

Minutes - FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL Monthly Meeting

Meeting Date: November 13, 2023

Meeting Location: Blue Mounds State Park Friend's Shelter

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; Lydia Haynes

Minutes

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

Add part that Dave sent to me in an email.

Financial Reports

The financial report showed a balance of \$33,842.84 in the Farmer's Savings Bank as of October 31, 2023. The Zeffy account has \$60 as of the end of October. The Zeffy account is not live yet. Brad suggested that now is the time that people are looking to donate for tax purposes. Friends were worried about the suggested \$4 Zeffy fee associated with transaction. They might think this is a swipe fee, a tipping fee, or something else. Maybe we need a donation page which would include: the brick forms, the Zeffy site, and the membership form. Jerry thought the front page of the website should have information about how people can donate. Bill thinks we should have everybody use the Zeffy site and see how it works before we advertise it. Zeffy is for credit cards. Dave motioned that the financial report be approved, Rodney seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

DNR topics

Wednesday, Nov 15, 6pm the DNR is meeting with snow mobile clubs. All FMRT members welcome.

DNR met with Verona city officials (there are many new officials). DNR told them about the new paving going through Verona.

DNR is still working on starting ditch mowing (there are many problems).

There were no updates on either the Riley or Kleevenville parking lot projects.

Epic is still trying to untangle from red tape associated with their plans to build new roads. At an Epic meeting there was talk of dechannelizing the stream again.

DNR is in the preliminary stages of working with DOT on the culvert at 18/151 to prevent flooding.

The new trail crew addressing ash tree removal are working on ash trees on both Badger and Military Ridge Trails. When possible, they will be working throughout winter. The crew is mostly LTE people who would have been laid off.

The Ridgeway village clerk, Hailey Roessler, is leaving her position. DNR asked Ridgeway, as part of their village improvement project, not to cement across the trail due to the probability of erosion from cementing. Cementing the trail was taken out of the proposed project. Ridgeway is supposed to talk about the work calendar for improvements at the next meeting coming up.

Barneveld is still working on the T connector and trail crossings.

Part of the fence along the trail in Mount Horeb, next to by Buck and Honey's on the south side, is gone. The contractor, who took it down, had city approval but the city didn't ask DNR first.

DNR still hasn't heard anything about the budget.

Depot

DNR is going to put up construction barrels instead of snow fencing to guide the snowmobilers and keep them off the brick deck in back of the depot.

Free Bike for Kids (FB4K)

Rodney motioned that we donate \$1,000 to FB4K, Lydia seconded it, the motion passed unanimously. Brad and Rodney asked that this donation be put on the webpage and also tell people where they can donate if they want to.

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

There is no news on this. Bill sent the FMRT group an email about the proposed rerouting of County View road.

Mt. Horeb Bike Shelter - Solar Panels

This topic has been deferred until January.

Caboose Window Repair / Replacement

Dave's plan for the caboose window replacement is to tear into the area around one of the windows and see what is there and how they can frame it up. They will then will cover the area with plastic and then buy materials. Because each window is a different size they plan to frame them so each window is the same size. Hopefully Gary will have time to keep going on this. The plan is to start tomorrow. Caboose construction appears to be non-standard construction/materials. Dave and Gary will set up saws in the freight room of the depot and also store materials there. The caboose is not on the historic register. Brad wondered, since the openings are going to be standardized, if we could purchase something that was already pre-built, instead of having Gary build the windows.

Free Little Libraries

Dave took nature books from Dodgeville Library to restock the free little library in Dodgeville. Carol Murphy would like us to contact her before we do the calendar for 2024 so she can get the library programs on the calendar. Jerry will contact her. Rodney will be

doing the calendar for 2024 but he will be gone much of the winter/early spring (until March 21).

December Meeting

The group decided not to have a December meeting.

Iowa County has a grant for good ideas

Iowa county is looking for ideas to improve tourism in Iowa County. There is grant money available if the Iowa County Board likes your idea. March is the deadline date. They want a specific dollar amount for a specific project. This will be on the January agenda.

Zeffy Update

No Zeffy updates.

Facebook and Webpage

There were no updates on the Facebook Page and Webpage.

Trail Pass Costs

Bill passed out a compilation of 2023 trail pass information. It was quite surprising who sold passes (both daily and annual). New Glarus Chamber sold the most daily passes. REI sold the most annual. 2024 trail passes will be available next week. DNR is thinking about going electronic on trail passes. Bill wrote in favor of this option and sent it to Chris Pedretti, the DNR trail manager, who did not respond. Bill thinks that depending on how online trail pass distribution is handled Friend's groups may lose out. Bill thinks the trail pass buyer should be able to check off something on the purchase screen allowing them to designate a Friend's group they would like a portion of the fee to go to.

The next FMRT meeting will be at 5:30 January 15, 2024 (Martin Luther King Day) at the Blue Mounds Friends Shelter at Blue Mounds State Park, Blue Mounds, WI.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Castello, Secretary