

**DNR'S DISABILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL
COUNCIL PURPOSE/MISSION**

To advise the Department of Natural Resources on matters pertaining to the accessibility of all department programs and services by persons with disabilities.

- To draft recommendations to the Department for legislation, administrative rules, or department policy.
- To identify and evaluate needs of persons with disabilities and to communicate them to the Department.
- To help to increase public awareness and sensitivity to the needs of persons with
- To communicate with individuals and other organizations dedicated to similar purposes.

**MEETING MINUTES
DISABILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL
FRIDAY MARCH 18, 2022
HORICON MARSH INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION CENTER**

Members Present: Keith Pamperin, John Martinson, Calvin Richtig, Andrea Frisch, Shannon Columb, and John Mitchell

Members Absent: Cathryn Scott and Kristen Engel

Others Present: Nick Zouski, Julie Amakobe, and Barry Gilbeck via the phone

Chair Martinson called the meeting to order at 10:41 am.

First the Council introduced themselves since this is Andrea's and Shannon's first in person meeting with the DAC. It was nice to see everyone in person!

Next the Council reviewed the agenda.

Andrea asked to have Trails Accessibility Tools added to the agenda.

Keith made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of Trails Accessibility Tools. John Mitchell seconded the motion and all were in favor.

The Council next reviewed the meeting minutes from December 17, 2021.

Andrea made a motion to approve the minutes. Keith seconded the motion and all were in favor.

The next agenda item was Customer Service and Licensing Updates led by Barry.

- New license year began on March 1. New licenses are valid upon purchase. Last year's licenses expire on March 31.
- Turkey bonus authorization sales start this coming week. Customers can purchase one authorization per day until the unit and time period are sold out.
- Checks have been sent to all customers to return application fees for those that applied for a wolf harvest authorization or preference point.
- Community fishing ponds opened March 12 This year, the pond fishing season opened Saturday, March 12 and runs through Friday, April 29. Only kids under the age of 15 and certain disabled anglers can fish these urban waters. Information can be found on page 23-24 of the fishing regulations.
- Go Wild has been recently updated with a new online customer dashboard. In addition to the new dashboard, a splash page will pop-up the first time a customer reaches their dashboard. This pop-up will give a brief description about the new dashboard, with the option to Close or Tell Me More. The Tell Me More button will take the user to a DNR web page with more information. Once the pop-up is closed, it won't appear again upon future log ins.

Legislative Updates

- [AB 165 \(see also SB 192\)](#) – combining archer and crossbow hunting licenses. Still in committee. **Status:** *(Failed)* 2022-03-15 - Failed to pass pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 1
- [AB 421 \(see also SB 422\)](#) – access to WisDOT records for State IDs
 - Current status: S – Available for Scheduling
 - 2/18/2022 - Report passage recommended by [Committee on Sporting Heritage, Small Business and Rural Issues](#), Ayes 5, Noes 0
 - 3/15/2020 - Failed to pass pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 1
- [AB 434 \(see also SB 438\)](#) - medical professionals certifying conditions/eligibility for disabled permits. Allows PTs and OTs to certify an applicant for a disabled hunting/fishing permit meets eligibility criteria for issuance of permit. Still in committee.
 - 3/15/2020 - Failed to pass pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 1
- [AB 346 \(see also SB 397\)](#) - a fishing license for a child with a disability. This bill requires the Department of Natural Resources and to issue an annual fishing license to resident and nonresident children that present documentation from a medical professional that they have a disability defined in s. 106.50 (1m) (g). Documentation must be a certificate from a licensed physician or psychologist who has personally examined the child and who has expertise concerning the type of physical or mental disability evidenced by the child. Per s. 106.50(1m)(g), "Disability" means a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of having such an impairment or being regarded as having such an impairment. Still in committee.
 - 3/15/2020 - Failed to pass pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 1

The next agenda item was the Trail Accessibility Tools led by Calvin. Nick said he is working with his new Supervisor Deanna Sell. DNR will be purchasing the trails accessibility tools equipment via the Capital Development Fund (placeholder) and will also arrange for the training. Calvin talked about the machine that could take the statistics of each trail. (It looks like a baby stroller). Alabama, Nevada, Minnesota, and New York State Parks are all using this equipment. The cost is \$12,000 for the piece of equipment and then the company trains the personnel who will use it (push it along the trail). You can also hire the company to do the work for you.

