

Minutes - FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL

Meeting Date: August 9, 2021

Meeting Location: Ridgeway Train Depot, Ridgeway, WI

Friends attending: Jerry Wilson, President; Dave Pearson, Vice-President; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Brad Bates, DNR; Lydia Haynes; Rodney Albers; Adam Maus

The meeting started at 5:55 (the group waited for a few members).

Minutes

Bill motioned and Lydia seconded to accept the July 2021 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports

The financial report showed an end of July 2021 balance of \$49,532.80 in the Farmers Savings Bank account. There have been lots of trail pass sales this year. Dave motioned and Sarah seconded that we accept the financial reports as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Additions to this meetings agenda

Future meeting place - this will be discussed at another meeting. Maybe we should consider selling the depot.

Lydia is looking for someone to replace her for the work she does on Quik Books. Bill volunteered to work with Lydia on this. You need the Quick Book program on your computer to do this. The 9-90 tax reporting may go with this.

Bill - bench requests

Concerns about the little libraries.

DNR Topics

Due to the storm there were 5-6 sections with blow downs that needed to be cleared. Brad has not gotten to the entire trail yet and anticipates a lot of work.

DNR staff mowed the MRT and now are looking into an herbicide treatment on the west end of the trail. Lots of weeds and grass are growing on the trail itself. They are trying to spray a 10 foot wide path. It is especially bad in areas where there are woods. Erosion from the woods causes the soil to improve and makes it more hospitable for grass/weeds. Just west of the new Ridgeway interchange is a bad spot.

There are only two members of the trail crew for both trails. One longterm member has been out for over a year now.

DNR staff is planning to put more belting on the trail bridges in the fall.

The new kiosk in Fitchburg is holding up well. The bike pump on the trail head needs repair again.

Two big trees behind Bill Kalscheur's house have been removed.

Master Plan public comments taken on line and from public meetings are being incorporated into the final draft. You can read a summary of the draft on the website. The final draft will be reviewed by the Natural Resource Board in late fall.

The structural engineer who is designing the concrete covering on the bridges is still actively working on the project. They are identifying bridges in Verona and Riley for this covering (these bridges are more accessible from the roads). These proposed bridges will be wider (12-14 feet as opposed to the 9 feet that they now are).

Solar Project for Blue Mounds State Park Shop Building

Bill said the FMRT would give \$4000 and Karl came back and said FBMSMSP wanted \$8000. We are not sure where the project now stands with FBMSMSP. We tabled the discussion and moved this item to October or November.

Discussion of the Big Ticket Item

If the Riley parking lot sign is approved the DNR could put it in next spring. Jerry looked up the cost for this proposed sign and it was \$4452.

Cleaning the Depot

We may use a professional cleaner to clean the building next spring. We will put this on the agenda for March.

Depot Open House

Bill and Jerry were here for the August depot open house and there were 32 people. The Ridgeway Farmers Market is the first Sunday of the month (concurrent with the open house). Jerry and Dave will be here for the September Open House.

Verona Park and Ride

Adam and Jerry have done work on the area around the kiosk at the Verona Park-n-Ride.

New Benches

Jim Billmeyer has suggested that more benches be placed between Mount Horeb and Verona for people to rest on (not memorial benches). This will be discussed at the next meeting. Brad knew that there is actually a bench plan for the trail and read parts of it to the group. Also, parts of the trail may be paved so this may impact benches. The plan says not more than one bench every 2 miles. Brad is worried about mowing and maintenance. Brad will reply to Jim Billmeyer and say there are lots of variables and it will be under consideration.

QR Codes

Jerry is working more on the QR project (32 points of interest from the old trail book). We need to complete this as we have funding for this. The posts that the codes will be placed on have to be installed or replaced. We talked about putting the Friend's logo on the QR code. Jerry was concerned about the military looking person on the logo. Jerry will have the logo redone so the military person looks more like a hunter.

Clearing the Backroom

Bill brought up that we need to go through the paperwork in the back room of the depot and decide what we want to keep. Jerry will pick some dates in September. Sarah, Jerry and Bill will work on this.

ACT

ATC line electricity carried across Wisconsin will not be used in Wisconsin but electricity from it will be used in Indiana, Illinois and Ohio.

Horribly Hilly Sign-up

Sign up for the Horribly Hilly race to work at the FMRT station. The race is Saturday, August 28th.

Little Libraries

The Riley Little Library needs to be rebuilt. Rodney Albers will take a look at this. Jerry needs a handle for one of the little libraries if anyone can donate it.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be September 13, 2021, 5:30 pm, at the Ridgeway Depot..

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Castello, Secretary