



## City of Rock Falls Hennepin Canal Committee Meeting Minutes

**Date:** 11/20/2013      **Time Meeting Started:** 12:00      **Time Meeting Ended:** 1:15

Members		Also Attended	
Alderman Schuneman -	P	Clerk Arduini	P
Tim Wilson	P	Administrator Blackert	P
Larry Spinka	P	Dave Hahne -IDNR	P
Mike Sterba	A	George Bellows - IDNR	P
John Larson	P	David Blanton	P
Also Attended			
Lee Bardo			

Topic	Discussion	Plan of Action
1. Call to Order	Meeting called to order at 12:00 pm	Called to Order
2. Review minutes	Minutes for the September 5 <sup>th</sup> , and October 30 <sup>th</sup> meetings were approved.	Minutes of the September 5 <sup>th</sup> , and October 30 <sup>th</sup> meeting were approved.
3. Discuss the draft of the Hennepin Canal Brochure	Adm. Blackert presented the committee with a new draft of a brochure about the Hennepin canal survey.	This informational brochure with one revision is to be emailed in color, to the respondents who requested a copy. The city will also plan on including it in the utility bills. A version of it will also be added to Channel 5
4. Discuss annexation, leasing, options, and responsibilities for the canal	<p>The committee was joined by two IDNR representatives. George Bellows, and Dave Hahne. Recent news about the canal and the responsibilities of Rock Falls by reporter David Giuliani, and resident David Druin appeared in the paper, and the media as well as Mr. Druin were invited to the meeting, but neither attended.</p> <p>The committee reviewed a list of “maintenance concerns” presented by Adm. Blackert.</p> <p>The first question raised was that of the use of volunteers for cleanup events along the canal if we are leasing with annexation. Special events would need to have paperwork done through the city and IDNR. And our insurance would need to let us know what waivers they would need from the volunteers. Other special events that citizens and groups may want to host along the canal will be required to fill out an “events packet” this would include all of the paperwork for the city and IDNR, along with proof of insurance for the event.</p> <p>The “upper trail” is currently considered a rouge illegal trail by the IDNR. If the city annexes and leases the city would have to propose to the IDNR a plan and purpose for the trail with a map and if approved the city would have to establish and maintain the new trail.</p> <p>Segways, OPDMDs, and motorized vehicles are currently illegal, but with annexation and lease some types may be allowed if the city decides it wants them. Special events involving golf carts will need an activity permit.</p> <p>Standing dead trees are considered habitat for the IDNR if annexation and leasing occurs, the city could show the IDNR their plans for cleanup of dead trees, and may be</p>	

	<p>able to make the land along the canal more landscaped to suit the city.</p> <p>The city can include things that they would like to do or need in the lease agreement, and individual items can be worked out. Details that arise later can also be negotiated by the city communicating with the IDNR.</p> <p>Canoeing events with less than 25 people do not need a any type of permit. Larger events would need an activity permit.</p> <p>On the issue of cleaning the fallen trees from the East bank of the canal. It is the opinion of the IDNR that the bank is stable and removal of the trees along the edge would not cause structural damage to the canal. A riprap program could be instituted in the future for bank stabilization, and this may be a cost share program.</p> <p>Mowing along the west bank. It is the IDNR's goal currently to keep the path open. It may be possible for more mowing to be done in the future. It typically takes the IDNR 2-3 days to mow from the mouth to route 40. A better solution would be to train a group of people to selectively remove unwanted woody plants from the west bank, and spray herbicide for remediation of unwanted plants.</p> <p>The city of Rock Falls is currently in compliance with the USDA for Emerald Ash Borer remediation. If the city annexes this property, the city may negotiate in the lease agreement for help with EAB from the IDNR. Currently the IDNR does not have enough equipment to fully take this on, but they are keeping up with it where there are populations of people.</p> <p>The surface of the towpath may be patched with the dura- patcher by the city if a lease and annexation occurs. This area of towpath in town was improved years ago by the RRDA. The current surface is 3 layers of tar and chip. Currently from Route 92 North to the mouth of the canal is the only section of the path that has not been improved by the IDNR. It is the intention of the IDNR to have this area improved with asphalt. The asphalt mix used for the towpath is different than that of road construction. The hills and trees will be engineered in the reconstruction There may be grant opportunities as soon a 2014. If the city annexes the property, the city may also then be able to include the towpath in its total amount of trails in the community for other grants.</p> <p>The IDNR does not have the manpower to make the canal better for the city. If we want it nicer, we will have to do it ourselves.</p> <p>Pastor Brian Tribley thanked the IDNR for letting his volunteers do what they have so far. He would like to be able to paint the buildings along the canal. These buildings may be painted, but any other work will need to be approved by the Federal Historical Preservation Authority. The contact at the HPA is Hal Hassen. The house on the east side of the canal was the original lock tender's house. It has been damaged by fire, but it is now empty, and has no utilities. It would fall on the HPA to determine what work, and uses could be done with the building.</p> <p>The committee will present a report at a committee of the whole meeting. The council will be able to see what annexation, and leasing means for the city. The decisions will then be voted on at city council. It is agreed that both the city and IDNR want to keep a good relationship and that there are to be no surprises.</p> <p>Mr. Bellows is currently working on a water trail from the Rock River, and this will include more areas for portage for canoes, and kayaks.</p>	
5. Next Meeting date	The next meeting date is set for January 8 <sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon	Set meeting date for January 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2014
6. Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 2:00pm	Meeting ended

Chairman Jim Schuneman

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Committee Chairman