

Minutes - FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL Monthly Meeting

Meeting Date: June 12, 2023

Meeting Location: Ridgeway Train Depot, Ridgeway, WI

Friends attending: Jerry Wilson, President; Dave Pearson, Vice-President; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Lydia Haynes; Rodney Albers; Adam Maus; Brad Bates, DNR; Bruce Pauli; Joel Xavier

Minutes

Bill motioned and Dave seconded to accept the May 8, 2023 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports

The financial report showed an end of May 2023 checking account balance of \$46,613.03. There was lots of activity with trail pass money coming in and going out. We had a donation from Jeff Billerbeck and Bonnie Myhre for \$35, and Norb Scribner for \$30. A brick order came in (for Mary Kay Baum). Dave motioned that we accept the financial report as presented, Lydia seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

DNR Report

- Riley parking lot - DNR met with engineers about the parking lot and there may be a push to get it done soon (maybe this fall) because of the displacement of the snow mobile users from Verona and the use of the Riley parking lot as the fall back lot.
- Building of the Kleevenville parking lot might also happen soon. The funds for this lot are tied to the Riley parking lot funding.
- Riley Signage- all the money for this project has been spent (mulch was spread, stain purchased and both are paid for)
- DNR and the City of Verona have draft agreements in place and are now going through final review. These agreements allow the

city of Verona to start planning for paving the trail from the high school to Hwy PB. It will be at least 4 years until this section is paved.

- MMSD is still going forward with their work. They are estimating it will happen this year. The goal is to detour trail users around the construction area not shut that section of the trail down.
- DNR crew graded the entire trail. In the next two weeks they will spray the middle where there is grass.
- DNR staff is working on putting up new signage (stop signs in Ridgeway, some street names, intersection signs, etc). The goal is to do Barneveld and Ridgeway this year.
- DNR is working with Iowa county on a new connector where Hwy T crosses the trail in Barneveld (leading to Birch Lake). This is a village/county project.
- The Dodgeville bike repair stand is not up yet.
- Not much has been done on the interpretive signage for the depot and quarry. The DNR does have the quarry research done. Jerry is close to being done on the depot part. Brad can work on this with Jerry.

National Bike Week

Dave, Adam and Brad, and more DNR staff, were at the bike table June 7 at the self registration kiosk in Fitchburg for National Bike Week and had trail passes to sell. Bikers stopped and asked questions. Adam reported there is graffiti on the Fitchburg kiosk. We need a comprehensive listing of which trails require trail passes. This could be an article for the papers (Sarah would write this if someone gives her the information).

Horribly Hilly

FMRT has about 15 people signed up for their station. We hope to have water and will have a hose. There is some confusion about if we will have water. Bill said the Friends will give out whatever is given to us by the organizers to distribute.

Solar Panels

The bid for the panels came in at \$22,000. DNR says that there is most likely money to do a new metal roof next year. Brad reached out to Hefty construction and Strandors for bids on a metal roof. Brad thinks the money for roofing might be more available due to the possibility of solar panels.

Caboose repair

Dave has not had time to look into repair of the caboose windows. One pane is slipping and there is a chance it might fall out.

Ridgeway Village Area around the depot

Brad asked about the scope of the plan for the Ridgeway redo of the area around the depot and if it would be possible to bury the electrical line and get rid of the pole. Hailey is going to look into this.

Webpage - Online membership vendors

Adam emailed Justin at FBMSF and has not heard back from him about the vendor FBMSF uses. Adam likes Zeffy. This is not the vendor FBMSF uses. Zeffy is free; allows for volunteer opportunities, donations, memberships, payments; has no platform fee; and allows for contact list details (desire to get minutes, agenda, alerts about work opportunities) and may allow this data to be imported into other online databases. Adam would like to do a test of Zeffy and will set up a private page on our webpage to do the test. Adam motioned to do a test run of Zeffy, Dave seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously. Adam updated the homepage events tab..

Facebook page

Lots of nice pictures were added by a teacher which increased the page following.

Tourism Grant from Iowa County

This opportunity was dropped because there was not enough time between the grant due date and time to write the grant.

Scavenger Hunt

Sarah motioned that she be allowed to spend up to \$200 for the scavenger hunt, Bill seconded it, and the motion passed unanimously. Sarah will look into a portable sandwich board sign holder (signs can be swapped in and out of the board) that can be used by the Friends at events to advertise the Friends presence at these events (ex. Horribly Hilly, trail work, Bike Day).

Open House/Volunteers

We need more people for July 2 open house. This open house coincides with the Ridgeway 4th of July celebration and a butterfly release at the caboose. We need to put this on the FMRT facebook page. Jerry needs someone for the August Open House at the Depot. Rod, Patti, Carol, Ray will stain a kiosk.

Golf Cart Event

Rodney asked Premier Golf Cart and Utility Company (in Deforest) about use of a golf cart to take people along the trail. They said they would donate a cart(s) for a day for tours of the trail. They have available contracts, liability forms, etc. for this purpose.

Nature Walk

Meg Skinner will do a nature walk June 26 at 5:30 starting at the Riley Parking lot. We will advertise this on the webpage and facebook page.

Resurfacing the trail

Rodney looked into costs associated with resurfacing parts of the trail. There was discussion about reworking the surface of the trail (we need to build it up from the center, not try and pull gravel/dirt from the sides), getting contractors, and equipment needed. Rodney looked into costs, equipment, and different contractors.

Is this something we could consider? Brad said that we should wait until the state budget comes out. This budget it is leaning towards infrastructure and may include funds for resurfacing the trail. He felt that if Friends do a resurface project this needs to be a Stewardship project. We will revisit this idea after the budget comes out and will put it on the September agenda.

Eagle Scouts need projects

There are more eagle scouts coming this way so need to come up with projects. Friends need to give ideas to Kevin.

Old Photos of the Trail

Kevin finished digitizing photos taken on the trail. There are some great photos.

Memorial Bench

Doug Kellogg has requested a memorial bench be placed in Mount Horeb, Bill thinks there might already a bench where Doug wants to place it.

Shuttle Request

Someone wants to know if the Friends know of someone who will shuttle them June 27-28 from Mount Horeb. Bill said this is a service the Friends used to offer.

Trail Conditions

There was a phone message from Minnesota people concerned about trail conditions due to something they have read on the internet. Bill is wondering why they are concerned.

Next Meeting

The next FMRT meeting will be July 10, 2023 at the Ridgeway Depot. The meeting will start at at 5:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Castello, Secretary