

Minutes - FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL

Meeting Date: November 8, 2021

Meeting Location: Ridgeway Train Depot, Ridgeway, WI

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

The Friends introduced themselves to Larry Kruckman.

Minutes

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

Financial Reports

The financial report showed an end of October 2021 balance of \$41,441.09 in the Farmers Savings Bank account. All 2021 trail passes have been collected except for two vendors. Six vendors have already paid in full for the season. All but two vendors have their final 2021 trail pass bill in hand. Bill is expecting to collect another \$10,000 once vendors pay their remaining bills. We still owe the WiDNR approx \$8,000 after all returns have been tabulated. Bill is expecting that the Friends will net over \$11,000 for the season. 2022 trail passes will be ready for distribution by the 1st of December. We also received our \$500 payment from Friends of Blue Mound for HHH 2021. Three more bricks were installed in October. Dave motioned and Sarah seconded that we accept the financial reports as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Additions to this meetings agenda

Larry Kruckman is offering to develop a Facebook Page for the FMRT.

Facebook

Larry is proposing setting up a facebook page for the FMRT on a voluntary basis. He proposes a quick message board for followers. Larry felt, and Friends agreed, that a Facebook page might improve the visibility of the trail, lead to more volunteers, and be educational. Larry would act as a conduit for information from the group to the facebook page. Larry would also like to add his own information. He gave as an example the app "Rockd" which allows you to explore and document your geological surroundings. Larry stated that his posts would be apolitical. Both Larry and the group felt that Facebook may be more effective than the Website in reaching younger people. Lydia asked if Larry would be interested in maintaining the webpage. He said he would like to work with Lydia on the webpage. Dave moved that we go forward with Larry's proposal to develop a Facebook page, Lydia seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

DNR Topics

Trail use still remains high versus previous years.

The Stewardship package was submitted and copies sent to Jerry

The DNR is continuing on fall brush mowing. They are still waiting on delivery of the flail mower.

DNR continues working on snow mobile contracts and easements along the trail (mainly for electricity and fibre optic lines).

State Friends of Wisconsin meeting

Nobody from our group attended the State Friends meeting.

Snow fence by Depot

DNR will deal with the snow fences by the Riley Depot.

Mary Kay Baum's Art Offer

The group examined the photos on metal prints that Mary Kay Baum brought to the meeting and choose 7 for display along the trail. Mary Kay suggested an in-kind payment of \$50 per print. Sarah sent her a letter that she can use for tax purposes, stating that the in-kind donation was worth \$350. Jerry and Bill returned the art not chosen to Mary Kay.

Solar panels on the maintenance bulding in Blue Mounds State Park

The FBMS Solar Project is still moving forward. The group is working with Eagle Point Solar. All the construction documents need to be approved by the DNR engineer. Panels may be installed in the winter. The building the panels will be installed on has a metal roof. FMRT has money committed to this project.

ACT

Dave reported that there is a hold on construction in the area around the Mississippi River but work continues in other areas. Driftless Area Land Conservancy is organizing a Cardinal Hickory Creek Protest Parade for November 21.

Bikes for Kids

Bill sent out bikes for kids information. Bill proposed sending \$1000 again to this group, Dave seconded it, the motion passed unanimously. We can send the money anytime we want to.

Added item

Windows on the caboose need repair. It looks like a whole side of one window is coming down and needs to be reframed. Jerry might talk to Rodney Albers about the needed repairs. Kevin suggested contacting a local group called "Spirit Construction" Jerry will call Rodney first and if he can't do a quick fix, then Spirit Construction.

Next Meeting

January 10th will be a zoom meeting and Dave will set it up. He will send the link and password to everyone. The meeting will start at 5:30. We will decide on the February meeting location in January (maybe then we will have heard from Epic). Sarah will send another email to Epic in January.

The Blue Mounds Friends Shelter is still not open for meetings. Kevin will let us know when it becomes available.

Larry suggested using the Driftless Historium in downtown Mt. Horeb as a meeting place. Sarah will call them about using there meeting rooms (availability/cost).

Jerry wants to tie possible new meeting locations with the formerly proposed letter to villages along the trail asking village administrators to suggest potential new members for the Friend's group.

The first Monday in February, the meeting date we always use, is Valentines Day. We decided to change the meeting date to February 7th.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Castello, Secretary