

**Lake Vermilion Trail Steering Committee**  
**Meeting #8 Notes**  
**10/5/16 – Minnesota DNR Office, Tower**

**Attendees**

Carol Booth – *Wakemup Village Resident, Cook*  
Joan Broten – *Office Manager, Minnesota DNR Parks & Trails, Tower City Council*  
Josh Gillson – *Lake Vermilion Resort Association*  
Russell Habermann – *Arrowhead Regional Development Commission*  
Cathi Hively – *Beatty Township*  
Holly Larson – *National Park Service*  
Steve Lotz – *Vermilion Lake Township*  
Caroline Owens – *Ely Resident*  
Sue Wolfe – *Owens Township*

1. Updates

- a. Planning Assistance from Russell: Russell Habermann and Carol Booth attended the Lake Vermilion Resort Association (LVRA) meeting in the morning to present ARDC's work to date and to request an expansion of the current contract between the LVRA and ARDC. The LVRA has approved up to an additional \$10,000 and an extension to December 31, 2017. If ARDC does not spend all \$10,000, the remaining balance will be rolled into the City of Tower's Lake Vermilion Trail Fund. The LVRA also approved ARDC's use of the LVRA Economic Impact Survey in further development of the master plan.
- b. Conference Call on Land Acquisition: Holly Larson gave a brief review of the conference call, "How to Work with Landowners for Trail Corridor Acquisition," presented by Laird Mork and Bob Manzoline on September 14, 2016. Attendees recounted the following ideas presented during the call: the Mesabi Trail has had donations of trail easements for about 90% of their land acquisitions; be prepared to hear a lot of "No's" at first, but don't give up; negotiations with landowners require multiple conversations with each one, and may take several years, so start early. The Steering Committee noted that having handouts with economic and health measures listed could help when talking to landowners.
  - i. ARDC will prepare language for the LVRA and ARDC contract amendment.
  - ii. Josh Gillson will send Russell an electronic version of the LVRA Economic Impact Survey report.
  - iii. Carol will write and send a thank-you letter to the LVRA for their continued support.
  - iv. Holly will customize and update the "Information for Landowners" handout that was shared with the Committee earlier this year to aid Steering Committee members who will go and talk to landowners about the Trail. It provides answers to common landowner questions.

- v. Holly will provide the Committee with more detailed notes from the land acquisition conference call at a later date.

## 2. Joint Powers Agreement (JPA)

- a. Review and Comment on Draft Agreement: Holly led the Steering Committee through the draft joint powers agreement, which was distributed prior to the meeting. Steering Committee members requested clarification of language regarding member agencies of the joint powers board, revisions of select passages, and further exploration of the terms of member withdrawal and dissolution. Holly noted that she has spoken with the City of Tower, who will request the League of Minnesota Cities to provide a legal review of the document. The Steering Committee also wants to further explore opportunities for one of the government entities to add trail insurance to their existing policy, in order to save money compared to a standalone policy.
- b. City/Township Presentations: The Committee discussed strategies for City/Township/Tribal presentations. The Committee suggested giving informational presentations first, and asking for a vote on the JPA at a later meeting. Informational presentations about the Lake Vermilion Trail will officially introduce the Trail (and the idea of a joint powers agreement) to cities and townships. The Lake Vermilion Trail informational PowerPoint presentation needs to be updated for these purposes.
- c. Committee members should try to talk to City Council members about the Trail and JPA before the Council presentation dates.
- d. Scheduling with Cook, Tower, and Bois Forte: Cook's city council meets on the 4th Thursday of each month at the Cook City Hall at 6 PM; a holiday on this date will have the council meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month instead. Tower's city council meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month.
  - i. Holly will revise the draft joint powers agreement and send it to Linda Keith at the City of Tower, who will ask for legal review from the League of Minnesota Cities.
  - ii. Steve Lotz will contact the Minnesota Association of Townships for information about insurance costs and the feasibility of adding trail insurance to an existing township's policy.
  - iii. Russell and Holly will revise the Lake Vermilion Trail information presentation for use at council and board meetings.
  - iv. Carol, Sue, and Josh will give the presentation to Cook city council; the tentative date is November 17, 2016.
  - v. Carol Booth will ask Tim Johnson to attend and bring other trail supporters.
  - vi. Greg Dostert will give the presentation to Tower city council. Other supporters from Tower need to be contacted to attend. Lee and Bev Peterson (Greenwood) were suggested, as well as Mary and Cheryl (no last names mentioned).

- vii. Lake Vermilion Trail representatives will look toward presenting at a county board meeting in December/January. Holly will contact the County's Deputy Administrator.
- viii. The presentation to Bois Forte Tribal Council is tentatively scheduled for December.

### 3. Master Plan Revision

- a. Holly led an input session to collect information on sections of the master plan. Ideas shared for programs and marketing are listed verbatim below.
  - i. Programming/Events: Annual ride, all ages participate, group rides, take a handicap trail day, picnic/trail day, service projects (eagle scouts), boy scout badges, Guide for the day (pointing out points on trail), helmet safety/bike safety classes, Go-Pro trail video posted on website, triathlons or Iron Man competitions, adopt-a-trail, school trail clean-up, historic/geological signs, shirts, rentals, Adopt-A-Trail program, geology/historic points tours with State Park staff
  - ii. Outreach/Marketing: Clothes to advertise, LVRA suggested routes (resort to resort), ads on brochures and at kiosks, summer parades, ads in publications (where to go/what to do), WDIO news (have a better health day), city web sites (Tower – TSCDC), social media/photo contest, bike shops, outdoor publications (i.e. Ely Summer Times)

### 4. Communications/Public Relations

- a. Fall Promotions: Sue brought brochures to the Ely Folk School. The Cook Lions'
- b. "Cook"toberfest has been cancelled for this year.
- c. Website: Carol obtained a local cost estimate to design a website: \$2500. Russell stated that a Word Press website can be created quickly. A domain name can be purchased for about \$26. A donation page could be included on the website.
- d. There is a new Tower/Soudan Main St. non-profit organization that will do marketing and branding. The trail committee should coordinate with this organization.
- e. There is about 2/3 box of brochures remaining, at the LVRA office in the Forest Service building in Cook. Contact Tiffany if you need some.
  - i. Russell will create a Word Press website for the trail.

### 5. Fundraising

- a. Updates: Carol has drafted an application for the Lake Country Power Round-up Program. The application that Carol submitted to the U of M Regional Sustainable Development Partnership asks for \$7500, including an intern. There is a new IRRRB program for downtown revitalization; if the trail will pass through downtowns this may be a source of funding or assistance.
  - i. Russell will distribute the application for Steering Committee review; comments are due to Carol by October 26<sup>th</sup>.

- ii. Carol will research funding possibilities through the food co-op and the Credit Union.

Holly will send out a Doodle poll to gauge what day of the week and time (morning vs. afternoon) most people are available to meet. Meetings in the future will be held based on the feedback from this poll.

**NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, November 9, 2016 @ 10 a.m. in Greenwood Town Hall**