

IV. OLD BUSINESS.
- Project Updates.
  i. Storm Water Project.
   - Mr. Kieser provided the following update:
   - The bid from the contractor was well beyond the budget. The project could not proceed without a permit from the state; the permit was approved a few weeks ago.
   - After the bid was rejected, there was a discussion about the possibility of finding other funding sources for the project. Costs for the project are higher than originally estimated. The project will need to be rebid.
   - There could be potential for cost savings on the engineering or construction part of the project, and there are options to get more bids. Funding and rebid are the two main considerations.
   - The infrastructure bill was passed at the federal level in 2021 and that will provide billions of dollars. We are looking for stormwater infrastructure funding, which is not a high priority in the infrastructure bill. There will be a lot of competition for those funds. There is some potential for the Council to get those funds through the EPA or the State, but it would be out in the future.
   - There is nothing highlighted in the state funding through the Clean Michigan Initiative or the 319 funding that would put this project back in the spotlight. These funds are also very competitive. If EGLE (Environment, Great Lakes & Energy) doesn’t deem the project important, it would be hard to get funding and, if the funding is available, it would be a year out.
   - The stormwater project is a shovel-ready project. It has been fully designed and engineered and put out to bid and is now permitted. If acceptable bids are received, the project can proceed.
   - Jeff Breneman, WMU Vice President of Government Affairs, spoke with people at the legislative level and at EGLE about infrastructure funding that might be available in 2022.
• It might be possible to obtain matching funds and use the available $162,000 as a form of match. Internal discussions suggest this project is a good candidate to receive infrastructure funding from the State of Michigan in 2022. This project fits with other projects in the queue. It is uncertain at this point when funding will be made available for this project.

• Mr. Strazdas stated that there is less than a 50% chance that traditional grant funds would be available and there would be a waiting period. A new agency has been opened in Michigan called the Infrastructure Office. The infrastructure funds are being targeted rather than traditional grants.

• Mr. Breneman will get delegates together and that will take time. If federal or state money does not become available over the next few months, there will be more discussion about having internal money for the project.

• Ms. Alkema suggesting encouraging EGLE to make the Asylum Lake stormwater project a priority. Maybe someone could contact them about that. Mr. Strazdas advised that Mr. Breneman has been in contact with representatives at EGLE. He suggested waiting a couple of weeks to see if any progress is made.

• Mr. Kieser stated that the permit from EGLE is good for five years. It was submitted as a minor permit. EGLE said it was a major permit, but they issued it as a minor permit. Some of the permit money will be refunded.

• John Jacobson from Kieser & Associates has been looking into the possibility of making changes to the project to save money. When the capacity of the sediment removal was increased, that increased the bid price.

• There is potential for saving money during the next round of bids. For instance, getting separate bids for the upland area and the lowland area by the lakeshore might also help decrease the cost. Contractors might want to bid only on one portion of the project and that might save money.

• Contractors have been more responsive and more competitive if they don’t have a tight turn around time. The bid could go out with a requested completion time of fall of 2022. A second bid price could be requested for work to be completed by summer of 2023.

• The subcommittee will continue conversations with Kieser & Associates. If the conversations include options for funding, that will be discussed with the Council.

ii. Ecological Study.

• A botanical floristic inventory was done in 2018 by Orbis. That set a new baseline for the ecological status of the Preserve. This would be beneficial in case there is development near the northwest corner of the Preserve, as previously discussed. The goal is to repeat the same plot studies Mr. Bassett initiated in 2008 to serve as an update to show how things have changed and to update the baseline.

• The bid went out in 2021 but Orbis asked for the project to be delayed for a year because their schedule was full. The Council agreed to the request.

• Mr. Bassett sent the bid out in December 2021 stating what had been done and asking for a repeat of that study. The response from Orbis included a bid that was approximately $6,000 more than the $17,000 set aside by the Council.

• There are three options: The Council can ask for less from the contractor, the Council can ask for a modified approach from the contractor to accomplish the same goals, or the Council can ask for an additional $6,000 to cover the cost of the current bid. Mr. Strazdas confirmed that it would be possible to add $6,000 and the Council can vote on that.

• Ms. Holmes requested a review of the benefits of having this re-study. Mr. Bassett referred to a map that provided answers to that question. A company called Native Connections, where Mr. Bassett worked at the time, conducted the study in 2008. The red lines and rectangles on the map show where data was collected. The rectangles are nested plots, which means that data is collected at different scales, including the forest canopy, the trees and vertical strata. There are four strata.

• The data will show what has changed as far as species composition and density. The forest plots will show the changes in the structure of the forest. It used to have a dense shrub layer but now, because of work done by Wildtype, the density of invasive shrubs has been reduced. The lines represent ground-level areas of vegetation and other parameters where data was collected in the prairie and wetlands by big and little Asylum Lake.

