

Minutes - FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL

Meeting Date: October 10, 2022

Meeting Location: Riley Tavern, Riley.WI

Friends attending: Jerry Wilson, President; Dave Pearson, Vice-President; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Lydia Haynes; Adam Maus; Kevin Swenson, DNR; Brad Bates, DNR; Rodney Albers; Tom Pedretti; Kate Teasdale; Mary Kay Baum (left after the photo shot); Bruce Paull; Meg Skinner; Joel Xavier; Doug Jones; Daryl Hinz

The meeting was held on the outdoor veranda at the Riley Tavern. Chuck and Kate provided drinks and pizza. A big thanks to them for their generosity!

Added to the agenda

Daryl Hinz posts to the Department of Tourism website about the condition of the Military Ridge Trail. Adam will link the website to the Tourism webpage and also send this information to Ethan for the Facebook page.

FMRT Picture for Close out report

A picture of the Friends was taken in front of the new DNR sign in front of the Riley parking lot. The picture was taken by Mary Kay Baum and will be used by Jerry to complete the close out report for the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship grant used to fund a portion of the sign.

Minutes

Dave motioned and Rodney seconded to accept the September 2022 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports

In Bill's absence Kate gave the report. The financial report showed an end of September 2022 balance of \$46,603.06 in the Farmers Savings Bank checking account. The 3rd quarter Fidelity report showed an ending balance as of September 30, 2022 of \$24,830.80. Bill motioned (through his report) to accept this report, Dave seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

DNR Report

DNR is continuing with the annual mowing and should be finished in the next few weeks.

DNR is still waiting on delivery of bike repair stand for Dodgeville.

The DNR is working with MMSD on the sewer line in Verona. A route has been chosen for the line.

DNR is working with the snow mobile clubs. They are scheduling an annual meeting soon (Friends are welcome to attend). DNR people will remind the snow mobile people to put up the snow fencing at the depot. The fence is needed so snow mobiles cannot go up on the ramp by the depot.

The Riley parking lot sign was made by the DNR up north. Spirit Construction built the frame and put it together. We received a \$2500 matching grant (Incentive grant from the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks). Kevin laid out the Kittleson Landscaping bid. The bid included putting boulders around the sign, for \$2700, and finishing with washed stone on top, for an additional \$200. There was a discussion about landscaping. Kevin thought we should just go with the boulders for now and the group decided to do this and defer the washed stone decision for later.

Knowles Nelson Stewardship Grant

Nov. 15 is the Knowles Nelson Stewardship grant proposal deadline. Typically the grant is for projects relating to trail education. The addition to the bridge by turtle pond, which will be a memorial to Palmer Haynes, will be addressed when the bridges are rebuilt. Suggestions for grant proposals include: Information on the quarry between Brian Street and Town Hall road (some of the stone quarried there was used to build the railroad bed); A sign in front of the train depot to talk about the depot, how it was renovated, how the cabooses got there, discussion about soldiers moving along the trail, a history of the area around the depot; Story book boards along the trail like they have at Governor Dodge. Brad can get a frame and panel estimate. Dave motioned to go ahead with spending matching money, and appointing Jerry to sign for it, to fund a kiosk outside the depot to lay out information about the depot and surrounding area history, and a sign by the quarry, talking about the quarry and use of the stone in building the rail bed. Joel seconded it, the motion passed unanimously. Rodney will research the quarry history (with Bill) and Jerry will do the depot research. The motion passed unanimously.

Volunteer Opportunities with Epic Employees

Jenny Hsu, our Epic contact, emailed Sarah about Epic Volunteers potentially partnering with Friends of Military Ridge Trail for future trail cleanup projects. Jenny said that Epic employees, after attending the September meeting at Epic, were interested in hearing more and we could reach out to them at epicvolunteers@epic.com. There was discussion about how this partnering could work. Lydia felt that since they were interested we should jump on this opportunity and not wait until spring when more project opportunities would be available. She also felt that we needed a Friend to act as the contact person. Joel Xavier volunteered to work with Epic on this and Sarah will send him the contact information. Potential volunteer opportunities discussed included: Epic employees adopting a section of the trail; vista clearings to open up views from benches and kiosks; bench sanding and refinishing; gravel distribution at the approaches to bridges (although Kevin and Brad pointed out this would be a problem due to the positioning of big piles of gravel at the bridge approaches for a time and disrupting biking); brushing out around and underneath bridges; trash pickup; and invasive plant removal.

Winterizing the Depot

Jerry closed down the depot, shut off most of the circuit breakers, left on one of the pole lights, and reseeded grass killed by boards left on the grass. Bill will have the plumber come and shut off the water. A portion of the parking lot has been blacktopped but no one knew why.

Depot break-in

There was an establishment on Main Street broken into but it was not the depot.

Website

Adam reported the following updates; meeting minutes; brick donation form; and the membership form.

Depot windows

Bruce will get some estimates on redoing the windows in the depot. Bruce will talk to Mike Larson first before getting other people involved. Mike Larson, who volunteered to repair the depot windows for the cost of materials, has not done anything on them yet.

ATC is off the agenda.

Since the ATC line is already being constructed the group decided to remove this item from the agenda. Dave is going to the court hearing about the line Monday afternoon.

Next Meeting

The next FMRT meeting will be November 14, 2022 at the Blue Mounds Friends Shelter. The meeting will start at at 5:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Castello, Secretary