



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

Friends of the Fred Meijer CIS Trail Monthly Meeting Wednesday, May 11, 2016 7:00 pm, Clinton County Courthouse, St. Johns, Michigan

Minutes

1. **Meeting Called to Order** – Chairperson Knight called meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. **Roll Call**
 - a. *Present:* Kyle Knight, Janice Gustafson, Barry Culham, Terry McLeod, Kathy Simon, Ardelle Rodgers, Marshall Baker, Pam Weisenburger, Dave Weber, Guy Buckingham
 - b. *Absent:* Marshall Baker
 - c. *Guests:* Keith Litchfield, Bryan Schutte, Kelly and Phil Thelen
3. **Approve the Minutes** – **MOTION** to approve the minutes of April 13, 2016 . Culham/Gustafson M/S/P
4. **Public Comment** - Bryan Schutte stated that he and his wife are members, both college professors. They live in East Lansing, but also own a house in Pewamo. They lead a Second Saturday ride in Pewamo and will be starting a Fourth Friday ride in Fowler, They would like to research the health benefits of the trail in Pewamo, Westphalia and Fowler. We will post information regarding the rides on our website and he will also send flyers to the village clerks in both towns. Thelen's mentioned bad spots in the trail caused by horseback riders between Kreps to St. Clair roads that are hard to ride bikes on. They are interested in becoming trail volunteers.
5. **Approve the Agenda** – **MOTION** to approve the agenda. Buckingham/Gustafson M/S/P Knight requested the addition of Keith Litchfield under Item 10a (Trail Maintenance - Spring Clean Up). Culham asked to add Master Plan for Signs under New Business, Item 11d.
6. **Update from the Mid-West Michigan Trail Authority** – McLeod stated that Treasurer Banks reported \$56,000 in expenses for 2015. (Treasurer Banks stated that he will be resigning his position.) They also reviewed the following bids for mowing the FMCIS Trail:
 - Mid-Michigan Turf Care bid \$650 per mowing, total of \$7,800
 - Keith Litchfield bid \$775 per mowing, total of \$9,300, along with two options. Option 1 included one time per month using a power hand trimmer to trim and cut grass around posts and rest benches (\$300 per occurrence). Option 2 included initial trail clean up to remove all obstructions that would hinder trail mowing, including use of chain saw and pole pruner to cut back any limbs or potential dead trees on the trail for \$500 one time charge.
 - Smith Landscapes bid \$2,500 per mowing, total of \$30,000
 - Maximum Pride Lawn Care bid \$849 per mowing, total of \$10,188.Bid was awarded to Litchfield based on quality of bid, references, equipment, and price, along with Option 2. Discussed liability of open drain 4 feet long with a drop off of 12 to 16 inches (Ionia Drain Culvert). They approved permit to install approximately 54 feet of guardrail parallel to the Ionia Drain on each side for a total of 108 feet at a cost of \$1,780. The purchase of 80 "No Horse" signs for FMRVRT was approved. Also discussed the MDNR pilot program for way finding signs (McLeod passed out specifications). Next meeting date is May 26, 2016.
7. **Financial Report** – Gustafson reported following income in April: \$110.00 in dues and \$235.00 in donations - total of \$345.00. Disbursements included \$2.50 for Pay Pal fees. The ending fund balance in April was \$14,658.88. **MOTION** to approve the Financial Report.

Culham/Buckingham M/S/P Gustafson reported she received a renewal bill for liability insurance for \$150.00 **MOTION** to approve payment of \$150.00. Culham/Buckingham M/S/P

8. **Fund Raising** – None.

9. **Community Outreach/Fairs, Festivals, etc.** - None.

