



FRIENDS OF THE FRED MEIJER CLINTON-IONIA-SHIAWASSEE TRAIL  
P.O. Box 274  
ST. JOHNS, MI 48879

## **Friends of the Fred Meijer CIS Trail Annual Meeting** **Wednesday, April 11, 2018**

**7:00 pm, Clinton County Courthouse, St. Johns, Michigan**

### *Minutes*

1. ***Welcome to Members*** - The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Rick Church at 7:00 pm. Approximately 27 members/guests in attendance.
2. ***Introduction of Board Members and Distinguished Guests*** - Church introduced the following board members: Rick Church, Chairperson; John Salemi, Vice Chairperson; Janice Gustafson, Treasurer; Kathy Simon, Secretary; Ardelle Rodgers; Pamela Weisenburger; Doug Hyland. Additionally, Barry Culham, Trail Manager and Representative Ben Frederick. Absent - Dave Weber (on vacation).
3. ***Featured Speaker Representative Ben Frederick*** - Representative Frederick stated that he and his staff have been meeting with Rick Morris, Barry Culham, Terry McLeod and the City of Owosso, who are very active in getting the trail into Owosso. He likened the process to "knocking down dominoes" one by one, slowly getting to each next step. Engineering has been done for the trail. Partners include the City of Owosso, Owosso Township, Consumers Energy and Lake State Rails. The Owosso city council is very positive and ready to go. Initial talks with Owosso Township have been positive. Consumers Energy owns some of the right-of-way and they have been positive. Lake State has been a little less positive, possibly because of the scenario of having a trail running parallel alongside a live railway. However, this issue has been solved on other trails. He foresees that the trailhead would be at the Armory (across the river from Curwood Castle). It appears to be a perfect location, near many other amenities and points of interest in Owosso, and would have the first public restrooms in the city (tourism is a major focus in the community). Once all the partners have signed on, it should fall in place. He stated that trail projects, and their amenities (bike racks, restrooms, parking, benches, etc.), are getting a lot more attention. Communities are looking to provide positive experiences for travelers, or pass through traffic. You might have one chance to make a positive impact on potential home owners, and trails provide that opportunity in many cases. In legislative news, Representative Frederick mentioned that there is currently legislation in the House that would put in place a 3 foot law standard between motor vehicles and bicycles on highways (check our website for more information). He stated that his office is available to us.
4. ***Approve Minutes from 2017 Annual Meeting*** - **MOTION** to approve the minutes of March 8, 2017. Gustafson/Salemi M/S/P
5. ***Financial Report*** - Gustafson presented the Annual Financial Report for 2017 (actual) and the 2018 Budget. We received \$20,000 from the MWMTA Grant Fund for trail maintenance. The 2017 ending fund

balance was \$14,635.26. Projected ending fund balance for 2018 is \$11,495.26. **MOTION** to approve the 2017 Financial Report and 2018 Budget as presented. Rodgers/Hyland M/S/P

