

Minutes - FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL Monthly Meeting

Meeting Date: September 11, 2023

Meeting Location: Ridgeway Train Depot, Ridgeway, WI

Friends attending: Jerry Wilson, President; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Bill Kalscheur; Treasurer; Rodney Albers; Dave Pearson, Vice President; Kevin Swenson, DNR; Brad Bates DNR: Bruce Paull; Adam Maus, Webpage Administrator

Minutes

Bill motioned that the August 2023 minutes be approved with changes suggested, the motion was seconded by Dave. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports

The financial report showed a balance of \$43,770.25 in the Farmer's Savings Bank as of August 31, 2023. This included money coming in and out for trail passes. Sarah motioned that the financial report be approved, Rodney seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

New Account at the Bank

Bill sent an email to all for approval for a new bank account to be used only for money transfers from the new website application (Zeffy). The account is being set up by Bill. He still needs Lydia's signature.

DNR topics

Knowles Stewardship - Kevin doesn't know if paving the trail is something that falls under the scope of this grant. The group talked about grant money that could be used for paving a part of the trail west of Ridgeway due to a donation from someone for this purpose. Kevin plans to follow up on this.

Verona Paving

There is no update on this.

Hwy PD

The DNR put up larger stop signs at the County Hwy PD trail crossing

General

Crews are out on the MRT and Badger pole sawing, cutting ash trees, and repairing bridges.

Riley Sign

DNR put two coats of stain on the Riley entrance sign.

Riley/Klevenville parking lot

The engineering plans for the parking lot are completed. The DNR wants this done soon due to the paving in Verona and snowmobile use of the lot. The plans call for doubling the lot size with a pull in and pull out design for people with trailers. Mostly the lot will extend

further to the east. There will be a cement slab for the port-a body and an earthen ramp for unloading snowmobiles. Probably the 3 sided kiosk will be moved.

Epic new road proposal

They are going through the permitting process to take soil borings. There is also talk of expanding the culvert near Verona Road to mitigate flooding.

Caboose window and other repairs

Kevin pulled out a window on the caboose. New caboose windows, framing around them, and potentially new siding, could be a lot of work. Dave reported that he measured the windows and they all are different. Gary Olson, Dave's contact, could work on the window replacement on site if he could store his equipment inside the depot. Gary recommended that we use Lexcam plastic for the windows. Dave is unsure how much he would charge. Bill asked that Dave give us an estimate when he gets it before we start working. The question was asked that if we replace the windows now can we reside it without again replacing the windows.

Letter to Epic about building a road through the marsh

The group discussed if this would be a good idea and make any difference. Bill and others think the DNR should use crossing the trail as a bargaining tool to get Epic to perhaps put in new bridges, or something else to improve the trail in this area. Epic's plan is to build another campus west of Dairy Ridge Road and the proposed road through the marsh would be a connector to the east campus. We will bring the idea of a letter forward to the October meeting.

Bricks and new sidewalk

Hailey will let us know before they put new cement in and then we can pull the bricks. The bricks will be laid on top of the cement bed (this is what they have done at the Blue Mounds Shelter).

Use of the Depot by the Historical Society

Jerry contacted the Historical Society of Iowa County. We are willing to share the depot with them on the months that the depot is open.

Fiber optic cable

Bruce said Melissa (MHTC) will send our request for fiber optic cable to the contractor. Bruce had a problem because there is no name for the street in front of the depot or to the side so he couldn't fill out the form needed.

Mount Horeb Shelter solar panels

The company that Brad was working with to get a bid for the reroofing of the Mount Horeb Shelter went out of business. Brad does think that we have funding from the DNR for the roof. Because the roofing project is funded we can now move forward with defining the project, getting approvals, funding, and estimates for the project. The building is owned by the DNR. The DNR pays for major repairs and the village for minor repairs. A subcommittee was formed including Sarah, Bill and Jerry. Brad will send us the notes that Friends of Blue

Mounds State Park put together when they put solar panels on the buildings at Blue Mounds State Park. Brad said that an electric car hook up would not be a good idea at this time. The FBMSF found that EV charging technology is changing rapidly and is too expensive for now.

Last Open House

The last open house of the year, September 3, 2023, had 5 people.

Sandwich boards

Jerry would like to get signs made for the new sandwich board before next season (March 2024 maybe). Rodney suggested also getting a dry erase blank piece to put up at various events (so we could use whatever wording on the sign is appropriate). Carol would also like to use the sign for the library events. Signage could also be used at Horribly Hilly, the bike day event, when we do trail maintenance, and for depot open houses (sign placed near the farmer's market), as well as the Scavenger Hunt.

Knowles Stewardship Grant

We should be thinking about what we want to apply for and discuss this at the October meeting.

Hwy 92 flashing light at trail crossing

This is a village/private citizens initiative. FMRT doesn't have anything to do with it but could make a donation.

Webpage

Bill is working on setting up a separate account that can be used with Zeffy. Once it is set up Adam will do a test donation. We also discussed putting the membership list on Zeffy then Bill, Jerry, Lydia, and Sarah would have access to the same list and it would not be accessible to the public.

Facebook

Nothing new.

Jerry will start closing up the depot. There was discussion about how to close up the depot (plumber, throwing some of the breakers for the winter). Dave pointed out that they will need power for the caboos project.

The next FMRT meeting will be at 5:30 October 9, 2023 at the Riley Tavern porch.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Castello, Secretary