



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

Friends of the Fred Meijer CIS Trail Monthly Meeting Wednesday, April 12, 2017 6:00 pm, Clinton County Courthouse, St. Johns, Michigan

Minutes

1. **Meeting Called to Order** –Vice Chairperson Church called meeting to order at 6:03 pm.
2. **Roll Call**
 - a. *Present:* Terry McLeod, Janice Gustafson, Barry Culham, Rick Church, Dave Weber, Kathy Simon, Pam Weisenburger, Doug Hyland, Ardelle Rodgers
 - b. *Absent:* Kyle Knight, Marshall Baker
 - c. *Guests:* Tom Ciganick,, ErwinTrumble, Jr., Bob Broughan, Tim Machowicz
3. **Approve the Minutes** – **MOTION** to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2017. Weber/Hyland M/S/P
4. **Public Comment** - Mr. Ciganick mentioned quads and motorcycles on the trail near Muir. He took pictures and sent them to the sheriff's office, who did follow up. He also said that these vehicles have ground the surface to powder in some places and are damaging the asphalt. Mr. Trumble suggested trail cams, but they don't have good enough quality to identify abusers. Reporting them to the DNR Conservation Officer doesn't seem to get us anywhere. Church advised logging abuses so that we have some kind of permanent record. Culham thought maybe we could put such a log on our website to report incidents. We should also add the amount of the fine (unknown at this time) to our Facebook page and website.
5. **Approve the Agenda** – **MOTION** to approve the agenda. Weber/Hyland M/S/P
6. **Update from the Mid-West Michigan Trail Authority** – McLeod reported that their current balance is \$19,925.06. They passed a motion to approve the split draw of \$70,000 from the Grand Rapids Community Foundation with the second split draw of \$70,000 to be evaluated mid-summer (proposed total withdrawal for 2017 is \$140,000). She stated that Ionia County, Greenville and Belding have passed resolutions to apply for three Trust Fund grants. Two grants are for the undeveloped section of the trail and another for a kayak launch. They are also working on a policy to recover money from items not approved. Next meeting is on April 27th at the Clinton County Courthouse in St. Johns at 4 pm.
7. **Financial Report** – Gustafson reported that \$1,970.00 in revenue was received in dues and donations and \$1,538.48 was expended in February and March, 2017 for the Trail Manager contract, printing and mailing of our newsletter, annual meeting expenses and website maintenance. There is a current operating funds balance of \$13,632.71. **MOTION** to approve the financial report. Rodgers/Hyland M/S/P
8. **Trail Maintenance** - Culham reported that a culvert is blown out located 1/4 mile east of St. Clair Road. This poses a hazard and needs to be fixed. He obtained a bid from Miller's in St. Johns. **MOTION** to approve \$3,113.75 payment to Miller Excavating in St. Johns to fix this dangerous and hazardous culvert and tree removal (requested by DNR). Hyland/Weisenburger M/S/P We will include this expense in our next grant amount. Keith Litchfield started mowing last Monday. The mower blower blew off branches, twigs, thorns, etc. from the surface and did a nice job of cleaning the trail. Also, Culham stated that railings have been broken in Ovid - need to be replaced as a safety precaution. He needs three 6' railings. Weber stated he has railings in

Pewamo . Discussion on the need to identify volunteer vehicles using the trail. **MOTION** to purchase three set of magnetic Trail Maintenance signs up to \$350. Simon/Gustafson M/S/P The Japanese Knotweed at Shepardsville Road has been cut down by nearby homeowners, so spraying is questionable at this point. Cutting this invasive species only serves to spread it even more. May take several applications over several years to eradicate it.