Andrea said we might want to add more information for the user than what the equipment spits out. There was a lot of discussion by the Council regarding trails accessibility in general.

Next the Council discussed the All-Terrain Chair –AAW Site Hosting Agreement Update led by Nick. The DNR Land Use Agreement has been written up specifically for Blue Mound State Park (one can change the name of park in the agreement in the future to fit each different park - hosting the all-terrain chair). DNR will provide the electrical hook up and a secure place and money has been set aside in Capital Development for this. The Friends Group will have a separate agreement with AAW for how and where the chair will be stored, etc. The chair should be placed in Blue Mound Park by the end of April. Nick said if we are placing them in State Parks, we want the narrow chairs which are about 30” and not the typical size of 40” plus. Calvin said the narrower ones can tip easier and this could be a liability issue. Keith says we should look at other types of vehicles other than the all-terrain chair. Nick said the DNR will not own any of these chairs. The AAW he believes is looking at other vehicles. Andrea said the trac chairs can over-heat after some time especially when going up higher slopes on a very hot day.

The next item on the agenda was the Placement of Electronic Payment Kiosks at State Parks with the discussion led by Nick. Currently there are a couple of the payment kiosks at Devil’s Lake State Park. There is a capital development project for 25 or 30 of these payment devices to be placed at several of the Parks. These kiosk devices are meant for cars and for walk up for pedestrians. Nick wanted to make sure the reach ranges are acceptable for persons with disabilities when they are installed. These kiosk devices will be used during after-hours or during the wintertime. Currently these devices are placed a little too high. Nick is working with DNR engineering to make sure the location of these devices is accessible.

The next item to discuss was the Smith-Conley Creek Project led by Nick. This project has been cancelled so it is off the books. This project was an accessible trout fishing access site. The regional fishing supervisor has a couple of other better sites for this project. Money was already approved for this project, so the money will be there when a better location is found.

Nick led the next agenda item which was the Stewart Tunnel – Badger State Trail at Belleville. Nick said the Stewart Tunnel is on the Badger State Trail and is located near Belleville. The Tunnel has been closed for a year or so because the ceiling has been falling in. There is a proposal out there with eight different options. Nick was asked if DAC should comment at the meeting? The Council cannot comment yet since the options have not yet been finalized. Probably at the next meeting the DAC can make a motion to choose one of the accessible options. Badger State Trail is a biking and hiking trail. Nick was asked to add some verbiage regarding accessibility.

Next on the agenda was the DNR’s Website & Social Media Post Image Descriptions led by Andrea and Shannon. Andrea said it was nice to hear from Sarah Hoye Director of Communications at the last meeting. Andrea and Shannon said it would be beneficial to have image descriptions to go with the photos with all the media posts. TikTok needs to have closed captions which the DNR currently doesn’t use. It should also have closed captions on all DNR generated videos. Nick asked if the videos are “shared” because then DNRs wouldn’t have to have closed caption. Andrea said no. Image captions will be used by persons who do not have a

screen reader and these captions will now allow the users to determine what the picture is portraying.

Andrea made a motion the DNR provide accurate closed captions and image descriptions on all TikTok and YouTube videos and image/video descriptions for all photos in post captions on social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Tik Tok. Shannon seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Accessibility Coordinator Updates

- 1) Dogs on Nature Trails. Nick said that designated nature trails are the most accessible, but these don't allow dogs except for service dogs. Bridget Brown from the Bureau of Parks has removed the designation for the one park where this was an issue, but she is now proposing that Parks remove the designated "nature" from all its trails.
- 2) Accessible Cabins (smaller ones) – Nick's meeting with Parks was cancelled. They will be meeting in the future. They are looking at the engineering aspect right now. It was noted plumbing could be an issue.
- 3) Accessible Cabins Reservation System. Nick received a complaint from someone who has stayed at the cabins several times. Those applying for the Cabins need to wait until January 10th to register, however some of these applicants like to camp with their able-bodied friends who can register several months (up to 9 or is it 11) in advance. The Bureau of Parks is looking at having the disabled community register for the cabins either as a Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 applicant. The different tiers designate the degree of disability and will determine the months in advance each can register. (Tier 1 is 11 months, Tier 2 is 10 months, Tier 3 is 9 months). This reservation system will take a minimum 2 years to implement. Nick, did I interpret this section correctly?
- 4) Jackson Marsh WA Accessible Waterfowl Blind project. Nick said this area needed a new parking lot area and the road would need a very large route of travel renovation. The Property Manager has identified another area that would work out better. The Wisconsin Waterfowl Association has money to put towards a large "planked" area, but due to uncertainty of costs, needs to bid for the wood when ready to purchase and the project has been finalized.
- 5) Other follow-ups from the last meeting:
 - a) Inventory of Accessible Features. Nick needs to talk to the new Parks Bureau Director Steve Schmelzer.

