

## **FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL**

**Meeting Date:** October 10, 2016

**Meeting Location:** Train Depot, Ridgeway

**Friends Attending:** Jerry Wilson, President; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Cletus Schwoerer, Vice President; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Jane Schwoerer; Lydia Haynes; Palmer Haynes; Brad Bates, DNR Ranger; Kevin Swenson, DNR Trail Manager; Mary Kay Baum; Dave Pearson

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

**Financial Reports:** The FMRT ended the month with \$14,066 in our account. The major expenditure for the month was the mower deck. Not much came in from trail passes. Mary Kay gained tax exempt status for the group. The group needs to buy a bar and a chain for the chain saw. Lydia made a new account to be called trail improvement, and it will include equipment for trail maintenance, new construction (kiosks), chemicals, etc. There was discussion of how the mower should appear on the report. It will most likely be owned by the DNR so it is not an asset of the FMRT. Kevin thought expenditures on the trail are all considered as donations. Dave motioned and Cletus seconded to accept the financial report. The motion passed unanimously.

**Thank you notes:** Jack Loud from Madison recently passed away. He sold senior citizen passes to trail users and advocated for senior citizens use of the trail. He founded a group called sports for active seniors. Bill would like to recognize the work he did on the trail with a brick and note to the family. Bill motioned and Dave seconded this idea. It passed unanimously.

Bill also would like to thank Todd Epstein who donated a model railroad tower to the group. He was a station agent in Ridgeway for a number of years. The group would like to send a thank you note to him also.

### **DNR Topics:**

-The FMRT paid \$4750 for the new (used) mower deck with the DNR paying \$800 in shipping fees. The vendor accepted us as tax exempt. The DNR thinks the mower deck is in great shape and have ordered a few new parts for it.

-Meg Skinner is interested in planting more glade mallow in the Riley section and is collecting seed and working with the DNR on expanding this area.

-DOT informed the DNR that the Ridgeway interchange work will mean that the trail has to be rerouted and/or shut down for 3-4 weeks in the summer or fall of 2017. The trail will ultimately be moved closer to 18-151. FMRT will use the website to alert users to the issues with the trail.

-Starting mid June 2017 PB will be closed and there will be a reroute of the trail through the park and ride.

-There have been a few events since the last meeting. Events included a local Verona group sponsoring golf cart rides for the residents of a retirement home and Bike the Barns.

-Across from the depot in Verona there is strip of land that has scraggly landscaping. The businesses fronting this area would like to restore the area to a prairie/flower area and have

agreed to pay for the restoration. The land use agreement in force for this area spells out what can and can not be planted next to the trail. The DNR is working with the the businesses on this restoration. A big issue along the trail is encroachment by land owners. Landowners are not allowed to landscape in the corridor without a land use agreement with the DNR. All plantings need to be approved native plants. The DNR can not accommodate landscape planting that is done outside of a land use agreement.

-Kevin and Brad are meeting this Thursday (October 13) at 6:00 at the Friends Shelter in Blue Mounds State Park with the snow mobile groups that use the MRT and work on grooming the trail. The meeting is a meet and greet to hear what everyones expectations are about using the trail.

### **Replacing the Barneveld Kiosk, Including Approval of Required Resolution**

Gerry has started the paperwork to raise funds need to replace the Barneveld kiosk through a stewardship grant. Bill needs an estimate and then the grant can go in. The grant allows for a cost split, half one year and half the next. We will request half of the estimated amount through the grant and FMRT will pay the other half. Cletus motioned and Bill seconded to replace the Barneveld kiosk with the contractor used before and with the best price we can get. We need to pass a resolution that authorizes Gerry to act on behalf of the FMRT to apply for the grant. Dave motioned, and Lydia seconded the motion to authorize Jerry as president of FMRT to act on the FMRT's behalf to submit the grant. The motion passed unanimously.

### **October 10 Trail Work Day – Debrief**

The FMRT work group today planted a sugar maple provided by the DNR at the Verona Park and Ride to replace the tree that was uprooted in the storm this summer. The DNR will mulch around the tree.

### **State Friends Meetings – Stevens Point, Saturday, November 5**

The State Friends group is having a training session in Stevens Point (Sat., Nov 5). Registration is needed by Friday, 10. Gerry can't go and asked if anyone else wanted to go. He will send out the information about it. If anyone is interested in it the FMRT will consider absorbing the costs.

### **Planting Hardwoods Project - Revisited**

There was discussion about moving forward with the plan to plant hardwoods along the trail. Gerry sent an email to Tom Meyer asking if he would be willing to advise us on this. Kevin said the DNR is always cutting soft fiber trees out of the corridor. The group thought that since clearing happens frequently, once an area is cleared it would be a good time to replant with hardwood trees and make this a routine project. The trees would need to be maintained for a number of years. Kevin is interested in this possibility. There was discussion about what kind of trees to plant along the trail (oak vs maple vs hickory, etc.) Bill motioned that we plant hardwoods on an annual basis around Arbor Day (the number to be determined). Kevin said the trees would have to be tubed and cared for for a number of years. Possibly we could get youth groups involved in the planting and maintenance of the trees. Dave seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Should We Purchase and Install Window Shades for the Depot Windows Trail**

The group decided not to purchase window shades for the depot.

### **Replacing Broken Outside Light Chimney**

It was also pointed to the the chimney on the light outside the door needs to be repaired.

**Request to renew domain name**

Gerry received an email request to renew the old domain name. We need to notify the vendor that we want to cancel this domain name.

**Trail Workdays**

The next work day is 1:00 on November 14. Cletus will send out an email about this.

**Depot Open House**

There were not many people last Sunday - only 4. Mary Kay made a good contact at the open house with a mother and her children who ended up working on the Pine Relict a total of 3 days.

The next meeting is November 15 at the in Blue Mounds Friends Shelter.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah Castello, Secretary