10. Old Business

- a) *Trail Maintenance - Spring Cleanup - Update* - Knight stated that no clean up occurred in the Pewamo/Fowler area, but St. Johns boy scouts, Goodwinds and Kiwanis did clean up in St. Johns area last Saturday. Overpass under US 27 and US 127 is full of profanity - Knight stated that the City of St. Johns is working on the US 27 overpass. Tire clean up on May 7 by McLeod, Culham, Flynn and Rick Howard went well. They picked up 35 tires and disposed of them at Hub Tire for \$2/tire (paid for by McLeod). Litchfield stated he spent 2 1/2 days trimming back brush (6-8 containers of trash). Need to have trees trimmed back further because of liability. He did widen trail in places where weeds were encroaching. Discussed possible need for spraying for invasive species. Also, the trail needs to be rolled or graded. In some spots near Prairie Creek where farmers are crossing (legally), surface is bad also. Litchfield said that he basically did brush cutting. He hasn't done too much mowing. He also stated that a Village of Ovid official approached him and said Ovid should either be paid for maintaining their Village portion of the trail, or that Litchfield should also mow their section. Board asked Litchfield to document areas that need more attention.
- b) *Update on City of St. Johns Sign Application* - DNR did not approve the signs applied for by the City of St. Johns and stated they must use their new specs. Per the DNR specs, the cost was \$2,375 for the "large trail guide"; "small trail guide" was \$650. April Wilson (at City of St. Johns) got back with Nikki Van Bloem (our new trail specialist at MDNR) and said this was not an affordable option, but that a local sign maker could make it for 1/3 of the cost. St. Johns plans to hire with Mid-Michigan Graphics, a local sign company.
- c) *Benches* - We have four bench spots left (2 between Ionia and Muir and 2 between Ovid & St. Johns). Thelen's have marked their spot off. Gustafson ordered the Thelen bench and Knight will check with Smith to see if they will still install. Knight checked on cost for signs (discussed in April meeting) with Mid-Michigan Graphics - \$25 each. Consensus to promote first on facebook and website and not to pay for signs at this point.
- d) *Bike racks* -McLeod stated that a bar in Ovid would like the bike rack slated for their village to be installed at their establishment. The Ovid DPW Supervisor concurred and will install. Weber stated that he has 9 bike racks remaining in his garage Consensus to offer a bike rack to Budget Tire on the east end of the trail (they have offered parking spaces for trail users). Culham will check with Budget Tire.
- e) *Conservation Officer - Update* - Two have been or will be assigned per county. McLeod talked to Conservation Officer Robert Slick in Shiawassee County and asked that he send us reports of problems/issues. To date we have not heard back from him.
- f) *Phone Message/monitoring/intern - Update* -We have a phone line donated by the City of St. Johns, but the college intern that was in line to monitor the phone line and monitor maintenance issues has since taken another job. Discussed possibility of hiring a trail manager. McLeod asked DNR for input, but has not heard back. However, the position description will need to be re-worked. McLeod will send copy of current position description (for the college intern) to board members to review prior to our June meeting. Discussed whether we could pay for this position under the MWMTA maintenance grant (approved at our April meeting). However, we would need to obtain prior approval from the MWMTA. **MOTION** Upon receipt of the grant, we support the concept of hiring a trail manager with price to be determined at a later date depending on the position description. Buckingham/Gustafson M/S/P Knight will send letter to the MWMTA regarding this issue.
- g) *Horse Signs - Update* - All our signs are up thanks to Weber and Baker. There are no road crossings between Muir and the end of our trail in Ionia, but Weber will work on installation of signs in this area.
- h) *Trail Brochures - Update* - Culham reported we have 200 brochures left. He will order an additional 1,500 more brochures at a cost of \$350.

- i) *Grant* - MWMTA grant for maintenance was not addressed at their April meeting. Also discussed under item 10f above.

11. New Business

- a) *Trail Event Requests* -
 - i) *SAC Bike Ride - 8/16/16* - **MOTION** to approve pending liability insurance. Buckingham/Weisenberger M/S/P.
- b) *2016 Mowing Bids*- See Item 6. Winning bid was Keith Litchfield
- c) *2017 Mowing/Trimming Bid* - Friends Group may handle bidding in 2017. Discussed concerns from bidders that the bid request was not detailed enough.
- d) *Master Plan for Signs* - Discussed Master Plan for way finding signs along the trail per the DNR specs. We can hire someone to make recommendations for signage, do it ourselves, or find a student to do it. Board members were instructed to make suggestions where signs are needed. Signs cannot advertise businesses, but may direct trail users to the shopping district, restaurants, restrooms, etc. at various towns or mileage information between cities and villages. Discussed that we need to ask towns where they want signs and what information they want on them.

12. Next Meeting Date/Location –Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 8, 2016 at the Pewamo Village Hall. NOTE: May meeting will include a 20 minute block to work on trail manager position description, if approved by MWMTA. If this position not approved, the 20 minute block will be used to work on wayfinding signs.

13. Adjournment – **MOTION** to adjourn at 8:56 pm. Simon/Culham M/S/P

Minutes taken by Kathy Simon