Friends of Military Ridge Trail Monthly Meeting
Meeting Date: April 13th, 2026
Meeting Location: Ridgeway Depot, Ridgeway, WI

Friends attending: Jerry Wilson, President; Dave Pearson, Vice President; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Adam Maus, Secretary; Brad Bates, DNR; Bruce Paull; John Helmenstine

Highlights

- Volunteer opportunities
    - Help us tend our trail kiosks. It's an easy low effort activity and we are always looking for extra help.
    - Sign up to volunteer at the refreshment station in Black Earth for the Horribly Hilly Hundreds bike ride on Saturday June 13th.
    - Have an idea for your own? Let us know! We'd love to hear it.
- For volunteers tending kiosks, it is time to start planning to get out to your kiosk to clean and update the signs.
- The DNR shared updates on various projects on the trail.

Minutes

Adam sent out the March 2026 minutes on March 16th. Jerry suggested the addition of Verona to the list of municipalities where the Friends have had a "Bike Safety Day" in the past. Adam edited the minutes. Dave motioned that the edited minutes be approved, Bill seconded it, and it passed unanimously.

Financial Reports

Bill sent out the financial reports on April 1st. The financial reports showed a balance of $67,021.44 in the Farmer's Savings Bank as of March 31st. The Zeffy account had $967 with $275 pending for April. Our quarterly Fidelity investment account was down $732 since the start of the year and has a balance of $48,025.34. Kate's report on April 11th matched Bill's.

We received two anonymous donations this past month. One was made in memory of Joyce Wall. The other was from a group who would be interested to hear how we use the money. We discussed using some of this money for the Wayfinder sign project.

We've received two brick orders. One brick is for the Verona Park n' Ride and Bill has already put it in. The other brick is for Mt. Horeb but Bill said we have to expand the brick bed.

Dave motioned to accept the financial reports. The motion was seconded by Adam, and it passed unanimously.

DNR Topics
The Mt. Horeb Rest Station remodel project is moving forward. They plan to do exterior work from August 3rd, 2026 until the end of October 2026 and the interior work from September 8th, 2026 until the end of December 2026.

DNR engineers are working with Fitchburg on a new project on Fitchrona Rd., near Mile Marker 1 to help with safety concerns on Fitchrona Rd. The project involves reconstruction of Fitchrona Rd. from Tonto Tr. to Nesbitt Rd. with a new roundabout at Lacy Rd. and a new bike path or bike only lane on Fitchrona Rd.

Brad and Kevin met with Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District about the Interceptor project that will replace an aging pipe in Goose Lake with a pipe that will run along the trail and Hwy 151 between Bridge 46 and Fitchrona Rd. This will involve boring under the trail, a lot of tree clearing, and a revegetation plan. Details are still being worked out.

Brad and Kevin did a walkthrough with the Verona City Crew from Old PB and the Verona High School to discuss the upcoming trail paving project in Verona. The project will replace 3 bridges and that construction may start this year. They may try to pave from Main St. to Franklin St. as well. Paving will conclude in 2027. There was a public information session on March 18th. That presentation is available on veronawi.gov. In preparation for the paving, DNR will be hiring a contractor to remove dead and leaning trees between Franklin St. and Lincoln St.

The DNR LTE hazard tree crew has completed their work for the season. One person will continue to help with storm damage over the summer. The DNR will be hiring another crew in Fall to help with hazard trees over Winter.

The DNR crew has started to do board replacements on bridges. They will start their annual trail grading and herbicide treatment starting in May.

Last Fall, Kevin and Brad installed six of the seven trail counters on the trail. However, when reviewing them, they aren't sure if any of them are actually working. They are in the process of purchasing new counters with the goal of having a counter in each municipality.

Brad shared new trail maps and brochures that are now available. Once the old black and white ones are dispersed, we will use the new brochures. New maps will be ordered and put in the kiosks as well.

DNR is working with engineers on the bridge replacement project from Verona to Paulson Rd. They have run into a few snags because they may have to do temporary repairs on the bridges in order to get the equipment across to do analysis on the bridges. They are working with the consultants to work out a solution that isn't overly expensive or time-consuming.

No new updates to share on the Epic Bridge project near Epic and Mile Marker 7 or the Riley-Klevenville parking lot projects.

Repairs to Depot and Caboose
Bill talked to Carl with Badger Home Improvement about helping with the Depot and Caboose repairs based on a recommendation by the DNR but there wasn't any interest.

Brad suggested another contactor that has been helping the DNR with tiling in the shower building at Blue Mound State Park. Bill said he could talk with him.

Immediate Depot Repairs
The fan is working and we could hear it. The light pole lamp does not appear to be working. The lightbulb looked corroded when it was removed and a replacement bulb didn't fix the problem. Bruce tested the light socket and it doesn't seem to be getting electricity. The timer for the lamp sounds like it is working though.

Spring Cleanup for Kiosks
Bill sent out an email on April 9th suggesting that kiosk tenders start planning to get out to their kiosks to do the following:

- Clean glass.
- Clean out bugs and debris.
- Take down **ALL** signs and paper. Replace with new signs.
- Pull weeds. Check and sweep brick beds, if it applies.
- Assess condition and report to group, if it needs repairs or paint/stain.
- Check at least twice per season or more often if possible.

If you are interested in helping to tend a kiosk, let us know! It's an easy low effort activity and we are always looking for extra help.

Bike Day at Ridgeway
Bruce has talked to the Village, Sheriff, and Marshal but hasn't had time to find a day for Bike Day in Ridgeway.

Bruce was open to suggestions about what the day could involve. Some ideas included giving away helmets, doing a bike safety check, a cone course, or seeing what others are doing. New Glarus is having a bike rodeo on May 16th 11a-1p, sponsored by Chamber of Commerce and Police Department.

Field Trips on Trail
Adam is still working to get field trips set up. The Southern Wisconsin Bird Alliance responded and he provided more information to help find guides.

Facebook Page and Webpage
No news on the Facebook Page and webpage.

Horribly Hilly Hundred
June is right around the corner and the Horribly Hilly Hundred will be on Saturday June 13th this year. We are looking for volunteers to help at our refreshment station in Black Earth. It helps the ride and our group. You can sign up by going to friendsofbluemound.org.

Bill is planning to go to Black Earth to start planning how the refreshment station will be set up.

Adam and Bruce will promote the volunteer signup on Facebook and website.

Other Additions
- Bill talked about doing an official dedication for the benches at the Depot.
- Bruce has collected 28 bikes already this year and took them to Bikes for Kids Wisconsin in Madison.

Next Meeting
The next meeting will be May 11th at the Ridgeway Depot in Ridgeway, WI at 5:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Adam Maus
Secretary