

Minutes - FRIENDS of MILITARY RIDGE TRAIL

Meeting Date: June 14, 2021

Meeting Location: Ridgeway Depot

Friends attending: Dave Pearson, Vice-President; Bill Kalscheur, Treasurer; Sarah Castello, Secretary; Kevin Swenson, DNR; Brad Bates, DNR; Lydia Haynes; Linda McMeen; Adam Maus; Tom Pedretti

Dave Pearson chaired the meeting in Jerry's absence.

Minutes

Bill motioned and Linda seconded to accept the May 2021 meeting minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports

The financial report showed an end of May 2021 balance of \$29,422.50 in the Farmers Savings Bank account. This has been a very active month for trail passes, way above normal. Four bricks were bought and placed last month. We sold 4 patches this month (a badge with our logo that you can put on clothing). We have a new trail pass vendor, the Riley Tavern. Sarah motioned and Lydia seconded that we accept the financial report as presented, the motion passed unanimously.

Additions to this meetings agenda

None

DNR Topics

- The Duluth project is completed and the trail is returned to its original shape.
- Brix Cidery area has been surveyed, the sidewalk is their property line. They have been migrating onto the trail land, but now realize that they can only use up to the trail property, not on it. If Brix wants to have music on the stage and have people put chairs in front of the stage they will need a special event pass. Bill suggested that the FMRT do something positive to help out Brix.
- The Wells Memorial bench is assembled and ready to be placed on the trail opposite the Himsel Kiosk.
- The DNR is getting close to picking out a mower to purchase and may ask friends for financial assistance.
- DNR staff planted 30 trees along the trail: the trees near PD are doing well but staff may have to water the rest due to the drought. The Friends may help with this.
- DNR is working with ATC on line easement across the trail. It looks like they are going to cross the trail east of the old quarry and the DNR might have no way to stop them.
- DNR met with Town of Springdale advisory board about the Town Hall Road trail crossing. The board is concerned about speed and parking on the side of the road. They will go back to the township board with the DNR ideas, and might be working with Dane County and DOT.
- DNR is working with village of Ridgeway on agreement about use of area around the trail/Depot and the need for insurance, etc.
- Kevin presented the award that the FMRT got in 2020 from the Statewide Friends group.

Letter to towns along the trail

- There is no new news.

Depot Open House

Bill might be able to do it in August. We still need someone for July 4th. Linda might be able to do July. People will get back to Jerry if they can volunteer.

New Bench

The family still wants a memorial bench but have not committed to a spot.

Scholarships and endowments

We need to make up our minds where we want to spend Friend's money so will address this issue when we have made more decisions about this.

ATC Update

There was a recent ruling in favor of Driftless Land Conservancy indicating that they can move forward with discovery and make the case that one of the decision makers had a conflict of interest and should have recused himself.

Horribly Hilly

Sign up to volunteer at Black Earth water spot for the Horribly Hilly bike event August 28.

Books

Carol Murphy dropped off some nature books for Jerry to pick up and Dave gave Carol some that were inappropriate for the trail Little Libraries for Carol to take.

Ownership of the Trail Committee

The ideas that rose to the top:

- Each of us (or 2 of us) should take a kiosk to maintain and have keys to access it. Kiosk responsibility is as follows: Dave-Dodgeville and Ridgeway; Lydia and Linda -Barneveld and Mount Horeb; Bill -Riley; Sarah-Blue Mounds; Adam and Jerry-Fitchburg and Verona.
- We need to use the kiosks more for information and will try and print posters (signs), which will be updated frequently, with current or timely trail information
- We should periodically have Friends set up by the side of the trail either selling trail passes or telling people about the fee involved for using the trail
- We need signs to put by the side of the trail (easels, signs that stick in the ground) with the Friends name, website, phone number. These will be used when Friends are working on the trail
- We may need a Facebook page as well as a Website

Other issues discussed:

- Move the monthly meeting to another site that is easier to get to (not Ridgeway) like Blue Mounds Shelter, Verona Library, Riley Tavern.
- Buy wasp spray for the kiosks.
- T-shirts - Dave?
- Ask Dave Atkins if he could sometimes pick up the trail etiquette signs when placed in Verona.
- Another Ride the Ridge or Walk the Trail in the future?

Blue Mounds Solar Panels

The Blue Mounds Friend's solar panel request will be dealt with next month.

Mary Kay Baum's Request

At the next meeting we need to address Mary Kay Baum's walnut tree harvest request. Does the FMRT want to take a stand on this?

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be July 12, 2021, 5:30 pm, in the Riley Trail parking lot.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Castello, Secretary