



TRI-COUNTY TRAIL COMMISSION

Meeting minutes of Thursday, April 30, 2020 at 7 PM
Green County Courthouse, Monroe, WI

Present: Committee members – Blumer, Torkelson and Withee of Green County along Flannery and Fisker from Lafayette County. Reichling and Stauffacher had excused absences. Iowa County has not appointed a representative yet. Coordinators present were Tom Jean and Deb Krahenbuhl along with ATV Club members.

The meeting was called to order by Trail Coordinator, Tom Jean at 7:00 p.m. Tom Jean verified the meeting was posted at the Green, Lafayette and Iowa County Courthouses, Darlington Municipal Building, the Lafayette County Highway Dept. and on the website. Mr. Jean declared this to be a properly posted legal meeting with enough members present to constitute a quorum.

New County Board members were introduced from each respective County. The new Tri County Trails Commission for a 2 year term is: Lafayette County – Nancy Fisker, Donna Flannery, John Reichling and Eric Stauffacher. Green County – Karl Blumer, Russ Torkelson and Aaron Withee. Iowa County – no appointment had been made yet.

The first order of business was to reorganize the committee following the April County board elections. Nancy Fisker made a motion to nominate Russ Torkelson as the Committee Chairman. Karl Blumer seconded the motion and with no other nominations Mr. Torkelson was elected as the Tri County Trails Commission Chairman.

Mr. Torkelson then took over as the presiding chairman and asked for nominations for vice chairman. A motion was made by Nancy Fisker to nominate Karl Blumer and seconded by Donna Flannery. With no other nominations, a unanimous vote was cast for Karl Blumer and he will be the Tri County Trails Commission Vice-Chairman.

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. Blumer, seconded by Ms. Fisker and the motion carried.

A motion to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2020 meeting and the March 19, 2020 virtual meeting, was made by Mr. Blumer and approved. None of the new members were present at those meetings. The motion carried.

Tom explained to the Committee how the grant funding from the DNR, which maintains the trail, works. He explained that by April 15 of every year, an application must be submitted to the DNR for ATV-UTV & Snowmobile trail maintenance funding. Once approved, the Tri County Trail Commission is granted funds in the amount of \$700/mile annually for ATV/UTV trail maintenance and \$300/mile annually for snowmobile grooming and maintenance. The local ATV clubs and Snowmobile Clubs perform the work and are paid by the Tri County Trails Commission who in turn is reimbursed through the DNR grants.

Tom also explained the history of the Cheese Country Trail and how it was transformed from the rail corridor to the current trail. He explained that the railroad corridor is still owned by the Pecatonica Rail Transit Commission and they allow the Tri County Trail Commission to operate on it as a recreational trail until such time that they may want to use it again for a train route.

Discussion and update on the status of the DNR grant funding for the projects along the Cheese Country Trail:

Tom explained the current grants that the Tri County Trail Commission is working with and the work that has been done in the past 2-3 years under these grants. **1. Flood rehabilitation grant** ATV-4121S in the amount of \$88,190.00 of which we have been advanced 75% or \$66,142.59 and a deadline of June 30, 2021 to have all work completed. **2. Bridge rehabilitation** Grant # ATV-3367 in the amount of \$31,950.00 and Snowmobile S-4487 in the amount of 10,650.00. All work has to be done by June 30, 2020. **3. For the 2018-2019 season:** Grant # ATV-3825 for ATV/UTV summer trail maintenance in the amount of \$45,400 of which \$22,700 was advanced and Grant # S-5264 for Snowmobile in the amount of \$19,200 of which \$9,600 was advanced and all work had to be done by June 30, 2019. **4. For the 2019-2020 season:** ATV-4026 in the amount of \$40,850 of which \$20,425 was advanced, and Snowmobile grant # S-5384 in the amount of \$17,250 of which \$8,625 was advanced and all work has to be done by June 30, 2020. Tom is currently working with Jewell Associate Engineers designing the 900 foot rip rap project along the Pecatonica River south of Tibbetts Road. The estimate of the project is about \$173,000 and the DNR has tentatively agreed to fund the request through a split of Snowmobile and ATV funds.

Deb Krahenbuhl explained the \$15 annual trail pass system and gave a brief accounting of how much revenue it brings to the Cheese Country Trail each year.

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

Lee reported that the trail remains closed with the current COVID 19 situation, he and his crew have been working to get the trail in good condition, so that it can be opened soon if possible. Lee has been working with some landowners near Calamine to drain a wet area that has been caused in part by recent flooding and the inability of a culvert under the trail to handle the volume. The culvert does need to be replaced and following some discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Fisker to replace this culvert with a new one, sufficient in size to handle the volume of water. The motion was seconded by Mr. Withee and by voice vote, the motion carried.

Apparently there has been some confusion on whether the trail was opened or closed. Following some discussion in which Tom explained that the DNR has contacted him regarding the funding requirements. The DNR's position is that during the current pandemic situation, the trail can be either open or closed to the public, whichever this committee decides. However, it can't be open to locals and closed to the distant public. By doing so, we would be operating a DNR funded trail as a private entity and jeopardize losing the DNR funds. After some discussion and with the State parks going to be opened the 1st of May, a motion was made by Ms. Fisker and seconded by Ms. Flannery to open the Cheese Country Trail on May 1 also and the motion carried. Deb will post the opening on the website and list some social distancing guidelines and recommendations.

Legislative update: None.

Public comment: None.

Fencing Request: None

Status of Funds: Tom presented the Status of funds report through April of 2020. Following a review, a motion was made to accept the Status of Fund report, by Mr. Blumer and seconded by Ms. Fisker and the motion carried.

Vouchers: Vouchers presented for payment were from Lumber for Bridge repair material - \$900.00, T-Riders Snowmobile Club for gravel fines applied to the trail - \$464.10, Bard materials for flood rehabilitation - \$4,793.41, Tri County ATV Club for ATV maintenance grading - \$2,277.72, Southwest Graphics for trail stickers - \$580.00, Deb Krahenbuhl for trail liaison - \$1,040 and First Capitol Salvage for guard rail for bridge rehabilitation - \$1,828.50. A motion to approve the vouchers was made by Ms. Fisker and seconded by Mr. Blumer and the motion carried.

Date of next meeting: May 21, 2020 at the Lafayette County Multi-Purpose building at 7 PM.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Withee and seconded by Ms. Flannery and the motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Submitted 5/19/20 TRJ