

Minutes - FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL Monthly Meeting

Meeting Date: November 11, 2024

Meeting Location: Blue Mound Park Friends Shelter, Blue Mound, WI

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

This meeting started at 5:00 with the annual pot-luck.

Adam is working on putting addresses in Zeffy. Jerry asked about names that were not included in the minutes mailing. Adam plans to take over the secretarial job.

Minutes

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

Financial Report

The financial report showed a balance of \$35,921.42 in the Farmer's Savings Bank as of October 31, 2024. There was a donation from the Clintons of \$100. We donated \$1,000 to Bikes for Kids. The port-a-potty people finally cashed their check. Lots of trail passes that were distributed to the vendors are being returned (about 25%). Some vendors do not keep good track of sales. Eriks on East Washington still needs to return unsold passes.

The Zeffy account stayed at \$195.

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

Kiosk Bills

Jerry asked if he has all the invoices for the panels. He has \$662 paid to Fossil Industry and \$425 paid to SC Designs. We asked for \$1,450. There should be an invoice to BCE. It may have been billed last year. Brad found this bill. It was for \$609.61. So we are a little over in our expenditures.

DNR Topics

The DNR is continuing with ditch mowing.

The trail crew is out still working on May storm damage and on the camp grounds at Blue Mounds. When they are done with this they will start working on hazard trees along the trail. They have an LTE crew that is only working on storm damage trees.

Kevin drove the trail with an engineer and looked at bridges, how to repair them, culverts needed, etc. Bridge 24 (before White Crossing Road as you head west) will be the pilot

bridge (easy to get materials to as it is near the road). They also looked at the turtle bridge and Kevin explained the FMRT planned observation platform next to this bridge to honor Palmer Haynes.

White Crossing Bridge funding is approved under RTP funding. It will give us an approximate dollar amount per linear foot to estimate the cost of repair of all bridges. The other bridges have not yet gone to the engineers. Bridge 24 is now in the concept phase (how to repair, what to do about infrastructure, culvert or not, etc). The DNR is looking at why some bridges are in existence, Some could be filled, perhaps with the placement of a small culvert, and have the trail cross the fill, meaning the DNR would no longer have to maintain a bridge at the site.

MMSD

They are close to wrapping up their project. They had pipes separate underground and had to redo piping.

Annual Snow Mobile Meeting

The annual snow mobile/DNR/MRT Trail meeting is November 12, 2024.

Trail Counters

The DNR would like to take the Friends up on their offer of purchasing trail counters. They would like to place counters in Blue Mounds, Barneveld, Dodgeville, and Ridgeway. The Dodgeville one they have is broken. FMRT has budgeted \$2,000 in 2024 for counters. \$500 per counter would allow (probably) for the purchase of the kind they are using now. They want to get all the counters set up, and at the end of 2025, when we have numbers from most locations for a solid year, FMRT could write an article for the local papers.

Little Libraries

Dave will use part of the Little Library that the DNR donated. He will use the stand currently there. The DNR does not want any of it back.

Annual Blocking of the Ridgeway Depot Deck

DNR will do this soon.

Knowles Stewardship Grant

Jerry has done his part on the Knowles Stewardship Grant and sent it to Kevin. Kevin is looking into what he needs to do on this. Tom has some ideas for future Knowles Stewardship Grants that he will put forth in the coming winter.

Caboose

The Amish have looked at the caboose. Bruce was not at the meeting to report on this.

Quarry Cleanup

DNR will do the trail brushing around the fence near the defunct quarry where the new kiosk will go.

FMRT Projects

Thomas Meyer talked about trail work to renovate the rock outcropping between Kleevenville and Riley (near Jesse Bernstein's pig farm). He would be glad to give advice from an environmental perspective.

Facebook and Webpage

Adam worked with Tamylin to get the old domain name under the control of the Friends. Adam paid the cost of the domain name for 2 years (\$35). Thanks Adam! Bruce was not here to talk about the Facebook page.

Depot Winterization

The depot water is turned off and the breakers are all off except one. John has pulled the railroad ties from the front floor bed. Bruce came to the depot with his tricky truck and they hauled away the old railroad ties.

Telegraph Poles

Thomas asked if there was interest in preserving the few telegraph poles that are left. Dave thought we used to have one stored along the side of the depot. This is something to add to the future agenda.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be 5:30, January 13, 2025 at the Blue Mounds Friends Center at Blue Mounds State Park, Blue Mounds, WI. This is the monthly meeting and will include the suggestions for the ballot for the annual meeting in February.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Castello, Secretary