

Lake Vermilion Trail Steering Committee
Meeting #11 Notes
1/11/17 – Tower DNR Building

Attendees

John Bassing, Carol Booth, Joan Broten, Greg Dostert, Earl Grand (Beatty Township), Tom Holmes, Holly Larson, Steve Lotz, Sue Wolfe

1. Updates
 - a. Sue suggested using Facebook for marketing in addition to a website.

2. Joint Powers Agreement (JPA)
 - a. Report on Bois Forte meeting: Carol noted that she presented to the Bois Forte Tribal Council, which did not vote, but showed support for the trail, and will have the joint powers agreement reviewed by their lawyer. The Tribal Council had a lot of thoughts on a how a trail could improve the health and safety of the community. Carol also noted that “Lake Vermilion Sector” is the correct terminology when referring to the portion of Bois Forte located near Lake Vermilion.
 - b. Report on Greenwood meeting: John noted that there was a unanimous vote to pass the joint powers agreement pending review by a Township lawyer. Carol presented to the Township and there was a good turnout both from the Township and the Lake Vermilion Trail Steering Committee. Carol noted some facts that the committee should have ready for next time: Mesabi Trail counts; make the point that the trail includes winter uses; mobility devices come in all forms.
 - c. Prepare for Next Presentations:
 - i. Breitung Township: Meets 4th Tuesday of each month
 1. Tuesday, January 24, 6:00 pm at the Town Hall next to the post office (Joan will make the presentation and will actively look for support from people in Breitung)
 2. Projector and screen are available for use at the Breitung Town Hall
 3. A request was made to change the General Location map to include a spur from Tower to McKinley Park to Soudan (see map given to Holly)
 4. Should emphasize connecting with the State Park in the presentation and how Breitung will be a hub for trails
 5. Greg noted that the Breitung township counts on the Mesabi Trail was 3900 annually, the lowest of all segments. Also, fat tire bike use is growing on the Mesabi Trail, and should be considered for this trail.
 - ii. Vermilion Lake Township: Meets 1st Monday of each month

1. Monday, February 6 at 5pm at Town Hall, 6703 Wahlstein Rd [address of 5937 provided by Clerk later] (Sidra or Josh were nominated to give the presentation; Holly will ask them.)
- iii. Owens Township: Normally Meets 2nd Tuesday of each month- Date changed to Monday in February to avoid Valentine's Day
 1. Monday, February 13 at 5:30 pm at Dan and Shirley Woods' house on Leander Rd. Meeting will include dinner. (Sue will give presentation, Carol & Russell or Holly will attend)
 2. Some of Owens Board members are concerned about taking money away from roads for the trail. The comment was made that trail funding usually comes from different pots of money, so doesn't compete with roads.
- iv. Beatty Township: Normally Meets 2nd Tuesday of each month but February has been moved since a majority of the board will be out of town at the beginning of the month
 1. Earl will get back to Holly on the exact day in late February that will work. The Township is waiting for a quorum since many will be out of town at the beginning of February [Thurs. Feb. 16th confirmed later.]
- v. Kugler Township: TBD
 1. Joan's sister and son are contacts and she will check on a March date since February's agenda is getting full
- vi. St. Louis County: TBD
 1. Josh was nominated to do the presentation and Holly will ask him about this one as well. If he says no, Carol will do the presentation
 2. The committee decided they want to request the JPA be added to the 3/14 meeting in Ely. Holly has been in contact with the County staff since mid-Nov., but they are not providing answers. It is still unknown whether the JPA will need to go to a staff committee prior to the Board. Holly will follow up.
 3. Committee members committed to reaching out to board members to brief them on the issue prior to the Board meeting:

3. Master Plan Revision

- a. Trail Development Phasing/Prioritization: Review of ranking worksheet lead to some discussion. Pike River dam is going to be removed or replaced using State Land Trust. The original Dam had a walk way across the top. Earl suggested approaching the County about building a road from Oak Narrows to Frazier Bay, where there is no road now. A trail could be built in conjunction with a road. Rankings: Some committee members had tried ranking the segments, but found it difficult. Members felt they had little information by which to judge some of the categories. The Committee agreed upon the following changes to the ranking worksheet, which Holly will revise and distribute:
 - i. replace J, public support with "Proximity to Residences"

- ii. discussion on columns A and H being contradictory; leave as is
- iii. Add a new criterion called “ease of access & parking”, considering existing and potential parking
- iv. Combine E and F into one criterion
- v. Change “acquisition” in B to “ownership.” Also consider the value of land for this criterion.
- vi. Add 3A, Oak Narrow Spur to the map.
- vii. For 4A, Greenwood Spur, a comment was made that a highway with wide shoulders has been built in the vicinity of this trail segment since the original plan was written. A trail may not be needed, or would be a low priority.
- viii. Add 6B: Hoodoo Point to McKinley Park to the map and this ranking worksheet
 - ix. Change “acquisition” in I to “easement cost”
- b. Other Plan Elements for Review to be tabled for next meeting due to lack of time. We will break into small groups and discuss: Interpretation, User Metrics & Research (trail counts & surveys), and Ecology & Land Resources. Holly asked the Committee to be thinking about places along the trail corridor that would be good for interpretive spots, such as historical or cultural, or natural landmarks.
 - i. Regarding places along the trail corridor for interpretation, Earl noted that there was a steamboat line that went from Tower to Ashawa Trail (Peterson’s Landing). There are remnants of the trail along the ridgeline on the south side of Wakemup Bay. There as a landing at Pehrson’s Lodge.
 - ii. See the book about Lake Vermilion history by the Timber Jay.

4. Communication/Public Relations

- a. Earl noted that the ARDC Commission meets quarterly and the next one is in April; he is on the Commission. They have not heard of the trail project. Committee will ask if Russell can set up a presentation slot for the next commission meeting in order to get feedback, funding suggestions, etc.

5. Fundraising

- a. Carol noted that the committee received a \$500 donation from Lake Country Power for promotion and that she would send a thank you letter. A private \$500 donation may be coming. Minnesota Power’s round up program should also be pursued.
- b. Carol went over the draft fundraising letter and took suggestions for improvement from the committee

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, February 8, 2017 @ 10 a.m. at the Greenwood Town Hall