

Minutes - FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL Monthly Meeting

Meeting Date: August 12, 2024

Meeting Location: Ridgeway Depot, Ridgeway, WI

Friends attending: Jerry Wilson, President; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Dave Pearson, Vice President; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Kevin Swenson, DNR; Brad Bates, DNR; Adam Maus; John Helmenstine; Bruce Paull; Hailey Roessler Ridgeway Nature and Garden Club; Anne Connor, Member of the Ridgeway Nature and Garden Club

Depot Garden in the Front

Hailey Roessler and Anne Connor from the Ridgeway Nature and Garden club attended the meeting. They agreed to do a planting plan (most likely a prairie style planting), and agreed to organize the community to clear out the existing plants. They may use herbicide on the bed. They have worked with the key club (high school) and possibly could organize a community service day to clear out the bed. The FMRT would give the money for plant purchase. There is no time line. The FMRT (Sarah) agreed to get a truck load of mulch from the Mount Horeb village compost site to keep maintenance and watering at a minimum. Dave moved that we accept their offer and clear out the bed (group project between the garden club and the FMRT and Ridgeway Community), provide up to \$200 for the plants (can be revisited), John seconded it, the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes

Bill motioned that the July 2024 minutes be approved. There was no June 2024 meeting. The motion was seconded by John. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report

The financial report showed a balance of \$52,613.95 in the Farmer's Savings Bank as of July 31, 2024. SC Designs paid for depot and quarry signs. Trail passes are bringing in money.

The Zeffy account showed a balance of \$195 (no change since last meeting).

Dave motioned to accept the financial report. The motion was seconded Sarah by and passed unanimously.

DNR Topics

On average the trail has 220,000 users to date. The DNR used to estimate 200,000 users for the year but are now thinking users are upwards of 300,000-400,00 per year! No trail cams are set up in Ridgeway, Barneveld, Dodgeville, or Blue Mounds so the use number is probably low (it could be as high as 300,000 to date). Trail passes are not checked.

The MMSD project took a disastrous turn. They had to go back and open up what they had done due to massive sink holes on the side of the trail. It has been corrected.

Mount Horeb 4th - 8th street bridge paving is done. The riprap on the side of the trail needs repositioning.

Riley/Kleevenville parking lots are a go and the DNR has started the paperwork needed for money and permits.

DNR is actively working on paperwork needed for repaving parts of the trail.

DNR doesn't know yet how much money is allocated for each project on the trail. There is lots of red tape to work through since the projects have been bundled together to hold down costs. Trail crew is finally at a point where they can start addressing the sandy ruts and washout on the trail now that the trees are cleared. Previously all the resources went to keeping the trail open by removing downed trees. FMRT has received complaints about the trail condition.

The roof for the 2nd street bike shelter in MH is a go and work on it will start soon.

DNR has starting putting up signs with the QR codes for trail passes.

Shoulders on the trail were mowed in July and staff sprayed around signs, etc.

There was no update on the EPIC/Verona trail paving.

Bill asked if the DNR would like us to purchase more counters (FMRT budgeted for them). Kevin said the ones they have don't work well. DOT is getting rid of some counters and DNR may get them so for now FMRT should hold off on considering this purchase.

Caboose windows

Dave has been unable to get his contacts to look at the job and give him a bid. Bruce does not have a bid yet either but his Amish contacts have agreed to stop by and look at the job. We will address this next month.

Linda Lynch and Keith Sincox Memorial Benches

There is nothing new on the benches. Brad can get quotes if we give him the size. Our size options are 4,6, or 8 feet. Bruce recommended Monroe engraving. Brad will get us quotes. We have already allocated money. The benches are made with plastic lumber.

Historic signage (Ridgeway Depot and quarry)

The signs have been ordered and everything is a go. We are waiting for them to be delivered. DNR will install them.

Air Filter in the Depot

Nothing new on this. The filter still needs to be cleaned/replaced. Bruce will take care of this.

Bridge #26 (with the bump out to facilitate turtle observation)

Nothing new.

Nelson Stewardship Grant - Possible Projects

Kevin proposed way finding signs (ex. Verona 3 mile with directional arrow). Capital City Trail has these. Jerry proposed the caboose repair.

Facebook and Webpage

Nothing new.

Trail Project

A proposed trail project was cleaning up the area around the cottonwood tree (wishing tree) between Mount Horeb and Riley. Maybe Tom Meyer could look into this. We will talk to him at the next meeting.

PB Park and Ride Planting

PB park and ride in back of the picnic table has become very overgrown. We need to do something in that area that is different than what is there. If we redo this area we will have to dig out the area (could be about 3 1/2 by 12 feet). Jerry and Adam have dug out parsnip there. Adam and Jerry will send an email out about this.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be 5:30, September 9, 2024 at the Ridgeway Depot, in Ridgeway, WI.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Castello, Secretary