

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

Meeting Date: October 14, 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; Lydia Haynes; Jared Urban, Ridgeway Garden Club

The thermostat at the depot was not working and the heat was not on. Friends wanted to make this a quick meeting.

### **Minutes**

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

### **Financial Report**

The financial report showed a balance of \$36,907.29 in the Farmer's Savings Bank as of September 30, 2024. We will be collecting trail money next month. Friends paid for bricks (which have been installed). Strand's port-a-potty is picking up the port-a-potty this month.

The Fidelity account had a quarterly balance of \$40,216.51 (up from \$37,678.03).

The Zeffy account stayed at \$195.

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

### **Flower Bed in Front of the Depot**

Jared Urban, DNR Volunteer Coordinator and prairie plant specialist, from Ridgeway Garden Club attended the meeting. Jared sent Sarah a list of possible plants to fill in the bed in front of the depot. This long narrow space has an awning which will prevent rainfall, necessitating dry plants. Because the bed is next to the sidewalk Jared suggested short plants. The list also includes plants that will create a floral show throughout the year.

There are multiple places to get plants. Seedlings will require regular watering. Jared suggested one option, if there is a budget, of 2 year old plants from Prairie Moon Nursery. They will need to be watered frequently depending on the rainfall next spring. Jerry thinks watering will not be an issue. There is a spigot outside the building for watering.

Jared estimated about \$500 for the cost of the plants if we got them from Prairie Moon Nursery (in Iowa County). He thought it might be hard to get the plants established. Jared thought we would not have to amend the soil. If we go the bare root plant route we would have to mark where the plants are planted because the plant would not be above the ground. Also, if we used bare root plants, we would have to wait to mulch.

Jared is usually busy in April so he may not be able to help plant. Jared would order the plants and have them shipped to his house (he lives just up the street from the depot).

Jared has a planting plan we can follow in planting.

Sarah motioned that we approve money for plants up to \$600. Dave seconded the plan. The Friend's will work with Jared (if he is available) to plant them. Jared will send the bill to Bill. Sarah should send Jared Bill's email address.

John will dig out the ties that are currently lining the front of the bed. He wondered if the village would pick them up and dispose of them. No one knew the answer.

A big thanks to John Helmenstine for all the work he did in clearing out walnut trees, vinca, etc. from the bed in front of the depot.

### **Verona Park and Ride by PB**

The area next to the PB park and ride has a 4 X 20 foot (approximate area) planter. Adam dug out the weeds in the bed and Jerry cleaned the lichens from the stone in (near?) the bed. Thanks to both of them for the hard work.

They would like to add prairie plants. Sarah has volunteered to start little bluestem and side oats game grass for the bed. Jared suggested butterfly milkweed also. Jared estimated that we would need about 40-50 grass plants.

### **DNR Topics**

Annual trail ditch mowing has begun.

The trail crew is starting again this fall to cut dead ash and storm damaged trees.

DNR was awarded federal RTP funds (Recreational Trails Program funds) which include trail resurfacing, the Riley/Kleevenville parking lots, and Bridge 24.

As of 2025 there will no longer be self-paid tubes along the trail.

The DNR is now going to a twelve month park sticker plan (the park sticker would not be for the calendar year but park access would start the month that you purchased the sticker). Trail passes do not follow this same time table.

A neighbor in Ridgeway that has a farm crossing is causing big problems.

A family is paying for the entire remodel of the kiosk between Blue Mounds and Barneveld. They are paying for a new roof, table, and path up to the kiosk.

### **Linda Lynch and Keith Sincox Memorial Benches**

Memorial benches - Bill and Brad will discuss them. They have not been ordered yet and there are some issues about them.

### **Dodgeville Little Library**

Dave removed the Little Library at Dodgeville and is planning on repairing it. Kevin has a spare Little Library in the Blue Mounds garage that can be used. It needs a little work.

### **Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant**

Sarah liked Kevin's idea of the way finder signs for the grant. Kevin said way finder signs have not been done before so it will be impossible to get a bid. Kevin suggested a small grant this year. The sign(s) could be used as a prototype in years to come and give us a better estimate of the cost per sign. Graphic design, fabrication, materials, hardware, and installation all need to be considered in the design of them and future bids. If we are able to get more than one sign out of the 2025 grant that would be good. Sarah motioned and John seconded that Friends submit a grant for \$4000 for 2025 Knowles-Stewardship grant (\$2000 FMRT, \$2000 grant).

### **Tom Myer - cutting trees in front of the quarry**

If the DNR trail crew cuts trees and clears brush on the fence side of the quarry (to give trail users a better view of the quarry) then FMRT people are not needed to haul away the brush.

Jerry will work with Tom to set up a date for Friends to clear brush along the trail east of Kleevenville by the sand quarry.

### **Facebook and Webpage**

There is nothing new on the webpage. Bruce was not here to talk about the Facebook page.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be 5:30, November 11, 2024 at the Blue Mounds Friends Center at Blue Mounds State Park, Blue Mounds, WI. This is a pot-luck and the pot-luck will start at 5:00.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah Castello, Secretary**