

## **FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL**

Meeting Date: May 14, 2018

Meeting Location: Blue Mounds Park Shelter, Blue Mounds, WI

Friends attending: Jerry Wilson, President; Dave Pearson, Vice President; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Lydia Haynes; Palmer Haynes; Brad Bates, DNR Ranger; Kevin Swenson, DNR Trail Manager; Linda McMeen; Bruce Paulli

The group met early to clean the depot and enjoy a pot luck.

### **Minutes**

Bill motioned and Dave seconded to accept the April 2018 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Financial Reports**

The financial report showed we have \$17,921 in the FMRT checking account. Boy Scout 62 hasn't cashed the check given them to purchase helmets. FMRT received some of the money from the DNR signage project grant. Jerry gave his part of the closeout for the grant to Kevin for his completion. Dave motioned that we accept the financial report. The motion was seconded by Sarah, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Additions to this meeting's agenda**

#### **Who can use the depot during the times when the heat is on?**

Palmer motioned to allow the use of the building for meetings of a poetry group of which he is a member. In recompense for using the depot the group thought that we could ask for donations but they are not mandatory. Palmer will check with the poetry group to let them know it is available and see if they are still interested. Dave seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### **Vista opening and marsh marigolds**

Tom Meyer emailed the group on May 9th to let them know that their work on opening the trail east of Sletto Road and west of Highway P allowed trail users to view the spectacular display of marsh marigolds.

#### **REI volunteer group seeks trail projects**

REI, who sells trail passes for us, had an event in their parking lot. REI has a volunteer group and let Bill know that if they can get 6-8 employee volunteers they would like to work on a project on the trail. Kevin and the rest of the group liked the idea. Both Jerry and Kevin will mention this idea to Tom. Others suggested that LL Bean, which is opening a store at Hilldale, might also sell passes for the trail and might be interested in helping on the trail.

#### **Dodgeville newspaper**

Bruce Paulli, who is working on the Dodgeville Chronicle, will post news items related to the trail. We will send him the times that the depot is open on Sundays.

### **DNR Topics**

There was discussion about the DNR signage kiosk stewardship grant. This is a matching grant (50-50). The grant we currently have has two more years on it. The deadline for the WI State Enhancement Grant for 2019 is June 1.

Pine trees were planted from the Mt Horeb bridge to Waltz Park. They were hard to plant due to rock, roots, etc. The DNR also put in a line of Indian grass in front of the trees. The trees are intended to act as a screen for noise and hold back the buckthorn.

The PB project has started and PB is closed from the park and ride to the bridge. A pedestrian bridge allows access to the community gardens.

The Verona School District project has started. There was lots of clear cutting. The project will involve removing two bridges and replacing them with box culverts. The DNR has had lots of complaints about the clear cutting along the trail.

The DNR is doing some trail brushing near Nine Mounds Road.

A company is doing an expansion near Nine Mounds Road, and wanted to use the trail. The DNR said no.

The bridge in Mt Horeb will cost \$300,050 to remediate. Work will start sometime this summer.

Duluth project is still proceeding.

The Ridgeway highway exit project is getting close to impacting the trail.

Brad has incorporated comments from everyone and sent out the final design for the interpretive signs. We have a grant for this for \$1600. We already have four of the frames needed. Dave moved that we move to the next step in the interpretive project with what has been done so far. Lydia seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

Brad has ordered signs to be placed on the trail near the 2nd Street intersection in Mt. Horeb to indicate that there is a bike shop just off the trail and to also indicate that there is bike repair done there. The signs do not mention the specific name of the bike shop.

The DNR is working with engineering students from UW Milwaukee to get suggestions on the most cost effective way to deal with the bridge in Mt. Horeb, how to manage the run off on the 5th street bridge, and more.

The DNR got cost estimates for using culverts vs. bridges near Epic. Wherever possible they want to move to culverts to avoid having to constantly replace bridge decking.

### **Trail pass cross training**

Bill wants cross-training in how to handle trail passes in case of his absence.

Dave agreed to be cross trained in this area.

### **Screen doors and donated painting**

Bill, Brad and Kevin rebuilt and rehung the depot/caboose screen doors. The group also hung the painting donated by the Iowa County Historical Society.

### **Assignments for first Sunday of the month Depot opening**

- June 3 (Sunday) - Linda and Sarah 12-3:30 (open and extra half hour because of DNR Open House Days when there are no fees for fishing fees, trail use, etc.)
- June 9 (Saturday) is Hyde Family Friendly Day; Depot open 12-3, Dave can be there
- July 1 (Sunday) - Lydia and Palmer 12-3
- August 5 - Lydia and Palmer 12-3
- September 2 (this is also Ridgeway Days) Jerry and Dave 12-3
- October 7 - not on the calendar currently - Lydia will add this to the calendar- tentatively Linda and Sarah

### **Depot visit by Dodgeville Schools**

Dodgeville District Elementary Schools will visit the depot Friday, May 18. Bill and Palmer will be there.

### **ATC Power Line**

ATC decided to go ahead and apply for the permit with the public service commission sometime in September. There is a hearing where ATC will present all the data in favor of the Cardinal Hickory Creek transmission line. Intervenor can talk to the commission at this hearing to give reasons why it does not have to be built. Opponents of the power line are counting on the Environmental Law and Policy Center to testify, They have been working pro bono in order to be competent. The intervenors (Environmental Law and Policy Center) need experts on some the issues and this will cost about \$100,000. FMRT sent money to support an ad in the paper about the hearing. Dave wants to encourage people to come to the Dodger Bowl (off Highway 18) Friday, June 8 at 7pm. Howard Lerner from the Environment Law and Policy Center will be there to educate the public and answer questions. There is a thought that power from this line is needed for FoxCon.

### **FMRT Members selling trail passes**

There was talk about the Friends selling passes and the group thought we should do this in the spring. We need something to make us official looking such as a sign that says "Trail Passes Sold Here", then an arrow pointing to the Friend selling passes. Jerry is going to try and get 2-3 signs made. Linda and Sarah will try to sell passes Memorial weekend. Palmer motioned that the group authorize up to \$150 for signs, Dave seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Sign Grant**

Kevin said there was a matching grant which we could use for plantings around the sign in Verona. and it only takes an email from Kevin to get \$100. Lydia motioned to apply this year for the matching money (\$100 from Friends) for plants around the sign in Verona. Sarah seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The next meeting is 6:00 pm, Monday, June 11, 2018 at the Ridgeway Depot.

Respectfully submitted, Sarah Castello, Secretary