

Lake Vermilion Trail Steering Committee
Meeting #10 Notes
12/14/16 – Cook Hospital

Attendees

Bryan Anderson – *MnDOT District 1 Planning*
John Bassing – *Greenwood Township*
Carol Booth – *Wakemup Village Resident, Cook*
Greg Dostert – *Breitung Township*
Josh Gillson – *Lake Vermilion Resort Association*
Russell Habermann – *Arrowhead Regional Development Commission*
Cathi Hively – *Beatty Township*
Andy Holak – *St. Louis County*
Holly Larson – *National Park Service*
Steve Lotz – *Vermilion Lake Township*
Caroline Owens – *Ely Resident*
Lee Peterson – *Greenwood Township Resident*
Sidra Starkovich – *Bois Forte Band*
Elizabeth Storm – *Cook City Council*
Sue Wolfe – *Owens Township*

1. Updates

- a. Carol Booth noted that she will be looking more into Minnesota Power for funding opportunities but is waiting to see what happens with the Lake Country Power Round-up Program first.

2. Joint Powers Agreement (JPA)

- a. Report on Cook and Tower City Council Meetings: Carol noted that she presented at the Cook City Council meeting, and the City Council passed the joint powers agreement pending review by the City lawyer; there was good discussion and great representation from the Steering Committee. Russell Habermann said that he presented at the Tower City Council meeting, and the City Council also passed the joint powers agreement pending review by its City lawyer. Questions were asked about the funding streams for an executive director and trail maintenance costs. Josh Gillson, Steve Lotz, Linda Keith, Joan Broten, and guests were there for support.
- b. Prepare for Next Presentations:
 - It was noted that Steering Committee members' attendance at the presentations is valuable, even if you aren't presenting. Please try to attend as many as possible, and recruit other trail supporters, especially from the local area, to attend the meetings. Josh will announce this at the LVRA meeting January 4th.
 - i. Bois Forte: Meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month

1. Wednesday, December 21 @ 9 a.m., Fortune Bay Resort
 - a. Carol, Sue, Dusty, Sidra, and Russell
- ii. Greenwood Township: Meets 2nd Tuesday of each month
 1. Tuesday, January 10 @ 6:30 p.m., Greenwood Town Hall
 - a. Carol, John, Lee, and Holly
 - b. Holly will email materials to Greenwood Clerk by January 5
- iii. Breitung Township: Meets 4th Tuesday of each month
 1. Tuesday, January 24
- iv. Vermilion Lake Township: Meets 1st Monday of each month
 1. Monday, February 6
- v. Owens Township: Meets 2nd Tuesday of each month
 1. Tuesday, February 14 (Sue will give presentation)
- vi. Beatty Township: Meets 2nd Tuesday of each month
 1. Tuesday, March 14 or April 11 (Kathy will check on agendas/dates)
- vii. Kugler Township: TBD
- viii. St. Louis County: TBD
 1. Trail alignments dealing with tax-forfeit land will deal with Andy Holak; alignments dealing with road right-of-ways will deal with public works department.
 2. Work with a joint powers agreement may have to go to a staff committee before being presented to the County Board.
 - a. Holly will research this possibility.
 3. Commissioner Rukavina should be contacted by a member of the Steering Committee prior to presentations to the County Board.

3. Master Plan Revision

- a. Trail Development Phasing/Prioritization: Holly led a brainstorming session to gather ideas for how to prioritize trail segments for construction. The following criteria were identified by the committee: connect to existing trails, land acquisition, easiest construction (on given terrain), proximity to most businesses/resorts, existing road rights-of-way or power line corridors, existing trail corridors, access to scenic opportunities or presence of historical and cultural sites, geographic equity, construction and acquisition costs, and public support.
 - i. Holly will compile a list of these criteria, send the list out to the Steering Committee, and ask members to weight their importance for each item on a scale of one to five (1-5). Prioritization will be determined based on aggregated results.
 - ii. Russell will remove the “Ski Trail Parking” label from the Lake Vermilion Trail map and include segment connecting Hoodoo Point and McKinley Park, naming it Segment 6B, and include the existing Hoodoo Point trail.
- b. Outreach/Marketing: Russell explained that the brainstorming session held at the October meeting has been compiled into a list that highlights existing outreach efforts and proposed efforts, as identified by the committee. Listed

initiatives include brochures, website, tabling at community events, trail logo contest, clothing with Lake Vermilion Trail branding, dissemination of ads in local and regional news outlets, features on area websites, active social media activity, suggested route maps for tourists, brochures at trail kiosks, readily-available trail maps (both physical and online), and online video resources (i.e. Go Pro trail videos).

- c. Committee Conference Call: Holly would like to set up a conference call for the master plan subcommittee to review the master plan in early January.
 - i. Holly will send out a Doodle poll to check on availability, and Russell will send out the drafted master plan a week in advance of the selected meeting date.

4. Communication/Public Relations

- a. Letterhead Revision: Carol noted that the Steering Committee has the need for letterhead that accommodates thank you letters. In turn, Russell developed a second letterhead that could be used for more general business, especially to thank donors following their donation. He sent around the two drafted letterheads and encouraged the Steering Committee to let him know if additional revisions should be made to either. It was suggested that a note reading “all donations are tax-deductible” be added to the general letterhead.
 - a. Russell will include the tax-deductible language on the letterheads.

5. Fundraising

- a. Draft Fundraising Strategy: Carol explained that she was contacted about a donation of \$500 to the Lake Vermilion Trail effort. In response, Carol drafted a fundraising strategy and wanted to discuss ideas with the Steering Committee.
 - i. Brainstorm Reasons People Donate: Demonstrate support, we need your help, be part of a community effort, promote health and wellness for you and your family, enjoy the scenery and be involved in the outdoors, safer (off-road) recreation, programs and activities, small local funds leverage large grants, leave a legacy, bring in tourism dollars for businesses, provide something to do for your visitors.
 - ii. Review Fundraising Letter: Carol noted that revisions should be made to Josh’s drafted fundraising letter to make it more of a letter from the Steering Committee; this can be addressed later.
 - iii. Brainstorm List of People and Businesses to Send Donation Request Letter: Resorts, local businesses, flyer in local papers, local paper articles (Hometown Focus), local governments (cities, townships, etc.) for information, local groups (Lions, Scouts, etc.), Northwoods Friends of the Arts (ideas), and local community colleges and schools.
 - iv. Determine Action: Carol noted that it might be a good idea to incentivize giving. The Steering Committee outlined the following draft giving hierarchy for consideration:
 - 1. \$25+ (or what you can) - Decal

2. \$50+ - Pin
3. \$100+ - T-Shirt or Cap
4. \$500 – Plaque and Photo in the Paper
5. \$1000+ - Kiosk Recognition
6. \$5,000+ - Advertising along the Trail
 - a. After noting that this might deter some people from giving smaller amounts, the Steering Committee noted that sending a decal (sticker or window cling) with the logo with thank you letters would be an attractive option to start off this process.

6. Other Updates:

- a. Sidra noted that Greg Lindsay of the University of Minnesota contacted Bois Forte and offered one year of trail counting to the Tribe. Russell noted that ARDC also hosts trail counters from MnDOT and could offer trail counting equipment even after the one-year trail counting is completed.
- b. Holly noted that an update of the Taconite State Trail Plan is currently under public review. The plan is available for review at <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/trails/taconite.html>, and comments will be accepted through January 6, 2017.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, January 11, 2017 @ 10 a.m. in the Tower DNR Office