

Lake Vermilion Trail Joint Powers Board Meeting Notes

8/22/18 – MN DNR Office, Tower, MN

Called to order at 10:00 AM

Board members (JPB)

Cathi Hiveley – *Beatty Township*

Tim Johnson - *City of Cook*

Larry Tahija – *Greenwood*

Tom Lantry - *Owens Township*

Terri Joki-Martin - *City of Tower*

Steve Peterson - *Vermilion Lake Township*

Work Group

Carol Booth - *Beatty alternate*

Josh Gilson - *Lake Vermilion Resort Association (LVRA)*

Joan Broten – *MN DNR*

Greg Dostert - *area resident*

Steve Lotz – *Vermilion Lake Township*

Holly Larson – *National Park Service, RTCA*

Barrett Steenrod - *NPS, Americorp fellow*

1. Fundraising: 2018 Goal: \$100,000
 - a. Online donations – Pay Pal update - Carol Booth indicated that Char Conger was ready to do this but would need the EIN and bank account numbers. These will be forwarded to her.
 - b. Holly Larson provided an update on the Legacy grant application, which was submitted to the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission (GMRPTC) on July 31 in the amount of \$1,775,134 for 4.56 miles of trail running from a crosswalk on State Highway 135 west to the east end of the Y Store parking lot. Included were two Trailhead Kiosks, one at the Y store end and the other at the Tower Trail fork by the harbor. Included were interpretive signs, benches, boardwalks, and overlooks of the West Two River and the beaver pond. Also included were funds for part-time project and construction managers. Trail design and construction totaled about \$1.2 million. Bois Forte did not offer any matching dollars so the application was submitted without a match. Joe Czapiewski, AICP, System Plan Coordinator, GMRPTC requested a site visit for Friday, August 17. Holly, Caroline Owens, and Steve Lotz met with Joe at the Y Store and walked approximately three-quarters of a mile of the west end of the east segment, which included the beaver pond portion and some rock outcrops. They also drove to both ends of the West Two Road as well as the area of the crossing on State Hwy 135. Joe indicated that for this cycle they had some \$8 million available and applications in excess of \$20 million (including a Mesabi

Trail segment). Holly reported that the GMRPTC will make a recommendation to the legislature between now and January. Lobbying the GMRPTC and area legislators may be helpful.

- c. Fat tire winter bike ride with Iron range Off Road Cyclists (IRORC) – Carol Booth had contacted Luther Kent of IRORC about such a ride. She indicated that time was short and that it would be too large a project for her to take on at this time. No volunteers came forward.
- d. IRRRB Regional Trail Grants – the IRRRB announced on August 19 the availability of Regional Trail Grants with a pre-application deadline of September 10, 2018. \$3 million is available for fiscal year 2019 with a one to one cash match required. Holly Larson reported that among the project categories were design, development, and master plans. Land acquisition funds may also be available but she felt that the process was likely similar to that required for acquisitions with Legacy fund dollars, which requires a state certified appraisal that would be cost prohibitive. Suggestions for the cash match included the Northland Foundation and Bois Forte. Holly indicated that Barb Caskey of ARDC would have addition grant assistance hours available and that they would likely have to create a project that fits the guidelines. Discussion settled on a project cost of \$50,000 with a \$25,000 request to the IRRRB. Resolution by Tom Lantry – Owens, second by Tim Johnson – Cook, to authorize the Lake Vermilion Trail Joint Powers Board (JPB) to make application to and accept funds from the IRRRB Regional Trails Grant Program, ayes – five, nays – none, resolution number 5 passed. The draft application will be reviewed by the Chair, Vice-chair, and work group members prior to submittal. Carol Booth will check with Char Conger about approaching Northland for the match. She will also search the archives for letters of support that may be on hand. Tom Lantry – Owens will check with Sidra Starkovich about a request to Bois Forte.
- e. Joan Broten asked for information on liability limits for land owners providing easements to the trail. Holly Larson indicated that liability was limited by statute and she has a generic handout that covers that information, which she will provide.

