

FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL

Meeting Date: October 9, 2017

Meeting Location: Ridgeway Train Depot, Ridgeway, WI

Friends Attending: Jerry Wilson, President; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Lydia Haynes; Palmer Haynes; Tom Pedretti,; Dave Pearson; Brad Bates, DNR Ranger; Kevin Swenson, DNR Trail Manager

Minutes

Bill motioned and Sarah seconded to accept the September 2017 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports

The financial report showed we have \$17,196 in the FMRT checking account. The Friends received a donation from a realtor. This realtor gives a percentage of his sale to whatever organization the customer would like to donate to, and in this case, it was the FMRT. Bill sent a thank you note to the realtor office to be passed on to the home buyer. Bike trail pass money is coming in. Dave motioned that we accept the financial report. The motion was seconded by Palmer. The motion passed unanimously.

Workday

Tom Meyers has a few vistas he has identified for clearing and he is available Saturday, Dec. 9 or Sunday, Dec 10. Palmer and Lydia have a friend who is a certified to chain sawer and Palmer will see if he is available to work with us. The group decided on Saturday, Dec 9 for the work day. Bill will also notify Cletus about the work day.

Chain Saw Training

Dan Wallace is offering the chain saw class sometime in the beginning of December. Sarah's husband is taking the class. Tom Pedretti is interested in the chain saw class also and Sarah will forward Dan Wallace's email to Tom.

Additional Agenda Items

None

DNR Topics

- Brad and Kevin are meeting with 4 snow mobile clubs Tuesday night to talk about grooming the trail. The Friends were invited to talk about the FMRT but no one was available that evening.
- The DNR is starting to put belting down the center of the bridges (at least 600 feet so far), mostly on the bridges near Blue Mounds. Kevin had pictures of some of the bridge problems and fixes. The belts are there to absorb the carbide studs of the snow mobiles and prevent further damage to the boards. Belting can only be put on the bridges that are not already really worn down in the center (these bridges will be replaced soon and the center is too sunken in allow the belting to lie flat). The belts are secured by outdoor lags. The belts are nice for bicyclists (smoother ride) but they can be slippery (but so are the wooden planks on the bridges). The DNR has submitted a development project for funding, The project focuses on bridge replacement.

- The Friends of Blue Mounds are having an appreciation event, Thursday, Nov 9, 6-9pm, to thank everyone that has helped with the Horribly Hilly and any type of volunteer project at Blue Mounds State Park.
- The DNR contacted the bureau to find out when and where the closure, due to the Ridgeway 18-151 exits project, will be. They think the closure will be June, July and August of 2018. The trail closure time will be posted on the DNR website and the FMRT website. 1.6 miles of the trail will be closed west of Ridgeway. The DNR will not recommend a re-route (too much liability) but will give maps.
- The trail got its last turf mowing for the year. The DNR will start next week to do ditch mowing starting at Riley. DNR personnel also removed walnuts from the trail.
- Brad is getting contractor quotes on repairing/resurfacing areas that are sandy and washed out. Some sections need to be completely rebuilt. Some need rebuilt culverts and then trail resurfacing. They got one quote on repaving the area under the 6th street bridge in Mt Horeb.
- The Cenex in Mt Horeb has a new drive so the trail in front of the DO-IT center was repaired.
- This winter the trail from the PB park-and-ride to the beginning of the Cannon-Ball Trail will be plowed. The DNR decided to plow due to increased traffic on the trail. A volunteer will be plowing this stretch for free. So far the DNR has had no negative comments on this effort from the snowmobilers.
- Highway PB was resurfaced (Verona park and ride) with some replacement of the PB bridge.
- The DNR is not sure how the recent decision to not allow a snowmobile trail in the Blue Mounds State Park will affect the new park master plan which included some reworked and new hiking/biking/skiing trails.

Stewardship grant to put up interpretive signs near Riley

Brad got a quote, for 6 side panels and high pressure laminate signs, of \$715 total with an additional \$540 for frames. The frames that are currently there have a few problems but basically can be used. Jerry will get to work on the grant. Kevin needs to submit the grant by the 15th of November.

Trail Maps

Brad is looking into larger laminated trail maps to put in the newer kiosks. The computer file that we currently have does not allow the map to be enlarged (pixel density is too low to provide good resolution in a bigger map). Bill will look into possible amendments that can be made to this file to allow for a bigger map. The change in the trail by Ridgeway will not change the trail enough to make it visible on the map. We would like an estimate on producing the laminate maps for the kiosks. Bill pointed out that we can use the old size maps that we still have in the older kiosks. We will include the making of the new laminated maps in the Stewardship grant.

ATC Power Line

Dave provided new input about the proposed ATC power line. The Driftless Defenders are meeting with Grant County Committees to inform them about the proposed power line. These county individuals do not seem to know as much about the issue as the Iowa county folks. Mt Horeb has formed an opposition group, Western Dane Preservation Campaign. The Driftless Defenders group is going to put together another short video featuring farmers and young families whose land is under the proposed route(s). It is anticipated that the draft Environmental Impact Statement will be completed in March. This will provide a good opportunity for citizen input.

Etching framing

Linda showed the picture (donated by Melva Philips) to Larry Welo who said the sketch is on canvas, not leather. Linda is still trying to find more information on the etching. Palmer said that Melva reported there were similar sketches at the Historical Society. Linda will report more on this project next time.

Snow Fence

We need to put up the snow fence in back of the building to keep snowmobilers off the brick walkway in the back of the building. Brad will ask the snowmobilers, at the meeting tomorrow, to put the fence up. We also need to move the paint that is stored in the depot so it won't freeze. We decided to leave it here and turn the cans upside down.

Depot Visits

Lydia and Palmer had two groups of people visiting the depot last Sunday, both with children, but unfortunately they could not get the doors to the caboose open.

Potluck and Next meeting

The next meeting is 6:00 pm, Monday, November 13 at the Blue Mounds Park Shelter. The annual potluck will take place before the meeting (menu to be decided).

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Castello, Secretary