Nick mentioned Deanna Sell (his Supervisor) and he met, and it was decided he needs to be involved with all DNR's master plans.
 - b) Add a tab to Parks page. Nick hasn't talked to the Parks web person yet.

- c) Taking down the accessibility tile. Nick is going to send an e-mail to Sara Hoyer asking in writing why the tile for accessibility can not stay up permanently instead of being taken down monthly.
- d) Use of the Moby Mat. Nick will write a project for the top ten most used beach areas in the Parks System. Eventually, all park properties with useable beaches will have Moby mats.

The Bureau of Parks is looking at changing the kayak policies. Concessionaires differ from park to park on their policies for the use of this piece of equipment. Some parks own the kayaks, and some do not. The Bureau is looking at having accessible kayaks at all locations where there are kayaks available to rent. For the smaller Friends' Groups who run concessionaires, DNR will purchase the kayaks and the Friends Group will rent them out. Having accessible bicycles at the Parks to rent is also being looked at.

The next agenda item was the DAC Membership Attendance Policy. This agenda item was tabled until the next meeting because the sub-committee members Cathryn and Kirsten were not present.

Next on the agenda was the Update regarding Diane Brusoe's Letter (DNR needing more accessible cabins). This discussion was led by Keith and Calvin. Keith said the letter was sent out December 31st. Prior to mailing the letter, he had received a lot of good comments on refining the letter from DAC members and Barry. Keith said he received some brief remarks from Diane **Keith, was this in a letter or e-mail or a phone call from Diane?** including "Thanks for the letter.....Parks has hired Steven Schmelzer as Parks Director and she has included him in the conservation regarding the business plans and setting priorities for the Parks Program....."

The next agenda item was Samantha Troyer (Quad friend of John Martinson) Requesting for More Accessible Parking at Devil's Lake State Park. The Park is likely meeting the required amount of accessible parking. However, Devil's Lake gets a lot of visitors and providing additional accessible parking may be a topic to look at closely. Nick said the request (e-mail) should come directly from Ms. Troyer to him and he will forward the request to the Park Superintendent.

Next the McMiller Shooting Range agenda item was discussed. John Mitchell led the discussion. John said he attended the Sports Show in Milwaukee and McMiller Shooting Range booth was near his booth. The gentleman representing the McMiller Shooting Range said there are Trac Chairs available for use at the Shooting Range. There are shooting benches at the Range also which are accessible. John also let the Council know the Borner Botanical Garden in Hales Corners has acquired a Trac Chair also.

The final agenda item was the Members' Updates.

John Martinson – None at this time.

Keith – There will be a Sporting Clay Shoot on April 2nd near Navarino. Challenge the Outdoors, Inc. is hosting this.

Andrea – WisCorps is hiring for many environmentally focused AmeriCorps positions across the state. For more information, check out wiscorps.org/jobs.

Calvin – Green Bay Independent Living Center received a Christopher Reeves grant for \$25,000 and bought a Recumbent Bike with these funds.

Shannon – She has been working with a company that makes All-inclusive Playgrounds in St. Louis. This firm has been mentoring Shannon on how to be a consultant. Shannon is going to Colorado to see how to incorporate accessibility at a nature center. She is learning more about accessibility at Nature Centers and Playgrounds for persons with disabilities. **Shannon, please reword this paragraph so it makes more sense.**

John Mitchell – John indicated Adaptive Sportsman just had its annual meeting. He said to take a look at the calendar of events on its website.

Keith made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Calvin seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Chair Martinson adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm.