

Lake Vermilion Trail Steering Committee
Meeting #6 Notes
5/24/16 – Greenwood Town Hall

Attendees

John Bassing – *Greenwood Township*

Carol Booth – *Wakemup Village Resident, Cook*

Joan Broten – *Office Manager, Minnesota DNR Parks & Trails, Tower City Council*

Carmen Deluca – *Greenwood Township*

Greg Dostert – *Breitung Township*

Russell Habermann – *Arrowhead Regional Development Commission*

Holly Larson – *National Park Service*

Steve Lotz – *Vermilion Lake Township*

Caroline Owens – *Ely Resident*

Sue Wolfe – *Owens Township*

1. Updates

- a. Regional Significance Application Submitted: The regional designation application was submitted to the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission (GMRPTC) on April 29. The completed application included 12 letters of support from area organizations.
- b. Presentation to Mesabi Trail’s Railroad Authority Board 6/1: Holly Larson and Russell Habermann will meet with the Railroad Authority on June 1 to ask if a small portion of the Lake Vermilion Trail could be a “spur” of the Mesabi Trail. The request asks the Railroad Authority to own and manage a 5-mile trail segment westbound from its Mesabi Trail connection in Tower; the trail committee would raise funds for the trail construction. Other committee members are invited to attend the meeting.
- c. Conference Call on Land Acquisition: Holly noted that Laird Mork, Chisago County Parks & Trails Director (Swedish Immigrant Trail), and Bob Manzoline, Mesabi Trail, have had success with land acquisition, and would be willing to share their knowledge on the topic. Tentative dates for the call are June 7, 8, and 9.
 - i. The committee has selected June 8 or 9 in the morning as the best time for the conference call. Holly will set up a conference call line and send out materials.
- d. Fundraising: No updates, but Tower has approved the request to serve as an interim fiscal agent for the trail committee.
- e. Legislative Session Updates: LCCMR has designated \$679,000 for the Tower Trail, and \$1.2M has been designated for the Mesabi Trail from bonding.

2. Planning Assistance

- a. Russell's Time: ARDC's funds from the 2014 contract with the Lake Vermilion Resort Association have now been depleted. ARDC is currently developing a proposal to the Lake Vermilion Resort Association to ask for more funds and to continue trail assistance.
- b. Holly's Time: A renewal letter is needed from the trail committee by 6/30 for Holly to continue providing assistance for FY17, through the beginning of September 2017. Holly has sample renewal letters that a trail committee member may utilize when writing one.
 - i. Russell will work to develop a new contract proposal and connect with Josh Gillson and Tiffany Fondie regarding continued assistance.
 - ii. Carol Booth will draft the renewal letter to the National Park Service for continued support from Holly. Since ARDC has requested the assistance, Russell will finalize and submit the letter on behalf of ARDC.

3. Master Plan Revision

- i. Elements Missing/Incomplete: Topics and sections that need to be addressed in the master plan include trends/public value (public involvement, demographics, public health, economic development, and recreation trends), acquisition plan, development plan, implementation plan, joint organization responsibilities, maintenance/operations plan, ecological/land resources plan, programming plan, outreach and marketing plan, and research plan.
- ii. Target Timeline: Provided the Lake Vermilion Trail receives an initial "High" designation from the GMRPTC, the master plan can be submitted on a rolling basis. Considering the information needed, a good target date for completion of the master plan would be spring 2017, which would allow the commission to score the master plan before another funding round opens at the end of summer 2017.

4. Communication/Public Relations

- a. Logo Contest: Bois Forte has generously donated \$400 for the grand prize. Logo designs are due to Northwoods Friends of the Arts (NWFA) by June 15, and the winners will be announced and awarded at NWFA's annual meeting on June 21.
- b. Promotion at Summer Festivals: The committee voiced the need for a pamphlet or one-page to hand out at summer festivals. The handout would include general information about the trail as well as donation language. Potential summer festivals for promotion include: Ely's Canoe Festival (June 10-12), Cook's Timber Days (June 10-12), Virginia's Land of the Loon (June 18-19), Camp Vermilion's Bluegrass Festival (July 30), Chisholm's North St. Louis County Fair (August 10-14), the Embarrass Region Fair (August 26-28), and Ely's Harvest Moon Festival (September 9-11). Summer farmers' markets also offer opportunities in Cook (Saturday mornings), Tower (Friday evenings), and Ely (Tuesday nights).

- i. Carol Booth will work with Northwoods Friends of the Arts to produce ‘thank you’ letters for logo contest sponsors.
- ii. Holly and the National Park Service will produce a pamphlet by June 10.
- iii. Committee members would like a website for the trail that is separate from the ARDC site on which the committee notes are now published. The Resort Association’s website was suggested. Carol will ask Eric Hanson.

5. Management Structure/Political Support

- a. Joint Powers Board Discussion: The committee continued its discussion of a proposal for a Joint Powers Agreement, including issues of insurance and liability, costs, management and board structure.
 - i. Holly will put the committee’s ideas into the standard agreement format for further committee discussion.
 - ii. Subcommittees
 1. Fundraising: Linda, Carol, and Josh
 2. Management Structure: Linda, Carol and Joan
 3. Trail Development – West End: Carol, Sue, Liz and Jerry
 4. Trail Development – East End: Steve, Joan, Linda Tyler and Sidra.
 5. Land Acquisition: Sue, Carol, Tom R., Ron Potter

NEXT MEETING: August/September 2016, Date and Location to Be Determined