

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

Meeting Date: February 8, 2021

Meeting Location: Zoom Meeting

Friends attending: Jerry Wilson, President; Dave Pearson, Vice-President; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Lydia Haynes; Linda McMeen; Brad Bates, DNR; Kevin Swenson, DNR; Charlotte Jerney, Verona; Adam Maus, Fitchrona area; Daryl Hinz, Verona

### **Minutes**

Dave motioned and Linda seconded to accept the January 2021 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Financial Reports**

The financial report showed an end of January 2021 balance of \$30,308.84 in the Farmers Savings Bank account. The post office box was paid for, some utilities bills were paid, and we sold some trail passes. Sarah motioned that we accept the treasurer's report, Linda seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

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

None

### **DNR Topics**

Kevin highlighted the completion of the Fitchburg trailhead kiosk, bench, bike tools and evergreens which mark where the Capital Trail starts and MRT ends as a major achievement.

Snowmobiling on MRT has been open for more than a week. Both Kevin and Bill spoke of the cooperation between most snowmobilers and other trail users but there have been complaints (noise, speed, some park users have been chased off the trail). Bill said these people wondered who to call with complaints. Kevin suggested calling the DNR tip line (1-800 847-9363) and they will address the issues. Those with complaints could also call the Mount Horeb Police if the incident occurs within village limits. Lydia will put the DNR hotline number on the website.

There is no date for the Master Plan which includes the MRT to come out.

DNR met with city of Verona and others to discuss potential paving of the trail through Verona. The possibility of paving is looking hopeful.

There has been no news on the issue with Duluth. They are waiting to hear from the lawyers involved.

Ridgeway is discussing a project at the park (west of the depot) to mitigate water damage at the park. This project might not affect trail. There are land use agreements involved.

DNR is still working with engineers to get bridges redecked with cement in the fall of 2021. The project has led to permitting issues because some of the bridges go through wetlands.

DNR is going to replace the Howard Himsel shelter plaque but a new plaque has not been made yet. A new plaque will likely not go up until spring at the earliest.

### **ATC Update**

Dave found that the Driftless Defenders website referred to a new threat due to hundreds of windmills in Dane and Lafayette Co. that will be visible from the trail. Dave thinks these windmills will be generating power for other states, not WI.

The ATC cases are still being appealed. There was a court decision that allows ATC to continue building the line while the appeals go through.

### **DOT Trail Related Signage on Highway 18/151**

DOT signage about the MRT on 18/151 near Ridgeway is still on the village clerk's list of things to do.

### **Dick Trexel**

Dick Trexel, who filled out a contact form, said he had some things to donate to the depot. Jerry will contact him.

### **Ownership of public spaces**

Bill thinks we should make our presence known along the trail by doing projects on the trail and as working, talking to trail users and tell them about the Friends group. Dave thinks Friends working of trail need a t-shirt or vest to show Friend membership. Jerry

asked that we form a group around this idea. Bill is somewhat interested. Sarah will contact Jess Bernstein to see if she is interested in working on this.

Lydia asked when we put the 2021 calendar in kiosks. Jerry said we will discuss the calendar in March, and finalize it in April.

### **Contacting Villages/Towns Along the Trail to Get New Members**

Greg Pitts once contacted communities along the trail. Jerry is suggesting that we do this again and contact people in villages and towns to get more people in towns along the trail to join the Friends and have their town represented in the group. Kevin thought it was a good idea to contact villages/towns and will send a letter to village personnel (Sarah will draft it). Jerry and Kevin will sign it and send it to village clerks, etc. Hopefully, representatives from each town will take care of kiosks in their area, pick up along the trail in their area, report conditions, know where users can buy passes in their area, and come to meetings. Jerry will send bullet points to Sarah about this and she will draft a letter.

Next on the March and April agendas will be Bill's ideas to adopt a kiosk, and to use funds to start a scholarship or endowment program.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be March 8, 2021 via zoom. Dave Pearson will send out an invitation and open the meeting at 5:15.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah Castello, Secretary