

Badger Oversight Management Commission  
Meeting Recap  
October 26, 2011

The Badger Oversight Management Commission (BOMC) convened at the Sauk County West Square Building, Room B24, for its regular meeting on Wednesday, October 26, 2011.

Chair Wenzel called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m. Staff affirmed compliance with Open Meetings Laws.

Attendance:

<b>Commission Member</b>	<b>Commission Representative</b>	<b>Present</b>
HoChunk Nation	John Holst	Yes
Wisconsin DNR	Steve Schmelzer Craig Karr	Yes Yes
Sauk County	Bill Wenzel	Yes
Town of Merrimac	Richard Grant	Yes
Town of Sumpter	Peter Mullen	Yes
<b>Stakeholder Interest</b>	<b>Stakeholder Rep</b>	
Badger History Group	Michael Goc	Yes
Citizens for Safe Water around Badger	Laura Olah	Yes
UW-Baraboo	Ann Vogl	No
Baraboo School District	David Haseley	No
Bluffview Sanitary District	Jeff Little Lisa Rutkowski	No Yes
City of Baraboo	Eugene Robkin	No
Sauk Prairie Cons. Alliance	Dave Tremble / Allison Duff	Yes
Sauk Prairie School District	Teresa Kreutzmann	No
Wisconsin Wildlife Federation	Don Hammes	No
The Village of Sauk City	Bill Stehling	Yes
<b>Commission Liaison</b>	<b>Liaison Representative</b>	
USDA-DFRC	Rick Walgenbach	Yes
U.S. Army	Joan Kenney	Yes

Others present: Brian Simmert, David Serafy-Cox, Gail Lamberty, Frank Olah, Steve Fleming, Nichelle Martin, Frank Huntington, Jeff Johnson, Terre Carlson, Fred Lochner, Donna Stehling, and Dana White Quam.

Motion by Richard Grant, seconded by Peter Mullen, to adopt the agenda for the October 26, 2011 meeting. **Motion carried.**

Motion by Peter Mullen, seconded by Richard Grant to adopt the minutes from the July 21, 2011 meeting. **Motion carried.**

**Public Comment:**

None.

**New Business:**

1. *Presentation by Fred Lochner from Imperial Multimedia.* Wenzel stated the work Lochner is doing may dovetail the effort at Badger. Lochner has been involved with the development of media for state parks and similar organizations. Using examples of other projects, Lochner's presentation focused on generating ideas as to how the history of Badger can be presented to the public as well as ideas for a visitor's center.

The presentation suggested the use of emerging digital technologies to promote areas of natural, historical and cultural significance with an effort toward branding and promoting assets. Examples by the American State Park Alliance and [virginiaoutdoors.net](http://virginiaoutdoors.net) were presented. Interaction between visitors and media were presented using such examples as touch screen kiosks that are used to disseminate park information, way finding, and interpretation etc.

A second example presented, as established by the America State Parks strategic priorities, include the use of website and media channels to build relationships between parks and the public including:

- Establish initiatives and programs that connect families and children to the outdoors;
- Position and promote state parks as an asset to American pursuing a healthy lifestyle;
- Promote conservation and sustainable lifestyles.

The economic impact of visitors to Devils Lake, the Badger State Rec Area, connected bike trails from La Crosse to Madison, promotion of lower Wisconsin river etc. draws over 3 million potential visitors. If each visitor spends \$25 (per visitor) x 5 million (visitors per years) = \$125 million economic impact.

The group was asked to consider how a visitor center at Badger can be a place where people come to launch their outdoor activities. And branch out from there to other recreational opportunities in the area.

Tremble stated that it will be important to convey the reuse plan to the community in a way they understand. All we need is a kiosk—not necessarily a visitor center. At least until such time that the capacity exists to build a visitor center.

2. *DOT-DNR Rails to Trail Agreement.* Huntington indicated that an agreement has been reached for 50 years and beyond with the understanding that a trail can be reverted to rail with a one-year notice. White-Quam stated that having a corridor through Badger does not mean we can move ahead with trail development as there is still cleanup to be done and there is no access at this time. Also, in order to seek out funding sources for construction, a connection between Sauk Prairie all the way to Devils Lake would be helpful. Need to dovetail trail development with DNR master planning process.

Wenzel asked that now that the Reedsburg line has a 15-year lease signed by Wisconsin Southern, is the rail line and bridge eligible for DOT funds? Huntington said that it is not. The price for the land is 41 million with 70 miles of rail line involved. 7-10 million is needed in new track improvements. Purchasing the line will likely occur over several years. Union Pacific is interested in selling land. The current criteria for rehabilitation of the line or bridge is to acquire the line first. Kenny indicated that the contractor at Badger could remove the rail and ties going out of service, with the hope that there is enough value in the steel to offset cleanup.

White-Quam asked if it would be possible to put the Sauk Prairie part of the line to a trail before the acquisition of the rail. Huntington stated that it is possible if there is an agreement that acquisition will take place.

