

Minutes - FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL

Meeting Date: September 12, 2022

Meeting Location: Epic Campus, Farmhouse Conference Room, Andromeda Building

25 people attending including 12 people who have never/or infrequently attended

Friends attending: Jerry Wilson, President; Dave Pearson, Vice-President; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Lydia Haynes; Adam Maus; Kevin Swenson, DNR; Brad Bates, DNR; Rodney Albers; Mark Cis; Tom Pedretti; Bruce Paul; Donna Paul; Kerry King; Kelly Wang; Dave Bass; Nick Gnade; Joel Xavier; Colin Fisk; Gabriella Fisk; Jonathan Hugh; Vivian Morrison; Tom Hawes; Rod Zentner; Doug Jones;

Minutes

Bill motioned and Dave seconded to accept the August 2022 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports

The financial report showed an end of August 2022 balance of \$45,409.95 in the Farmers Savings Bank checking account. Expenses included depot monthly bills, Riley port-a-potty, and other recurring bills. Bill motioned that we accept the minutes, Lydia seconded, the motion passed unanimously. Bill explained how we get funding from the trail passes. Lots of our operating budget comes from the sale of trail passes. We get \$3 if the pass is sold by a vendor. If we sell the pass directly we get \$5. The DNR gets the remainder of the trail pass cost. Trail passes are for the calendar year and good on other state trails throughout the state.

Bank Resolution

A motion was presented by Bill to approve a resolution from the Farmer's Savings Bank. This resolution approves agents listed on the resolution form to exercise certain banking rights. The approved agents are Jerry, Lydia and Bill.

DNR Topics

DNR folks encouraged newcomers to ask questions

Verona is working on a memorandum of understanding related to paving a section of the trail from PB west to the new high school.

An expansion of the Riley parking lot has been requested so that snowmobilers might use it during winter months since they will lose use of trail near Verona High School.

The new Riley parking lot sign, funded partially by the incentive grant, must be done by November 1. FMRT applied for this grant and it was approved. The grant funds an entrance sign in the front of the Riley parking lot. The new sign will be bigger and more prominent. The goal is to get it into the ground before October.

Trail maintenance continues: mowing along the sides, and lots of tree trimming and brush removal.

DNR is still waiting for the bike repair stand to be installed in the Dodgeville area.

DNR is working with MMSD. The effluent line going back towards Fitchburg will cross the trail in the paved area.

The City of Verona is working to expand some hiking and biking trails in Verona to tie into MRT.

Tomorrow DNR will begin brush mowing of the trail.

ATC has begun work in Dodgeville, MH, and crossing 18/151.

Brad explained how the funding application for the Development Project Program (DPP) is going. Brad and Kevin have been applying for funding for the last 6 years for bridge repair. Bridges are damaged by dry rot, snowmobiles, and flooding. They have been doing minor repairs and some major repairs in house. There are 45 bridges on Military Ridge Trail. Part of the DPP is applying to redeck and, in some cases, transform bridges using concrete decking. Concrete decking holds up well to snowmobiles. Concrete adds weight to the bridges so they don't float up with flooding. But, concrete decking, due to the weight, may also result in the need for replacing the infrastructure of the bridge. In some cases the entire bridge structure needs repair before the new decking is attached. They are on the cusp of getting

funding to get some bridges replaced. DNR is diligent about responding to complaints about bridges and tries to get to those as fast as they can, especially when there are safety issues.

Brad and Kevin emphasized that the users of the trail are their eyes and ears so send issues concerning the trail to the FMRT website, which then go to Bill, who forwards them to the DNR.

Mark Cis asked about the cost to replace the bridges. The cost depends on the bridge and what is done to it.

Mark asked what the DNR thought about naming rights (ex. Walmart from Dodgeville) for bridges if money was raised in a capital campaign. Kevin said this was a possibility for it but it would have to be negotiated.

Debrief: Open House in Ridgeway Depot. September 4 (Jerry attending) 35 people went through.

Webpage

Adam added Kate Teasdale's article and updated the webpage with the Epic meeting information.

Closing the Depot

Jerry is closing the Ridgeway Depot October 10 before the October monthly meeting in Riley. All are welcome join him.

Facebook page

Bruce is now another Facebook editor. A photographer took some pictures of the inside of the depot which are going to be put on the Facebook Page. The Facebook event page did not have the Epic meeting. Vivian said we need a TickToc page or snapchat presence.

ATC

The ATC line is moving ahead even though there is not permission to cross the Mississippi.

Depot Parking Lot

We received a message from Hailey Roessler, Ridgeway Village Clerk. Ridgeway received a DNR grant for parking lot and sidewalk improvement in front of and along the side of the depot. The grant is for 2023. The sidewalk improvement may affect the bricks and light post near the sidewalk.

Possible Volunteer Opportunities

Visitor asked about volunteer opportunities. Suggested opportunities include: adopt a section of the trail, trash pick up, bike rodeos, relay races, cut invasive species, haunted bike ride. The opportunities for volunteering are endless.

Next Meeting

The next FMRT meeting will be October 10 at the outdoor area of the Riley Tavern. The meeting will start at 5:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Castello, Secretary