

Friends of Turtle Creek
Meeting Minutes
June 9, 2015

Attendees: Dean Paynter, Jayne Paynter, Tom Presny, Richard Stenstrom, Hank Woodard, Sue Franz, Terry Meyers, Tom Holmes, Mandy and Bill Magill, Doug and Joan Lownik, Steven Woodman, Tom Holmes, Nancy Johnson, Linda and Gary Polglaze, Therese Oldenburg, Nancy Johnson, Jim Van De Bogart, Sally Olson and Stuart Olson, William Geissler, and Sandy Thorpe

City Staff: Greg Boysen, City of Beloit Public Works Director
Justin Presny, City of Beloit Water Resources Environmental Technician

Meeting location: City of Beloit Water Resources Building - 2400 Springbrook Court

Guest Speaker: Wendy Peich (pronounced 'Pike') DNR Area Water Management Specialist

Time: 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Welcome: Tom Presny welcomed the attendees to the second meeting of the Friends of Turtle Creek. A few volunteers had been working on clearing vegetation which blocked the view of the historic Five Arch railroad bridge over Turtle Creek and realized the need for volunteerism to work on that and other efforts related to Turtle Creek., thus the needs for a friends group.

Introductions and initial comments: We went around the room and each of the 26 attendees introduced themselves and shared brief comments on what needs, activities, and efforts they thought were needed and might benefit Turtle Creek, its neighbors, and users.

Many of the attendees live adjacent to Turtle Creek. Most have had long time exposure to the creek with uses including; paddling on the creek, fishing, nature observation and hiking.

Common needs identified included:

- Shoreline erosion and need for shoreline stabilization.
- Siltation and resulting seasonal shallow areas, with creek becoming wider
- Fallen trees and tree snags that impede stream flow and recreation opportunity.
- Education on how to be good stewards of Turtle Creek
- Schedule Work efforts to improve Turtle Creek.
- Scheduled paddling, tubing, or other activities to enjoy Turtle Creek.

Speaker Presentation: Wendy Peich is WI. DNR Water Regulation and Zoning Specialist for Rock and Dane counties. She oversees water protection programs. She can be reached at (608) 275-3481 or Wendy.Peich@wisconsin.gov Wendy shared that she is responsible for overseeing

Chapter 30 of the WI Code (Navigable Waters and Navigation) reviewing applications and approving permits. (Have a quick look - Chapter 30 covers 71 pages of water regulation, so to be sure, there is significant detail involved with each aspect of water control). Included are water quality, recreation, fish and wildlife and scenic beauty oversight.

In brief summary the following are some of condensed comment highlights:

1. Adjacent property owners along Turtle Creek - own property to the center of the creek, but the State owns the water contained in the creek.
2. Reviewing requests for work in or adjacent to Turtle Creek is done by Wendy and well as Colin Byrnes, Acting Director with The Rock County Planning Office. (Colin can be reached at 757-5587 or bymes@co.rock.wi.us)
3. Sue Graham is DNR Aquatic Plant Biologist serving Rock County and can be reached at (608) 275-3329 or susangraham@wisconsin.gov
4. Non-natural debris or materials can be removed from Turtle Creek. It is illegal to dump leaves, grass clippings, or other organic yard waste into or adjacent to the creek.
5. Removal of branches, limbs, or portions of a tree in a creek are permitted such that there is an opening for navigation. A hand saw in a boat to remove such obstacles is permitted.
6. We as 'The Friends' should consider collectively submitting a list to Wendy of obstacles or problems in the creek that we would like simple review of and approval. The larger the project the more detail and review will be necessary.
7. Creeks are intended to meander naturally and are not to be straight.

Wendy concluded by encouraged anyone with urgent concerns to document them with photographs and mapping and submit them to her for review by herself or other support biologists.

Ideas and Suggestions: At the conclusion of our meeting we opened the meeting up to ideas and suggestions for the coming month: We want to host a meeting with The Town of Turtle at their town hall in the near future. We want to host a social paddling activity. We want to host a work on the creek event once we have any needed approval(s). Future speaker suggestions included: Sue Swanson, Carol Mankiewicz and Dick Newsome (retired) of Beloit College, Biologist Rob Baller, and Mark Edwards with Beloit Parks. It was suggested that we create a 'Friends' web page, which Therese Oldenburg may offer assistance with in the future.

We will intend on meeting in approximately one month.

Meeting adjourned 7:31 PM

Recorded by:
Tom Presny