• It has been 14 years since the last study and a lot has happened during that time. The new study will serve as a baseline to show changes such as activity on the former Vermeulen property.

• Ms. Holmes suggested that the data could be used to talk to the public and to people who might assist with funding to help educate people about the importance of the Preserve.

• **Mr. Hampton**, supported by Mr. Bassett, moved to add $6,000 to the budget for the ecological study to cover the quote from Orbis. There were no objections from the Council.

iii. Ecological Maintenance.
• Mr. Sauber reported that the entire $20,000 budget went to Wildtype to cover the cost of the work they did in the preserve. They did a great job.
• Mr. Hampton will contact Bill Schneider from Wildtype to let him know one of the files he e-mailed won’t open. When that issue is resolved, Mr. Hampton will forward the information to the Council.

**iv. Garlic Mustard Pull.**

• The ALPA has an outline for the Garlic Mustard pull. Ms. Holmes will have dates and arrangements to review at the next Council meeting.

**v. Install Memorial Tree**

• Mr. Sauber’s crew can work with Mr. Bassett to choose the species, or they can work with the WMU arborist. Mr. Bassett offered to assist with the memorial tree. He will send Mr. Sauber an e-mail.

**vi. Land Management Plan Committee.**

• Mr. Sauber reported that $3,452 was spend for work done by Plantwise on the Prairie burn last spring. There is a balance remaining of $6,548.
• Mr. Bassett spoke with Justin Heslinga about revising the Management Plan. Mr. Heslinga will do as much as he can and request more details as needed. He provided a quote that was a little over $3,000.
• The contractor will provide an update to the Council in March or April. Mr. Bassett will provide assistance in the fall with a goal of having the Land Management Plan revised at the end of the year.
• **Mr. Hampton, supported by Ms. Alkema, moved to approve the full amount of Mr. Heslinga’s quote for his services related to the Land Management Plan. There were no objections from the Council.**
• Ms. Holmes questioned if the updates to the Plan would take that much time. The Land Management Plan Subcommittee discussed details of the Plan and can convey that information to the consultant. Can the Council ask for shorter timeline?
• The Land Management Plan was vague. Mr. Bassett advised that adding specifics will take time. The updates could happen sooner but that will depend on his availability. Mr. Bassett will be very busy by the middle of May, limiting his involvement.
• Ms. Alkema stated that representatives from Parkview Hills reviewed their property and laid out a plan with Mr. Heslinga. Sometimes they spent two hours at a time in Zoom meetings with the contractor. Maybe the Council could provide input when the contractor has something on paper? The project was done in a couple of months for Parkview Hills.
• Mr. Strazdas suggested that someone on the Council could meet with the contractor when Mr. Bassett is not available. Mr. Bassett commented that the Council is asking the contractor to take over with what the Subcommittee started. The Land Management Plan has never been revised.
• It was suggested that an incentive could be provided to move this project up on the list of priorities that the contractor has. Mr. Bassett was not sure if Mr. Heslinga has time to do more.
• Mr. Bassett will continue with getting this project launched, and Mr. Sauber will work on the purchase orders that are required. Feedback from the Council indicates that they would like to proceed with this project as soon as possible.
• Mr. Bassett sent an e-mail to the Council regarding a schedule for the draft plan to be presented in April to get feedback. The budget is on a July 1st timeline. The draft and timelines for the Plan should be available by then.

**vii. Replace Dead Memorial Tree.**

• Mr. Bassett will work with Mr. Sauber to find a native species to replace the memorial tree that did not survive. The same type of tree could be used for both memorials.

**viii. Sign Committee.**

• Ms. Huxmann stated that the balance is incorrect because she hasn’t been reimbursed for $450. The subcommittee is not working on signs at this point. She will work with Mr. Sauber to make sure the reimbursements proceed. There is a specific process that is necessary for that to happen.

**ix. Trails Management Committee.**

• Mr. Sauber paid an invoice for $13,500 for trail improvements in the southeast quadrant of the Preserve. There is a balance remaining of $6,500.
ALPMC Minutes, January 13, 2022, Page 4 of 5

- Mr. Strazdas mentioned that the university accounting system is delayed a month.
- Mr. MacNellis stated that more money will be spent on that trail. An organic base is needed so planting can proceed, but the fall winds blew it off. A work order has been written to have wood chips dumped on the trail. Volunteers might be utilized for that project. There is only about $5,000 left for trails management projects. Mr. MacNellis will ask for money in next year’s budget.