2. Marketing/Public Relations

- a. Carol Booth represented the Lake Vermilion Trail at the Vermilion Lake Association (formerly the Sportsman’s Club of Lake Vermilion) at their Annual meeting on Saturday August 11, held at Camp Vermilion. She received a number of favorable comments, acquired contact information, and will follow up on multiple offers of volunteer help. She also received donations totaling \$30.
- b. Carol Booth and Holly Larson are working on a draft news release regarding the GMRPTC “high” designation for the Trail’s Master Plan.
- c. A public meeting to be hosted by DNR Trails for the Kabetogema and Sturgeon River State Forests is scheduled for Wednesday September 26 from 6:30 to 8:00 pm at the Cook Community Center. While the focus would seem to be on motorized trails it was felt important to attend. Tim Johnson – Cook will do so.

- d. Other events – Josh Gilson reported that he is involved in St. Louis County’s Comprehensive Plan update process as a Tourism & Recreation group where he has brought up the need for trails and indicated that the draft goals and objectives call for additional trails. Steve Lotz indicated that the draft goals and objectives were available to the general public for comment as well and draft policies would be available soon. Josh confirmed that the draft goals and objectives were available at planslcmn.com. Josh also attended a recent US Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Open House at Fortune Bay. Focus was primarily on the BLM islands in Lake Vermilion but Josh raised the need for trails and the value of BLM assistance with same.

3. Administration

- a. Transition of fiscal agent – Treasurer Steve Peterson – Vermilion Lake reported that the JPB now has a P. O. Box, and EIN and application for a checking account is to be ready for signatures after this meeting at Frandsen.
- b. Billing Joint Powers Board members for 2018 dues – Treasurer Steve Peterson – Vermilion Lake has the population figures, will make final adjustments to the invoices, and will be sending invoices out shortly. The need for checks was brought up. Motion by Tom Lantry - Owens, second by Tim Johnson – Cook to authorize spending up to \$100 for checks, ayes – five, nays – none, motion carried. Holly Larson reported that JPJ of Hibbing, which provided the construction cost estimate for the Legacy application is expected to charge \$800 for that work but she had not yet received an invoice.
- c. Liability insurance – Tim Johnson – Cook has discussed trail insurance with Bob Manzoline of the Mesabi Trail and Bob provided copies of Mesabi Trail’s coverage. Tim contacted Liscomb and Hood, or LHM Insurance, a Marsh & McLennan Agency in Duluth regarding coverage. Coverage may be available through Northfield Insurance Co. or Scottsdale Insurance Co. Questions that the Agency had included the organization’s start date, miles of trail, employees, mailing address, and EIN. Tim will continue to work on this, as well as contacting Linda Keith, Tower Clerk, and Breitung Township regarding their trail coverage. He is also looking for a list of concerns.
- d. Steve Lotz asked about the status of the by laws – Holly Larson reported that she was working on revisions and that they would be available for the next meeting.
- e. Volunteer Management – action steps from July meeting
 - i. Talk with the Northwoods Scholl Principal – Tim Johnson – Cook met with Northwoods Principal John Vukmanich. There is consideration of a greater emphasis on vocational and skills learning and it was felt that volunteer opportunities with the Trail may be a good fit with this. A list of ways to engage high school students is needed as is a trail from Cook to the school.
 - ii. Vermilion Law – pro bono easement work – Tom Lantry –Owens left a message and has not received a reply yet. Tom did report that the First Baptist Church of Cook’s pastor, Jared Bangs had offered to assist with

trail maintenance once there was a trail to maintain. Tom also spoke with Kim Holmes who volunteered to assist with web design.

iii. Volunteer job descriptions – Holly Larson is working on this.

4. Parks and Trails web page – Carol Booth reported that a \$35 payment was required. She will draft a web page and ask Russell Habermann to critique it.
5. Tom Lantry – Owens reported that he had located an individual who was will to serve as his alternate and asked of the process to make it official. He will take the matter to the Owens Town Board for their action.
6. The next meeting was set as September 18, with September 12 as the alternate date depending on Holly Larson's availability.

**NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, September 18, 2018 10 a.m. to Noon
at the Greenwood Town Hall, County Road 77.**