

FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL

Meeting Date: August 13, 2018

Meeting Location: Ridgeway Train Depot, Ridgeway, WI

Friends attending: Jerry Wilson, President; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Linda McMeen; Kevin Swenson, DNR Trail Manager; Brad Bates, DNR Ranger and Assistant Trail Manager; Jim Billmeyer, Verona; Sharon Billmeyer, Verona; Dick Pantalone, Cross Plains; Steve Schmieding, Madison Westside

Minutes

Sarah motioned and Linda seconded to accept the July 2018 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports

The financial report showed an end of July balance of \$31,238 in the FMRT checking account.

Linda motioned that we accept the financial report. The motion was seconded by Sarah, and the motion passed unanimously.

Additions to this meetings agenda

Riley Kiosk has been repaired.

There was discussion about the new trail pass kiosk installed in Verona between the new people who came to the meeting and the DNR attendees.

Bridge Discussion

The Billmeyers, Steve Schmieding and Dick Pantalone came to discuss the condition of the trail, and more specifically the poor condition of the bridges. The DNR has funded \$150,000 for bridge repair on the trail. They are looking at preformed concrete slabs. Brad stated that decking in some instances has not been repaired because the DNR lost their only full time trail worker. Supports under the decking are rotten in many places. To date the DNR has replaced about 140 boards on the bridges. Bridges are old and were built to support trains. Decking was placed on top of railroad ties that are now rotten (they see this when they go to replace the decking). There are 40 bridges on the trail, 6-8 are in good shape, the rest need a lot of work. An effective way to see improvements to the trail is by advocating to staff. Several of the people attending the meeting wanted to volunteer to work on the bridges. Brad talked about the difficulty of working on a bridge while, at the same time, still making the bridge usable to trail users. One attendee was concerned about the approaches to bridges, roads and driveways and wanted to volunteer to work on them. Brad and Kevin felt they could use volunteers to work on the approaches with the DNR crew (who would train them) and would like to contact the people who want to volunteer (not have the Friends contact them). They did not want the volunteers to work without DNR people there. There was lots of discussion about different ways to raise money or support bridges (adopt a bridge, naming rights, donations from groups for specific bridges). Sarah and Linda will work on fund raising for specific bridges.

DNR Topics

Verona High School will start on around August 20th to put in the 2 culverts. The trail will be closed in this area for at least two weeks.

The PB bridge is open.

The bridge project in Mt. Horeb is a third done.

Duluth Trading company still in progress.

The Ridgeway project is still moving forward. The trail may be closed by August 17th. The trail will be closed for a short period of time for big rock excavation. Then it will be closed later in the year to replace the whole trail in the area.

There was trail repair and ditching in Mt Horeb under and east of the 6th street bridge. The work was done by the Mt Horeb Village.

Brad will contact the people about the observation deck signage lamination project.

There was discussion about getting signage to tell trail users how far you were from different villages, shelters, water, bathrooms, etc.

The next meeting is 6:00 pm, Monday, September 10, 2018 at the Ridgeway Depot.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Castello, Secretary