6. **Public Comment** - Bob Flynn from Owosso - remarked that there are two new conservation officers in Shiawassee County that are very active enforcing no motor vehicles on the trail. They've stopped most of the quad runners. Clare Koenigsnecht from Fowler - recognized Roger Thelen's many years of efforts. Bob Craig from St. Johns - recognized MMPA's efforts. Roger Thelen from St. Johns - asked if there were any interest by the board in doing a public service announcement (letters to the editor, to the sheriff's offices, etc.) regarding rights of bicyclists and motorists. He is willing to work with the board to that end. Unnamed individual commented that regarding the decision on whether or not to attempt to fix the limestone surface or to pave, keep in mind that limestone is easier and less expensive to maintain than asphalt.
7. **Election of Board Members** - the three candidates elected were:
  - a. Clinton County - Kathy Simon (unopposed)
  - b. Ionia County - Doug Hyland (unopposed)
  - c. Shiawassee County - Ardelle Rodgers (unopposed)
8. **Recognition of Volunteers** - Chairperson Church recognized the following volunteers: Bob Flynn, Erwin Trumble, Jr., Terry McLeod, Dave Weber, Carl and Heather Hanover, Mike Salava, Bob Bartlett, Sue and Glen Witgen, Ron Gunderson, Dale and Diane LaDuke and Barry Culham
9. **Featured Speakers Barry Culham, Trail Manager** - *(This item was actually placed prior to public comment)* Culham stated that this is our third summer coming up for maintaining the trail. He mentioned that he is also on the MWMTA Board, who distribute funds for maintenance of the trail. This past summer maintenance including mowing and one spraying (weed control). In addition, Culham noted that last year we removed approximately over 150 dead trees that had fallen over the trail. Collapsing culverts have also been a challenge he has been working on. Vehicles on the trail, especially between Pewamo and Muir, have been an ongoing challenge. The surface of the bridges are starting to be torn up by snowmobiles. Japanese Knotweed has been identified along the trail, mostly at Shepardsville Road and in the City of Ovid. The Clinton Conservation District, along with the Ingham County Conservation District, has received a grant to eliminate this invasive and destructive species, which may take two or three years to eliminate. Culham has earmarked maintenance funds for 2018 for resealing certain portions of the asphalted surface in the towns. He has been brainstorming with many entities (Friends Group, MWMTA, MDNR, etc.) for ideas to fix the limestone surface. It was discovered through core testing that although the limestone surface used on our trail met the MDNR specifications, the actual type of limestone used does not bind to itself. This makes it more sand-like in consistency and will never harden like typical limestone surfaces. Tom Byle, Kent County Road Commission engineer, has been instrumental in uncovering this problem. The MDNR has a grant in the amount of \$40,000 to experiment with possible solutions. We have tried chip seal (rolled right off the surface), mixing cement with the limestone, and chloride treatment. None of these worked. We are going to experiment in the next month or so with two more trials of 500' each in St. Johns area. One trial will include using RAP (recycled asphalt) and the other surface will be a special mix of limestone. The limestone is being sent off to be tested before we put it down for a test strip. Hopefully by next year we will have a solution. Trail surface is very soft right now. It has been noted that the west end of the trail seems to be better (harder) than the east end. One guest commented that RAP was used on the surface of the Falling Waters Trail and it is terrible to ride on. Culham noted that our RAP will be screened to 3/8" and smaller and should be smoother. On April 21 the Friends group is sponsoring a trail clean up day from 9 to noon. Basically, we will be cleaning up brush, sweeping debris from the ADA

cement pads at street/road ends, trimming branches, vines, etc. We are required to keep minimum 12' high clearance, and 5' on each side of the trail, in order for emergency vehicles to have access. Sign up sheets were available, or sign up on-line. Upcoming events on the trail - 1) diabetes ride from St. Johns to Owosso on May 5, 2) a relay race hosted by the Back Road Brigade in Pewamo on June 22, 3) September 15, the St. Johns DDA is hosting a farm to fork dinner on the trail. Culham requested members to report trees down, fences broken, etc. by e-mailing him at [cistrail@gmail.com](mailto:cistrail@gmail.com) with location and nature of the problem. Question was raised about "ponies" on the trail. Culham responded that they are not allowed at this point. He has worked with the DNR and a landscape architect from MSU, but any potential horse trail would run beside the trail and only run east of St. Johns to Ovid. The trailhead would be in St. Johns at Scott Road since St. Johns doesn't allow horses within city limits. This is only an exploratory engineering of how to add the horse trail. However, it is in the works and funds will need to be raised in order to add the horse trail. Meanwhile, if you do see horses, snowmobiles or motorized vehicles on the trail, please report it to our e-mail address with pictures if possible.

10. ***Adjournment*** - **MOTION** to adjourn at 8:22 pm. Salemi/Hyland M/S/P

*Minutes taken by Kathy Simon*