



TRI-COUNTY TRAIL COMMISSION

Meeting minutes of Thursday, September 21, 2023
Lafayette County Multipurpose Building
Darlington, WI

Present: Committee members – Flannery, John Reichling(sub) and McGuire from Lafayette County, Torkelson, and Even from Green County. Berget, Malott, Peterson and Wilke were excused. Coordinators present were Tom Jean and Deb Krahenbuhl along with ATV Club members and snowmobile club members and potential Coordinator candidate, Max Blackburn and Lafayette County Conservation and Zoning administrator, Erica Sauer and Conservation Committee member, Jed Gant.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Russ Torkelson at 7:00 PM. Tom Jean verified the meeting was posted at the Green, Lafayette and Iowa County Courthouse's, the Lafayette County Highway Dept. and on the website. Mr. Torkelson declared this to be a properly posted legal meeting with enough members present to constitute a quorum.

Approval of the agenda: A motion was made by Donna Flannery and seconded by Luke McGuire to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried.

A motion to approve the minutes of the August 31, 2023, meeting was made by Melissa Even and seconded by Donna Flannery and the motion carried.

Discussion and update on the status of the DNR grant funding for the projects along the

Cheese Country Trail: Tom reported that Kurt Byfield of the DNR has emailed him confirmation that the Trail Rehabilitation and Bridge Rehabilitation applications have been approved by the ATV Council. Tom believes that the Snowmobile Council has approved funding for the Bridge Rehabilitation projects but not for the Trail Rehabilitation/gravel. When Kurt sends the grant agreements out, Tom will report the final project grant money available.

Discussion and update on general maintenance/signage or encroachment issues along the Cheese Country Trail along with Trail Maintenance Update – Local ATV & Snowmobile Clubs:

Tom has talked with Misty Molzof, who represents the PRTC. She indicated that the PRTC has served papers to the landowner that removed trees along the trail to the East of South Wayne. She indicated that the dollar amount of the fine is substantial. She promised to keep us informed of the progress of this legal action.

Craig Shager of the Green County ATV Club, reported that they had had Green County Highway Department do some grading on their portion of the trail and they were very pleased with the results. Lee McCarville was not present to give any report on the Lafayette and Iowa County's portion of the trail.

Following some discussion on the condition of the trail and the need for more consistent grading before the ground freezes in December, Luke McGuire made a motion to hire the Lafayette County Highway Department, to grade the trail on a trial basis of 1 year to see if that improves the overall trail bed grade. The motion was seconded by Donna Flannery and the motion passed unanimously.

Tom is going to resign as the Trail Coordinator in March of 2024. The Lafayette County Conservation Department is interested in taking over the position and Max Blackburn would be their representative to handle the duties of the Coordinator. Max Blackburn, Erica Sauer and Jed Gant all spoke on behalf of the Conservation Department and their interest in taking over the Coordinator's duties.

Jed Gant expressed his concern that the Trail Coordinator's position needs to stay within Lafayette County as they have the largest portion of the Cheese Country Trail and the most to either lose or gain from its use. Tom Jean also endorsed Max Blackburn as his replacement, stating that Max was familiar with the DNR grant funding and reimbursement procedures and also would be good at promoting the Cheese Country Trail for the good of the 3 Counties that are involved.

Following some discussion Melissa Even made a motion that the Lafayette County Land Conservation Department produce a written proposal for consideration by the Tri-County Trails Commission, to transition the duties from the current Coordinator to their Department and bring it back to this Committee for consideration. Luke McGuire seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Trail Usage update – Local ATV and Snowmobile Clubs:

Deb reported that the Tri County ATV Club's fall ride was a huge success. They had 298 machines and 442 riders participate.

The Calamine Pavillion addition is probably on hold until next Spring.

There were several Snowmobile Club members present and they reported some of the areas of the trail that they would like to see repaired before the Snow season. Areas of concern were the bridge railings that need to be repaired between Calamine and Mineral Point along with tree trimming and bridge approach grading. Another major concern that was discussed was the lack of communication that has been prevalent between the maintaining authorities (Snowmobile Clubs and ATV Clubs).

Legislative update: No report.

Public comment: None

Fencing Request: None

Status of Funds: Tom presented the updated 2023-2024 Status of Funds showing the vouchers that were paid following the September meeting along with the deposit of trail pass money from August 29, 2023. A motion to approve the Status of funds report was made by Luke McGuire and seconded by John Reichling and the motion carried.

Vouchers: There were no vouchers presented for payment.

Next meeting date: October 26, 2023, at 7 PM in Monroe at the Green County Courthouse.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Melissa Even and seconded by Donna Flanner and the motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.