White-Quam indicated that the Merrimac bridge is the biggest question with regard to funding. Is it reasonable for the DOT to acquire the bridge to begin the upgrade? Huntington stated that anything is possible at this time.

Kenny asked if there is anything to impede the removal of the rails? Huntington replied, no.

### **Commissioner Reports:**

1. *Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources:* Schmelzer stated that there will be a prescribed burn this fall- first part of November – Unit A 152 Acres (map of area to be burned was passed out) and that the DNR will be working with Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance.

Olah asked for clarification that the 152 acres will all be burned at once. It will all be burned at once.

Last tank has been removed. UW student doing a capstone project, area of emphasis to be determined. Perimeter fence will likely stay as there is no salvage value in it. Have had meetings with Walgenbach about cropping on state property.

Hamm asked if the acreage to be cropped was going to increase. Schmelzer indicated not at this point, but that there has been some discussion about cropping some overgrown areas. The DNR is currently working out an agreement as to where USDA rents land. Money would be used for land activities at Badger on DNR land. Tremble asked if an increase in crop land would occur would this require a change to the parks master plan? Schmelzer indicated, yes- possibly. Ultimately the goal is to return lands to prairie or what the master plan recommends.

1. *Town of Merrimac*: No Report
2. *Town of Sumpter*: No report
3. *Bluffview Sanitary*: Rutkowski stated that the sanitary district is moving forward with acquiring land including the pump house. CDBG funds will be used (\$225,000) to upgrade the lift station on west side of Hwy 12. There are still previous grants and loans outstanding. Bluffview requested a water project funding grant. 50% grant and 50 % low interest loan. Two projects requested for funding are a wellhouse improvement and master meter project. Hammas asked if the capacity of the lift station will be increased. Rutkowski indicated that increasing capacity would be based on projected population which is not expected to grow.
4. *Sauk County*: No report
5. *Ho-Chunk*: Holst reported that efforts to pursue land at Badger would cease and that it was a difficult decision for the Ho-Chunk to make. BIA will no longer be the federal sponsor for Ho-Chunk to acquire land. Holst appreciated the gesture for Ho-Chunk to continue an active role with the BOMC and reuse of Badger. The Nation is looking forward to continuing to be part of the process and will continue to support the vision. Holst indicated that he will continue to be a part of the process as a district representative and can bring information back to the Ho-Chunk legislature. Wenzel indicated that the bylaws allow Ho-Chunk to remain a commission member unless they formally withdraw.

Olah asked what are some of the reasons why BIA disapproved? Holst indicated that the main reason is that BIA has a policy that continued monitoring for contaminants must occur and BIA does not have the ability to do this. Olah discussed contamination below concrete slabs and that the FOSTS do not address this. Kenny indicated that the slabs are being removed. It was stated that the BIA has not been here nor have they read the environmental closure reports.

#### **Committee Reports:**

1. *Executive and Finance*: Wenzel spoke about staffing requirements to support the BOMC. It was noted that a meeting needs to occur with the Planning, Zoning, and Land Records Committee (PZLR) chairperson and the Conservation, Planning, and Zoning (CPZ) Director to discuss roles. The BOMC will need to work with the CPZ Department to develop a proposal and take it before the PZLR Committee for consideration. Wenzel referred to the bylaws which state that the Planning and Zoning Department provide administrative support. Grant expressed frustration that this issued has not yet been resolved.
2. *Planning and Land Use*: No Report
3. *Education and Outreach*: No Report
4. *AdHoc*: No Report

### **Liaison Reports:**

1. *US Army:* Hammas asked if staff and number of people working on the rehabilitation were being reduced. Kenny said staffing is based on amount of work to be done. Work is being completed. Each parcel will have a final inspection. Building 200 still slated for demolition in spring. Building slabs are being crushed to fill voids when sewer pipe is removed. Also, building 207 was turned over to DNR control. The meeting room is currently occupied by the museum. Training room is still available for a few more months. Work continues on demolition, decontamination, except for holidays. Groundwater study results are available at [cleanwaterwelldone.com](http://cleanwaterwelldone.com) Grant asked how much longer decontamination will take place. Kenny suspects that exploratory work will take place for about one more year.
2. *USDA:* Walgenbach discussed three items. First, initial planning for the facility has been completed, but there are no funds for construction. The environmental assessment has been completed and is being reviewed by USDA staff. Finally, Cheri Nolden is still grazing goats. Nolden may graze an area between two fields that was planted with swithgrass and bluestem that is being invaded by brush. The environmental assessment will be available once it is received by USDA officials.

### **New Business (con't):**

1. Next meeting date: **Thursday, January 19, 2012 @ 6:30 p.m.**
2. *Public Comment:* Duff thanked Dairy Forage for contributing two speakers to the SPCA.

Motion by Grant, second by Schmelzer to adjourn @ 9:28 **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Ashford

*Recap by Simmert*