

## **Minutes - FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL**

Meeting Date: May 6, 2019, 2018

Meeting Location: Ridgeway Train Depot, Ridgeway, WI

Friends attending: Dave Pearson, Vice President; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Lydia Haynes; Brad Bates, DNR Ranger and Assistant Trail Manager; Regina Reeson, Guest; Jennifer Meeker, Guest; Helen Godfrey, Guest

This meeting date was moved one week earlier to combine the annual cleaning of the depot with the monthly meeting in order to have the cleaning take place before the first open house.

### **Minutes**

Bill motioned and Lydia seconded to accept the April 2019 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Financial Reports**

The financial report showed an end of April balance of \$22,713 in the FMRT checking account. Lydia motioned that we accept the financial report. The motion was seconded by Bill, and passed.

### **Additions to this meetings agenda**

There were no additions to the agenda

### **DNR Topics**

The City of Verona is proposing paving the trail from PB, through the city, and ending somewhere near Epic. The DNR is meeting with the snow mobile clubs to find parking for them so they would not have to ride on the paved portion of the trail. A meeting with WI Snow Mobile Assoc. and the DNR is set to discuss this.

The Verona High School project is ongoing. Contractors are putting in a road over the trail on the far east end of the project called Wild Cat Way. This will include a big culvert (one of three on this portion of the trail). The DNR hopes there will be no flooding issues due to storm water. The culvert will be lit. Contractors are hoping to start this in June with 4-8 week closure possible. They may explore putting up scaffolding (a soft closing) so the trail could still be used for part of this time. DNR is asking that a detour be set up by the contractors.

The Epic tunnel was flooded this spring. DNR has worked on it but it is still very rough in this area. DOT engineer Bob Armstrong is meeting with DNR/DOT on site to look at how to mitigate flooding in this tunnel. There are flood meter sticks on both sides of the tunnel so users know how deep the water is in the tunnel.

The DNR is in the final stages of issuing a permanent lease agreement with Tri Holdings, owners of the Duluth building, so they can use trail property as needed for maintenance of the building. Last fall Duluth landscaped along the trail, and changed the trail route, without first consulting the DNR. The DNR is telling Duluth that they must restore the trail to its original condition before the construction project began (remove crosswalk, plantings, and dog leg to the trail).

The new paved section of the trail through Ridgeway should be 10 feet wide and is only 8 1/2 feet wide. Also the asphalt is thin and has plants popping up through it. There is also a section of the trail that gathers water which ponds, overflows, and erodes the trail. The DNR has brought this to DOT's attention.

Dave asked about the Blue Mounds hike-bike campground. This site is now reservable. New this year is that every camp site is reservable including the hike-bike sites. There is also a non-motorized vehicle accommodations policy which says the DNR will provide a place to stay overnight for any one that shows up at the park in the noon or evening on a non motorized vehicle. This could mean camping in the public areas, the shelter lawn, etc. for the night.

DNR staff is addressing encroachments, land abuses, new crossings cut without permission, etc., as they have time.

Maps purchased through the grant process that show "you are here" are all up.

Kevin continues to detail everything done to repair the trail after the flood. This is time consuming but needed for the FEMA claim.

May 12 summer staff starts.

Siting the bench in Ridgeway. There was discussion on siting this bench: was the proposed site on Friend's or state trail property; if the preferred siting was on state trail property what types of benches are allowed; the goal of the group proposing the bench is to be able to see the sunset from the bench. The group went outside and looked at potential sites and picked three best options. Brad will relay these to Kevin. Kevin will discuss the proposed sites with the guests who are proposing the bench and make a decision.

Calendar - Bill has posted several calendars in kiosks and Lydia brought some more with her. Bill and Dave will post them in the remaining kiosks.

ATC - There is not much more happening. We still need to keep up opposition pressure. We cannot put the sign on the caboose (state property) so the sign was moved to the depot.

Are we interested in putting money into new dragons (replacing the old ones) decorating the top of the 2nd street depot? The cost is about \$2000 per dragon and there are 3 of them. The DNR most likely cannot put much money into this. Brad suggested a "Go Fund Me" page. Bill proposed giving \$1000 to this project. We will bring this issue to a vote at the next meeting (no quorum tonight).

The REI bike event is this Saturday (May 10). Bill will be there representing the FMRT.

The DNR free day is listed on their website but there is no literature to give out at the REI event.

A garlic mustard removal work day is also scheduled for May 10.

The covered picnic table near Blue Mounds needs sprucing up. Are we interested in a work day to do this? The wife of the individual to whom this is dedicated is getting a new plaque made for the site. There was discussion about other benches that needed to be repaired.

The next meeting is 6:00 pm, Monday, June 10, 2019 at the Ridgeway Depot. Dave will chair the meeting in Jerry's absence.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah Castello, Secretary