

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

Meeting Date: October 9, 2023

Meeting Location: Riley Tavern Porch, Riley, 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; Daryl Hinz; Tom Pedretti; Roger Brandt; Lydia Haynes

### **Minutes**

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

### **Financial Reports**

The financial report showed a balance of \$34,487.13 in the Farmer's Savings Bank as of September 30, 2023. The Fidelity quarterly report showed a balance of \$29,079.36, down \$1,170.56. Checkbook and bank balances do not match exactly because of outstanding checks. FMRT have opened a second bank account and transferred \$50 from the checking account to the new "Zeffy" account as start up funds. Adam has been testing the Zeffy account and successfully transferred \$10 to the new Zeffy account. In the future Bill will report on this account as well.

Dave motioned that the financial report be approved, Sarah seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

There was approval for payments for stain used on the decks to Rodney and Bill. Jerry had \$7 from the collection box at the depot that he gave to Bill.

### **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**

There are no budget updates yet. The DNR staff is still waiting to hear what has been finally allocated for the trail and bridges.

There is no update on the Verona paving project. There was a meeting with the new city administrator to bring her up to speed on the project.

DNR staff is attempting to start fall ditch mowing but has had lots of issues (equipment, etc).

The final plans have been submitted, for the Riley and Kleevenville parking lots with cost estimations.

There are no updates on MMSD.

DNR Staff have been working on bridges and hazard trees. They will be establishing a hazard tree crew for 4 trails in the area with the focus at first on ash trees.

There was more discussion with Mount Horeb on a paving project on the trail from 4th to 8th streets (there is a gas line that runs down the trail in this spot). DNR would pay for this. The Village of Mount Horeb is going to do fundraising for a beacon at the 8th street trail crossing. Maybe FMRT would want to contribute.

### **Proposed Letter of concern about the proposed EPIC road through the wetland**

A team representing DOT, EPIC, DNR, plus others is exploring the possibilities for a road through the marsh connecting the proposed west campus and current east EPIC campuses. No consensus was reached on a proposed letter since no proposed project has been announced.

### **Ridgeway Park Accessibility Project**

Hailey says the LWCF board will review final plans tomorrow. The group was concerned about cement over the trail. Jerry will look into this.

### **Depot winter close-out**

By October 16 the water was drained, cash box locked and power largely shut off (by Jerry). Jerry put a note to the electrician not to turn off electricity to the vents. Bill will contact the electrician and say not to turn off the vent.

### **Mt. Horeb Bike Shelter - Solar Panels**

Sarah said Eagle Point Solar still needs to complete the Site Assessment to give a final bid price. We will need a competing bid, maybe GlowSolar, the company used by Children's Community School in MH. The school had a good opinion of them. Sarah asked for other suggestions of solar installers. She also emailed Nic Owen MH admin, to get updated utility bills (PSC was going to raise rates). Sarah will set up a meeting of the subcommittee, Bill, Sarah and Jerry when she is back from traveling.

### **Caboose Window Repair / Replacement**

Dave talked to Gary Olson. Gary will be free later this month to do the window repair. Dave asked for volunteers to work with Gary and Dave on the caboose and the depot windows. Gary is willing to donate his time and charge for materials. Dave made a motion to authorize up to \$500 for the caboose and depot window materials, Bill seconded it, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Property Development Grant**

The 2024 Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Property Development Grant is due Nov. 15. Kevin suggested using the money for trail way finder signs (ex. Verona 2 miles). Kevin was in favor of deferring the submission of a grant proposal until the 2025 grant comes up. The group agreed with this.

Kevin would like the group to weigh in on historic knowledge along the trail related to the QR code posts.

### **Zeffy Update**

Membership via Zeffy automatically includes the addition of the donator to our contact list for future mailings. Adam and Bill set up a bank account for Zeffy money and Adam did a test donation (which Jerry was able to see). The donator gets a thank you message (which we will want to customize). Jerry would like a check box for people who donate and don't want to receive certain things (minutes, agenda). We can also do fund drives with Zeffy as well as reaching out for volunteers.

### **Facebook and Webpage**

There were no updates on the Facebook Page and Webpage.

### **Trail Pass Costs**

There is no change in trail pass pricing for the next year. The DNR is looking at on line sales. Bill will call DNR in favor of this option.

The next FMRT meeting will be at 5:30 November 13, 2023 at the Blue Mounds Friends Shelter at Blue Mounds State Park, Blue Mounds, WI. There will be a potluck before the meeting that starts at 5:00.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah Castello, Secretary