

FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL

Meeting Date: May 9, 2016

Meeting Location: Train Depot, Ridgeway

Friends Attending: Gerry Wilson, President; Cletus Schwoerer, Vice President; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Lydia Haynes; Palmer Haynes; Jane Schwoerer; Keith Sincox, Past President; Kevin Swenson, DNR Trail Manager; Brad Bates; DNR Assistant Trail Manager; Jon Steen, Ridgeway Village President, Sue Steen,

Ridgeway Depot

Following the annual train depot cleanup and pot luck, the meeting was called to order at 6:28. Laurie Phelan, Ridgeway Village Clerk, Jon Steen, Ridgeway Village President, and Jon's wife, Sue Steen, all stopped during the clearing for a tour of the depot. Both Jon and Sue stayed for the potluck and the beginning part of the meeting when discussion centered around the potential ways to increase the resident's of Ridgeway use and stewardship of the depot. Jon will discuss the use of the depot with the Ridgeway village board and village residents and get back to Gerry with potential dates for a meeting between FMRT members and interested village residents.

Goals/discussion centering around the depot included:

- to have the building open more and used more by the people of Ridgeway (Jon suggested that we give the times that the depot is open to the village clerk and they will post the dates on the Village of Ridgeway website); the depot open dates/times are listed on the FMRT website
- Jon felt that Ridgeway would like to keep the depot within the community (not have it revert to the DNR or State);
- Jon will try and find Ridgeway groups interested in using the depot (Jon suggested the village board meetings sometimes could be held in the depot)
- Jon suggested the school using the depot as a field trip destination (Palmer volunteered to be available to help with this)

There was discussion about giving a depot key to more people in Ridgeway. The folks at the lumber yard currently have a key. The Friends will discuss the issue of wider distribution of keys. Jon pointed out several towns people have expressed interest in the depot but it is hard to gauge if they will be committed to the use/maintenance/upkeep on a continuing basis.

Lydia asked how expensive it would be to keep the depot open in the winter so it could be used by local groups.

Minutes and Financial Report

Bill moved and Cletus seconded to approve the minutes. The motion was passed on unanimous voice vote.

Financial Report: Bill reported that sale of trail passes has been great and money is moving into the account due to these sales. Bill planted another brick 2 weeks ago which was a custom designed brick (a hand cycle). The report reflects the cost of the port-a potty at the Riley park and ride (\$502), and a bill from Tamlyn for website consulting. Keith moved to accept the financial report, the motion was seconded by Jane and passed unanimously by voice vote.

Lydia is using a new format to display the financial report and asked for feedback. The group liked the new format and Lydia will continue to use it.

Bill reported that our insurance bill increased \$77 (the bill is now \$896 annually) because of added cyber liability coverage. Bill's understanding is that this coverage would protect the FMRT in the event

that our website inflicts someone else to “cyber pain” due to our website (ex. infects a users computer with a virus). The group voted to not add this coverage to our policy and Bill will return a form opting out of this cyber coverage (and the additional \$77 cost).

The next depot open house is June 5. Lydia and Palmer volunteered to man/woman the depot. Gerry will send out email asking for volunteers for the successive three months. Our depot visitors book is full and Cletus and Jane will buy a new one.

Palmer asked if the village people who mow the park in back of the depot could also mow the grass around the depot. Jon didn't think this would be a good idea. The lumber yard owner's son, who in the past year mowed the grass, will continue to mow it. The cost for mowing is about \$300 per year. Palmer will contact the people at the lumber yard to continue the current mowing arrangement.

DNR Report

The new brochure has been printed. It has an improved map which is bigger, has more road signage, and has an updated key. The brochure also has addresses that will be useful for GPS users and the updated friends website url. Kevin will send a pdf of the brochure and map to Friends.

There is no new information on the wayside on ID.

In two weeks Kevin's group will be fully staffed.

Kevin received an email from someone about a “severe” garlic mustard outbreak.

Verona has approached the DNR about a memorandum of understanding which would allow Verona to blacktop a section the trail around Verona. The idea is in the very beginning phase. The Friends felt that snowmobilers would be adamantly opposed to this idea.

Electric bikes and other motorized vehicles were discussed. The DNR allows e-bikes on the trail but only if they are being pedaled. Kevin pointed out that due to all the new and various transportation technologies the DNR will eventually be reexamining their policies.

Bill has a neighbor who volunteered to drag the trail. Kevin needs a staff person to send out with each volunteer.

Trail Maintenance

There was concern expressed about the tree/brush clearing recently done by the Friends. What would be the effect on erosion if so much was cleared that there was nothing left to hold the soil?

Lydia has been asked by several people about how the DNR deals with gopher holes. Kevin said for anyone who is concerned to call the DNR with the hole location and he will try and repair the hole as soon as possible.

Lydia gave Jerry a copy of the 99- tax form. Lydia spent a lot of time working with the IRS on problems related to completing this form. Gerry will start a file for the 99s.

Keith moved and Bill Seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was passed on unanimous voice vote.

The Friends will meet again on June 13.

Respectfully submitted, Sarah Castello, Secretary