d. BEAVER DECEIVER UPDATE.
- The deceiver has not deceived the beavers as planned. Mr. MacNellis advised that the beavers can create a dam as long as the water keeps flowing further out into the lake. The pipe was full of silt. Tom Holmes, Jeff Palmer and Bob Allison cleared the area that the beavers had blocked, and the water was flowing out again.
- Ms. Holmes stated that the water is down to a trickle again, and the lake level is rising now. The water is not coming through the pipe rapidly; it is spilling over the cage and going into the creek.
- Mr. MacNellis has a plan is to extend the pipe 20 feet and get around the silt collected at the inlet of the pipe. If the silt continues to settle in the inlet and plug it, the pipe might need to go further out into the lake. The inlet is only about four feet deep.
- Mr. Hampton suggested that the Council hire someone to do that work. Maybe it would be better to not wait until spring. The Council could make an emergency budget allocation for the people with the right equipment. Mr. Strazdas agreed and stated that this is a maintenance issue; there are maintenance funds available.
- Mr. Sauber has access to time and material contractors with a pre-bid in place. There are service providers who can work with Mr. MacNellis on this project.
- Ice formation is a hindrance at this point. Mr. MacNellis suggested contacting a contractor to find out what they have to say. Mr. MacNellis and Mr. Sauber will follow up after the meeting.

e. OAK WILT AND OAK TREE AGE DATING UPDATE.
- Mr. Bassett stated that the conversation was originally to use the resistometer, but the Council members misunderstood the purpose of that tool. Now is not a great time to core a tree because it is too cold. This topic can be revisited in April.
- As far as he knows, the trees in the Preserve have not been cored in the past. Maybe the trees in the plots can be cored. Mr. Bassett can work with his co-worker on this project.

V. NEW BUSINESS.

a. Application for Preserve Use.
- Mr. Kohler has not received any applications for use of the Preserve.

b. Parking on Winchell Avenue.
- Ms. Holmes mentioned that the City of Kalamazoo has banned parking all the way down Winchell Ave. The ban might have been a response to parents who were concerned about how traffic affects kids at the Winchell school.
- The ALPA discussed the parking ban at their board meeting and how this affects access to the Winchell entrance of the Preserve. The ALPA members are drafting a letter to Christina Anderson at the City of Kalamazoo, she is hearing concerns from citizens. They will ask for a meeting with her.
- When the Preserve was created, the city contributed a fair amount of funding, and it was clear that the Preserve should be open to everyone. Winchell is the entrance closest to most of the residents in the City of Kalamazoo.
• Ms. Holmes inquired if the Council would like to issue a communication to the City. The Council is charged with the welfare of the Preserve.
• Mr. Scott mentioned that part of the Winchell Neighborhood Plan started by the city was to slow traffic in the neighborhood, particularly on Winchell where the school is located. There would likely be opposition from people in the neighborhood to having more parking on Winchell. The city put bike lanes on Winchell as a traffic slowing measure.
• Mr. Strazdas suggested there is a more appropriate forum for a discussion about parking on city streets. There are competing interests. He suggested the possibility of having signs that direct people to the other entrances to the Preserve.
• Ms. Holmes stated that access to the Preserve is an important issue, and the Council is charged with that responsibility. The city needs to hear the perspective of people who have concerns about having access to all the entrances to the Preserve.
• Ms. Alkema has been in contact with Dennis Randolph, the City’s Traffic Engineer. She is unclear if the city knew that the no-parking rule would create an issue with access to the Winchell entrance to the Preserve. It was suggested that Ms. Holmes could follow up with the city and inquire if some parking could be allowed on Winchell Ave.

c. Oak Trees and Beavers.
• Mr. Sauber gave the approval to put chicken wire around the base of Oak trees at the lake shore to protect them from further damage.
• Mr. Kohler stated that the beavers forage, and they will only go so far from their lodge. Once they deplete available resources, they will leave the area. Deer are probably doing more damage to the trees than what the beavers have done.
• Mr. Lemberg advised that Beavers don’t like Oak trees. If they eat Oaks, they are doing so because they don’t have Willow, Cherry, Alder, Cottonwood etc. Planting Willow trees would also help with shoreline stabilization.
• Mr. Strazdas suggested having a subcommittee to work with Mr. Sauber. There should be something in the Land Management Plan about dealing with the beavers.
• Mr. Kohler suggested letting the beavers leave the Preserve rather than supporting them and enabling them. When they reach their carrying capacity they will move on. The Land Management Plan should reflect that.
• Mr. Kreuzer, Mr. MacNellis, Mr. Sauber and Ms. Holmes volunteered to identify which trees will be wrapped with wire and catalog which trees have been damaged.

d. Need a Committee to Create a Five-Year Budget. (2022 – 2027)
• Mr. Strazdas, Mr. Sauber, Ms. Huxmann and Mr. Frever are on the subcommittee to create the five-year budget. They will study the spending patterns of the Council to determine how much money will be designated and for which projects.

e. Approve Meeting Dates for 2022.
• Mr. Bassett, supported by Mr. Frever, moved to accept the ten meeting dates that were proposed (no meetings in July and December). There were no objections from the Council.

VI. NEXT ON-LINE MEETING.


VII. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS.
• None

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS.
• None

IX. ADJOURNMENT.
• The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.