- a) *Trail Surface* - Culham met with Tom Byle (Kent County Road Commissioner), Nikki VanBloem (DNR), Corbin Wiegerink, Steve Krzesicki (DNR) Kyle Knight, and Heather Hanover. They looked at the trail near DeWitt Road. They spent 2 1/2 hours inspecting the trail. 2 1/2 buckets of sample were taken from the trail surface to test and figure out if it is compacted at all and if it can be fixed. If it has too much sand, or is not compacted enough, tar may not soak in and will slide right off. The surface may have to be seal coated, or graveled. Will be May before it's tested. They will also need to take a core sample, which could cost \$8,000 to \$9,700, which will have to be paid by the MWMTA. Culham talked to Mike Smith at MDOT. He says there is no way to sue anyone, the State signed off on the project, so it's over and done with as far as they are concerned. Culham stated we will need to get MDOT and DNR to pay or we will have to raise money somehow. But we don't want to start that process until we know for sure how we will proceed. The MWMTA is working on it, but it will be awhile until we get some answers. Meanwhile, the Lucinda Means Advocacy Day at the capital is on May 24. This may be an opportunity to talk to our legislators about our concerns (add to May agenda). Culham stated that they also discussed that the cracks in the asphalt (especially in Fowler) need to be sealed this year and then fogged next year.
- b) *Pack Down Day* - No longer a viable solution because of the poor quality of the trail surface.
- c) *Trail Clean Up* - Culham stated that it would be nice if we can organize a clean up, although the trail is not in bad condition overall. The O/E high school robotics club has asked to maintain the trail in Ovid area.
- d) *Chain Saw Certification Class* - A chain saw certification class is scheduled for May 17 at 6 pm at Sleepy Hollow State Park.

9. **Old Business**

- a) *Hazardous Crossings* - Tabled. Culham reported that trail signs were stolen on Bauer Road and will be replaced. Others were shifted by the wind storm in March. Discussed various methods of straightening out the signs.
- b) *Website* -
 - i) *Update Event and Volunteer forms* - Culham has worked on forms. Although details have not been worked out completely, each individual friends group will have their own forms. All will follow the same set of rules.
- c) *2017 Annual Meeting - Recap* - Went well, but numbers were down because of wind storm (DNR speaker was unable to attend because of hazardous conditions at her home).
- d) *Fund Raising* - Tabled
- e) *Wayfaring Signs/MSU Student Project* - Hyland reported that this project is going well. Students from MSU are working on this project. They have been given contact names for each community along the trail. They will be at next meeting.
- f) *AgroLiquid Sidewalk Connection* - This project is not moving at this time.

10. **New Business** -

- a) *Bridge Naming Request* - Paul Yak (DNR) requested a bridge named for Nancy Krupriarz, who is retiring this June from the MTGA. MDOT says we can name bridges. MWMTA, who own the trail, does not meet till late April. **MOTION** to support naming a bridge in honor of Nancy Krupriarz Simon/Rodgers M/S/P
- b) *Chuck Nelson Presentation* - Dr. Nelson is an MSU professor who teaches a Natural Resource Recreation Management Class. This class typically performs a hands on project. This term's project involved conducting a survey on our trail on September 10 and 11, 2016. Dr. Nelson presented his findings and gave us permission to publicize these on our website and Facebook page. Following are a few of the findings of the survey reported by Dr. Nelson (for more information refer to the Power Point presentation):

- Participation was down, it was rainy. Plus two of the communities were holding festivals.

- Total of 196 trail users were asked to complete survey; 97 actually completed survey
- 85% of users were from Clinton, Ionia and Shiawassee counties
- Most were using trail as recreation (66%)
- Most users lived 2 or less miles from the trail
- More than half of the users were bicyclists
- The mean spending during trail use was \$13.14
- Satisfaction level was 7.8 out of 10
- 46% of users reported that the trail surface was the area in most need of improvement
- 98% of users owned bicycles (biking is key on our trail, so surface is of utmost importance)
- 38% of trail users would like to see the entire trail paved.

11. Next Meeting Date/Location –Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 10, 2017 at 7 pm at the Clinton County Courthouse in St. Johns.

12. Adjournment – **MOTION** to adjourn at 8:02 pm. Simon/Weber M/S/P

Minutes taken by Kathy Simon