

Minutes - FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL Monthly Meeting

Meeting Date: September 9, 2024

Meeting Location: Ridgeway Depot, Ridgeway, WI

Friends attending: Jerry Wilson, President; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Dave Pearson, Vice President; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Tom Pedretti; Christine Pedretti; Kevin Swenson, DNR; Brad Bates, DNR; Adam Maus; John Helmenstine; Bruce Paull; Lydia Haynes

Minutes

Bill motioned that the August 2024 minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Dave. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report

The financial report showed a balance of \$46,208.09 in the Farmer's Savings Bank as of August 31, 2024. The Zeffy account stayed at \$195. Strander Sanitary is still not cashing our checks (\$468) but has been contacted and will cash them. There were two brick orders, the first brick orders of the year. One order for Ridgeway and one for Riley. Trail pass money is trickling in. Dave motioned to accept the financial report. The motion was seconded by Lydia and passed unanimously.

DNR Topics

The crew is working on bridges and slowly continues to repair the May storm damage.

The crew is now dealing with fruit and walnuts on the trail.

The Barneveld project is still going on.

MMSD project is still going on.

Jerry sent the final papers to Kevin so he could finish the 2024 audit.

The DNR had an engineering meeting for the roof, furnace, sinks, and more on the welcome center in Mount Horeb. Repair on this building is scheduled for 2026. An architectural firm will send the work out to get bids. This project will be paid for by the DNR.

The contractors who paved the section of trail from 4th to 8th streets in Mount Horeb finished the rip rap under the 6th street bridge.

The Free Little Library in Dodgeville needs to be rebuilt or we need to find a new one. Dave will rebuild it. The DNR asked if it could be taken down soon as it is in such bad repair (sometime this fall). Jerry suggested we have a standard note that says what kind of books (nature books) can go in the free little libraries. The DNR may have extra actual free little library structures in stock.

Linda Lynch and Keith Sincox Memorial Benches

Bill has talked to Brad and the two of them will make a decision on the size and type of bench (also maybe Jerry and Dave will be in on the decision).

Historic signage (Ridgeway Depot and quarry)

Brad brought the depot sign to the meeting and the quarry sign is back at the office. FMRT need to decide where it goes. DNR will install both signs. They are paid for. DNR would like to have some of the trees cut on the quarry side of the fence so trail users can see the quarry. It looks like the sign will go up in the spring. The DNR owns the quarry now.

Depot Garden in the Front

John Helminstine already dug the area out in front of the depot. Sarah will ask the garden club when they plan on planting and tell them that John has dug the area up. John would like to know if they have plans to remove the rail road ties that frame the front of the bed. We wondered if they would be hard to remove.

Caboose windows

Bruce said the Amish would like to do the work in the winter but they did not give us a bid. If we use Stewardship money we couldn't start the project until spring (when we get the money). Could we do the project in phases? Bruce and Bill pointed out that the depot also needs work. Kevin suggested 3 phases: 1) exterior of the caboose, 2) interior of the caboose, and 3) exterior of the depot. If the grant is not approved we can resubmit it. Jerry asked Bruce if he could get the Amish to break the bids down into the 3 parts. Bruce said the depot and the caboose are important to the community of Ridgeway as a site of interest. Bruce felt it might be important to look into the community view of the depot and the caboose. Dave might recontact Mike Larson.

Way Finder Signs

Jerry asked if there was a way to find an estimate of the cost for way finder signs. Kevin is thinking of starting with way finder signs at the east side of the trail (near Madison) and working west. Kevin will try and get costs per sign.

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

Again, nothing new.

Facebook and Webpage

Nothing new on either. There was one new member in August through Zeffy. Bruce is trying to promote what is going on in Ridgeway on the Facebook page (farmer's market, veteran's day, car show, etc).

Trail Project

Jerry has been in touch with Tom Meyer about a trail project and he will present it at the October meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be 5:30, October 14, 2024 at the Ridgeway Depot, in Ridgeway, WI.

**Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Castello, Secretary**