

FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL

Meeting Date: September 12, 2016

Meeting Location: Train Depot, Friends Shelter, Blue Mounds State Park

Friends Attending: Jerry Wilson, President; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Cletus Schwoerer, Vice President; Jane Schwoerer; Lydia Haynes; Palmer Haynes; Keith Sincox, Past President; Kevin Swenson, DNR Trail Manager; Mary Kay Baum

Minutes: Bill motioned and Cletus seconded to accept the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports: We have \$18,718.71 in the bank. Next months statement will reflect a \$138 Depot donation, Mary Kay's donation of \$50, and the Pine Relict's donation of \$50. We received some trail pass vendor payments during this period and we made a payment to the DNR during this period. Lydia added two new accounts: Port-a-potty is under Riley convenience, and the Website design payment. Cletus motioned to approve the financial reports and Jane seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Added to Agenda: The Friends decided to accept a donation of a model of the Ridgeway water tank (that would have serviced C&NW RR) from the Sheas. Bill will contact them.

The Friends decided to accept from the Bruce Paull Family a donation of Ridgeway anniversary cups and plates for sale at a \$1.00 each. They have more to donate. None have sold yet.

Melva Phillips was a depot visitor on Labor Day and will have items to donate.

Work day: Verona workday 9/12/16 was a success. It was attended by Cletus, Jerry, Bill and Jane.

DNR Trail Report:

Phones: MRT office telephone service is unstaffed. The DNR may switch park telephones to a Centrex system in the future. Kevin asked FMRT if they still want to keep their MRT phone number (437-7393 option 2). Option 2 says “press 2 to leave a message for the FMRT”, option 1 is to leave a message for the DNR trail supervisor. Bill said “the DNR should do what is best” for the DNR MRT office at the time. The cost is \$40 per month and whoever checks the messages forwards an email message to the FMRT if relevant. Lydia asked which telephone number should presently be used on the website to report comments or concerns about the trail. Kevin asked that calls be directed to the Blue Mounds State Park office, 437-5711 to reach trail staff. We decided to leave the 437-5711 number on the website to report problems, maintenance issues, etc related to the trail.

Brush Mower: Kevin would like the FMRT to purchase a brush mower to replace the one they have now. The one they are now using takes about \$1,300 per year in repairs. If the DNR were to purchase it Kevin would need to seek bids and that would delay the purchase probably past the time when it would be useful. He has located a used brush mower for \$5,950 at Carl F. Statz in Waunakee. Kevin thought the mower would only be used on the MRT. If the FMRT trail bought it the DNR would pay for repair. This unit is a ditch mower and goes on the end of a tractor and can pan up at 45 degrees to go around rock outcroppings. The unit floats on the side of the tractor so there isn't a need to go up and down the side of the trail. They would like to mow this fall to take out the woody vegetation. The snow mobiles are bothered by this woody vegetation encroaching on the trail. There was discussion about if they would be willing to help with the cost. The DNR has an expenditure cap of \$5,000, and Kevin has a present need for a mower. He asked if FMRT could purchase the mower.

Keith thought the DNR should not buy a used mower. There was discussion about raising funds for a new mower (cost between \$10,000 - \$12,000).

Jane motioned and Keith seconded to have the FMRT offer Carl F. Statz up to \$5,500 for the used brush mower. Motion passed unanimously. Bill and Gerry will go with Kevin to inspect the mower as time permits and make the

offer to purchase. (Kevin hasn't inspected it yet since he hadn't secured the funds). It was unclear who would deliver the mower to the DNR.

Jane motioned that we work to attain sales tax exemption status and Keith seconded it. The motion was passed unanimously. Mary Kay and Lydia will work on filing the paperwork needed for this exemption to avoid paying tax on the mower purchase. Bill said that all the documentation that is needed for the exemption is on the website.

The new parks director went to the ID property and decided that the DNR is not going to move on the parking lot there. He felt that it would not be feasible due to the current financial climate. Kevin has reached out to Dane County Parks to see if they could help. The point of the lot was to alleviate the trail users parking illegally in the Cave of the Mounds parking lot and to act as another trail head.

Pine Relict:

Mary Kay represented the Friends of the Pine Relict in the Labor Day parade. She had numerous inquiries about the properties, as did the FMRT in the depot. All the handouts in the depot were taken. Many people volunteered to work on the Relict, to show Friends of the Relict caves that were unknown to them, and to offer other services. Palmer suggested the Pine Relict photo exhibit remain posted in the depot indefinitely

The Ridgeway Depot will remain open through November. The Haynes and Mary Kay will be hosting. Bill will notify the plumber to drain the system on the 7th of November or sooner should temperature dictate.

FMRT will not be a sponsor the Bike the Barns Ride.

The next work day is October 10. The DNR will provide a sugar maple tree to plant at the Verona Park and Ride where the another tree was uprooted.

The next meeting is October 10 at the Ridgeway Depot.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Castello, Secretary