

Lake Vermilion Trail Work Group
Meeting Notes
3/14/18 – Greenwood Town Hall, Tower

Called to order at 10:06 AM

Attendees

John Bassing – *Greenwood Township*

Joan Broten – *Minnesota DNR*

Holly Larson – *National Park Service*

Steve Lotz – *Vermilion Lake Township*

Josh Gilson - *Lake Vermilion Resort Association*

Carol Booth – *JPB alternate, Beatty*

Greg Dostert – *Breitung Township*

Elizabeth Storm – *City of Cook*

Caroline Owens – *Eagles Nest Resident*

Shane Johnson – *area resident*

Terri Joki-Martin – *JPB, City of Tower*

1. Joint Powers Board (JPB) issues

- a. Legal update – Holly Larson has investigated the legal status of the JPB given that St. Louis County (SLC) has not decided how they wish to proceed. A League of Cities contracts attorney, Chris Smith, believes that the JPB is not created until all parties listed in the agreement have signed the agreement but recommends that the parties should check with their attorneys. Attorneys for Cook, Greenwood (used also by Beatty & Vermilion Lake), and Tower have no issue and believe that the JPB may proceed. It was also noted that when approving the second version of the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) in which Breitung Township had been removed, a number of parties (including Beatty, Greenwood, & Vermilion Lake), discussed and noted that SLC had not and might not sign the JPA and approved the JPA knowing so. The consensus was that the JPB may move forward.
- b. St. Louis County
 - i. Carol Booth and Josh Gilson shared conversations they had with SLC Commissioner Tom Rukavina.
 - ii. Upcoming SLC Board meetings in Gilbert and Ely – it was felt that the next step was the County's, without new information from SLC further efforts would not be productive, that time and effort was better spent on moving forward developing the JPB, finalizing the Master Plan, and preparing grant applications.
 - iii. Next steps – in addition to 1.b.ii above it was noted that SLC is in the process of hiring a recreation planner and filling that position may be helpful in moving forward.

- c. Local elections updates – new board members
 - i. Greenwood – Byron Beihoffer is the newly elected supervisor. Josh Gilson will contact Byron and the current vice-chair Carmen Deluca to provide them with updated Trail information.
 - ii. Vermilion Lake – Sarah Schmidt is the newly elected supervisor. There will be a board vacancy created at the April board meeting as supervisor Stephen Peterson, Jr. will be resigning his seat to take the position of clerk. Josh will contact Sarah to provide updated Trail information.
2. Master Plan
- a. Recreational trends/segment priorities – priorities were reviewed and adjusted
 - i. Segment 2 (Wakemup Hill to Wakemup Campground) was moved from high to medium due to easement issues.
 - ii. Segment 1A (Wakemup Hill to The Landing) was moved from medium to high due to easement successes.
 - iii. Segment 7 (Y intersection to Tower) remains high.
 - iv. Segment 4 (Frazer Bay Public Access to Greenwood Town Hall) was moved from high to medium due to easement issues.
 - v. Segment 8 (Hoodoo Point Campground to Breitung Town Line - segment 6B on some maps) ranking needs input from Tower.
 - vi. Segment 5 (Greenwood Town Hall to Fortune Bay) was moved from medium to high due to the connection to an existing trail system.
 - vii. Segment 6A (ferry route) was moved from low to medium because of its uniqueness and simplicity of construction.
 - viii. Segments 1 (Cook to ski trail parking), 3 (Wakemup Campground to Frazer Bay Public Access), and 6 (Fortune Bay to the Y intersection) remained unchanged at medium and segments 1B (Northwoods School spur) and 3A (Timbuktu access spur) remain unchanged at low.
 - b. Development – five year plan
 - i. First application – segment 7 - Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) grant - 2018.
 - ii. Second application – segment 1A – Legacy grant - 2018.
 - iii. First construction – segment 7 – 2020.
 - iv. Second construction – segment 1A - 2021.
 - v. Third application – segment 5 - source to be determined – 2021.
 - vi. Third construction – segment 5 - 2023
 - c. Fundraising goal
 - i. JPB Member dues will total some \$4,500 per year. Additional sources considered were individual donations, business or corporate donations, government grants, private or foundation grants, fundraising events, and on-line fundraising.
 - ii. Fundraising events – Shane Johnson is a member of Range Runners and he recommended a well scheduled half-marathon race as a fundraising event. He indicated that 5K and 10K races were plentiful but that a

half-marathon that did not compete for runners with other half-marathon races would do well after its first year. Range Runners has a trailer of equipment they call race-in-a-box that would supply the equipment needs of a half-marathon. Other event possibilities included a bike safety event and the Iron Range Off Road Cyclists.

iii. Fund raising goals were set as follows: 2018 - 100,000, 2019 – 150,000, 2020 – 200,000, 2021 – 150,000, and 2022 – 150,000.

d. Organization development goals/considerations

i. Project manager – part time by 2019 for development, easements, acquisitions, and fundraising.

ii. Executive director – full time by 2020 for development, easements, acquisitions, and fundraising.

iii. Event committee.

iv. Fundraising committee.

v. Maintenance funding – once there is trail on the ground maintenance will be needed. Initially this might be contracted with an area entity that has existing staff and equipment. Minor maintenance might also be handled by volunteers. Concerns were raised regarding liability issues with volunteers and power tools.

e. Review process/public meetings – There is a tight timeline to complete the process in order to make submission to the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks & Trails Commission on April 30.

i. Master plan draft #1 will be distributed to JPB & work group members March 22.

ii. A two week comment period will end April 5. Additional photos of the trail corridor are requested.

iii. Holly Larson and Russell Habermann will make revisions.

iv. Master plan draft #2 will be available for review and comment by the public and JPB and work group members from April 13 through April 23. Public meetings/open houses to allow the public to interact with the Plan will be held in Cook, Greenwood, and Tower on April 17 through 19. Which dates will apply to which locations is uncertain at this time. Availability of the plan and public meetings will be advertised in the various newspapers. Meeting locations will be the Cook Community Center, Greenwood Town hall, and Tower Civic Center.

v. Holly and Russell will propose changes based on comments received.

vi. Master plan draft #3 will be offered for approval to the JPB at the April 26 meeting.

vii. Plan will be put into final form based on JPB comments/changes.

3. Fundraising

a. Grant application status

i. People for Bikes – did not ask for a full application.

ii. State Farm – no response to date.

iii. IRRRB – application is being reviewed.

4. Trail development
 - a. Carol Booth reported that she and Tom Lantry met with Dana Frame, Tower DNR, and Terry Bergstrom, Cook DNR. Dana indicated that a lease would work best on State land for the Lake Vermilion Trail. State leases are for 20 years and are usually renewed. She also talked with Mark Kailanen, SLC Land Department, and in the county's case an easement would work best.
 - b. The deadline for an LCCMR application for the east segment is April 11.
5. Communications/public relations
 - a. Banner comments – concerns centered on the heritage of the photo used. Given that children were in the photo it was felt that permission to use the photo would be required. Carol Booth will work further on the banner design. Guidance given included more logo and more name and generic shapes walking and biking.

Meeting adjourned at 12:12 pm.

**NEXT MEETING: Joint Powers Board, Thursday, April 26, 2018 10 a.m. to Noon
at the LaCroix Ranger Dist. Office, USFS, Cook**