

## **FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL**

Meeting Date: September 10, 2018

Meeting Location: Ridgeway Train Depot, Ridgeway, WI

Friends attending: Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Lydia Haynes; Palmer Haynes, Kevin Swenson, DNR Trail Manager; Brad Bates, DNR Ranger; Meg Skinner

### **Minutes**

Bill motioned and Lydia seconded to accept the August 2018 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Financial Reports**

The financial report showed an end of August balance of \$25,205.94 in the FMRT checking account. The total reflected a payment to Albert Bilsley and Mr. Jelly for work done on the Riley kiosk. Lydia motioned that we accept the financial report, the motion was seconded by Palmer, and passed unanimously.

### **DNR Topics**

The Verona PB project is complete. Crossing lights have been installed.

The Verona High School project continues and will result in trail closing in September. Two bridges will be replaced with cement culverts. They are deferring the big bridge replacement until next year.

The Mt. Horeb bridge is about 3/4 done. Height signs may be added to the bridge.

The Duluth Trading Company building project is continuing.

The DNR was approached by the Village of Mt. Horeb. The Village is in the concept phase of redoing the Depot area and surrounding areas. The plan is to make the parking lot more of a green scape and move parking to the side. Brad encouraged FMRT members to share thoughts with the village. The Village would like the Friends to do a wish list of what they would like to see. The plan makes the area from 4th street to 1st street a green scape.

A section of the trail in Ridgeway is now closed due to road construction and the exit/entrance ramps. As a result of the construction a section of the trail will be improved.

### **Storm/Flood Damage**

Due to the August 20 rain event 9 bridges were floated up, shaken off the pinnings, and then set back down. The DNR has been trying to reset these bridges on their pinnings in the proper configuration on the pilings, piling caps, and stringers and then backfill where needed. The bridges that were plated with long brackets bolted to the pilings, piling caps, and stringers, (not pinned) fared better and did not move. Most of the bridges west of the Riley parking lot are plated not pinned. The Riley bridge (bridge 25) is the unknown card and the DNR is not sure that it can be repaired. Bridge 25 might meet the insurance threshold to have it replaced. The DNR might remove this bridge if it doesn't meet the insurance threshold and replace it with concrete abutments on either side, run steel girders across, and put the decking on top of this. The observation deck was also floated up off its pinnings and DNR staff are hoping that it will resettle.

The Epic tunnel still has significant flooding. DNR staff is cataloging all of the damage. This will be needed by Federal Emergency Management. Kevin and DNR engineers have looked at the bridges for safety. All the bridges they looked at were in good shape.

The apron railings that were destroyed were replaced. Those that were not destroyed the DNR is hoping will be replaced in a construction project later in the year. The DNR thinks they will be completed with the repairs this year and is hoping to get the trail open in a safe manner for the public to use by the end of the month. They have had extra staff from the DNR helping with repairs. Completion is dependent on the availability of material.

The website has been updated to reflect the trail closure but people continue to use the parts of the trail that have been closed.

There were parts of the trail that were rutted or completely washed out (by the Riley Tavern). The DNR had access to a wonderful grader (that they can use in the future) and the trail has been graded from Town Hall Road all the way to Dodgeville and this section is in excellent shape.

DNR staff is still pursuing project money for redecking and concreting bridges.

Finks is working on the stretch of trail south of the park and it should be completed soon.

Mt Horeb Village people came in with big machinery and helped repair the stretch of trail from the 6th Street bridge to 92.

Verona is also helping to rework some development they did that resulted in damage to a section of trail in back of the ball fields.

Brad reported that the Riley observation deck interpretive signs are being produced.

DNR Enhancement money was to go for signage and a kiosk at the eastern terminus of the trail. Kevin advised us to continue to aim for the kiosk and sign.

A Ron Betlach remembrance was discussed by the group.

Bill brought up the cracking cement, the locks needed for the caboose, Melva's 3-ring binder, and the open house announcement. An updated calendar showing the open house was put up on the front door of the Depot.

The next meeting is 6:00 pm, Monday, October 8, 2018 at the Ridgeway Depot.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah Castello, Secretary