



Trails Coalition

Bike & Hike the Valley

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 St. Croix Bike & Pedestrian

St. Croix Bike & Pedestrian Trails Coalition

2021 Annual Report for 2020

Dated April 14, 2021

St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trail Coalition 2021 Annual Report for 2020

General Overview

2020 was the year of the Pandemic that affected all aspects of peoples' lives, jobs and volunteer activities. Restrictions based on safety related to the Pandemic brought changes to the way the Coalition gets accurate information about trails and the organization out to area residents, brought changes to meeting formats, brought cancellations of planned events etc. Those details can be referenced in more detail in the standing committee reports. In general, continuing to work on extending a connected trail network throughout the County and beyond remained to be the focus of the organization.

Standing Committees

The Coalition has two standing committees, each tasked with in depth goals to study and make recommendations to the Board of Directors. See details about the Communications Committee in Appendix B and details about the Highway 64 Trails Corridor Committee in Appendix C.

Special Projects

The Coalition had both ongoing and new activity with several trail related special projects detailed in the standing committees' White Papers.

Financial Report

As 2020 began, funds carried over from 2019 were \$2190.62. The total revenues collected for the year were \$2470.00. The Coalition didn't hold any fund raisers in 2020. Yearly expenditures amounted to \$2086.11. The year ended with \$3832.32 in the bank with large part of that designated for the bicycle rack initiative. See Appendix A for details.

Looking to the Future

Making strong connections that create a county wide network of trails reaching into neighboring counties in both Minnesota and Wisconsin will continue to be the focus of the Coalition's activities in 2020.

Board of Directors

Terms Expiring in 2023

Mark Gherty
David Mandel
Open Seat

Terms Expiring in 2022

Pam Kaiser
Kyle Lindstrom, Vice Chairperson
Paul McGinnis

Terms Expiring in 2021

Susan Heuiser, Secretary/Information Director
André Johnson, Chairperson
Mark Vanasse, Treasurer

Alternates

Andrew Lamers – Term ends in 2022

Appendix A
St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trails Coalition, Inc.
Financial Report

January 2020 - December 2020

2020 Annual Financial Report

Revenue	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total To Date	Budget 2020
Grants - General						500.00							500.00	2,000.00
Grants - Baldwin														-
Grants - Bench Project														-
Grants - Beyond the Loop														1,500.00
Grants - Bicycle Summit														2,000.00
Grants - Bike Rack Initiative														1,500.00
Grants - Bridge Opening														-
Grants - Hwy. 64 Corridor														1,000.00
Grants - Lake Mallaleu RR Bridge														2,000.00
Grants - Lift and Loop						500.00	50.00					770.00	500.00	1,000.00
Total Grants			100.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	50.00					770.00	1,970.00	11,000.00
Donations - General		50.00												2,320.00
Donations - Baldwin														-
Donations - Bench Project														-
Donations - Beyond the Loop														700.00
Donations - Bicycle Summit														700.00
Donations - Bike Rack Initiative														700.00
Donations - giveBIGscv														500.00
Donations - Hwy. 64 Corridor														1,000.00
Donations - Lake Mallaleu RR Bridge														700.00
Donations - Lift and Loop							50.00					770.00	1,970.00	7,320.00
Total Donations		50.00	100.00	500.00	500.00		50.00					300.00		1,000.00
Total Membership Dues														-
Fund Raiser - General														-
Fund Raiser/Raffle - Baldwin														-
Fund Raiser - Bench Project														1,000.00
Fund Raiser - Hwy. 64 Corridor														-
Fund Raiser/Raffle @ Barley John's														1,000.00
Fund Raiser Oliphant														1,000.00
Fund Raiser - Raffle @ Oliphant														4,000.00
Total Fund Raisers/Raffles														200.00
Sales/Admission														-
Total Revenue:		50.00	100.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	50.00					1,070.00	2,470.00	22,520.00

St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trails Coalition, Inc.
Financial Report
January 2020 - December 2020

Disbursements	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total To Date	Budget 2020
Office Supplies									41.03	13.60			54.63	500.00
Insurance					400.00								400.00	500.00
Professional Fees														250.00
Gov't Filings Fees			35.50			79.50							115.00	250.00
Web Page/Media	557.81			5.32						54.51	41.34		658.98	400.00
Bank Charges		1.50			1.50		1.50	1.50				1.50	7.50	20.00
Disbursements General	400.00				350.00								100.00	400.00
From Donations - General	957.81	1.50	35.50	5.32	751.50	79.50	1.50	1.50	41.03	68.11	41.34	101.50	2,086.11	2,320.00
Grants - General														2,000.00
Grants - Baldwin														-
Grants - Bench Project														-
Grants - Beyond the Loop														1,500.00
Grants - Bicycle Summit														2,000.00
Grants - Bike Rack Initiative														1,500.00
Grants - Bridge Opening														-
Grants - Hwy. 64 Corridor														1,000.00
Grants - Lake Mallaleu RR Bridge														2,000.00
Grants - Lift and Loop														1,000.00
From Grants														11,000.00
Donations - General														2,320.00
Donations - Baldwin														-
Donations - Bench Project														-
Donations - Beyond the Loop														700.00
Donations - Bicycle Summit														700.00
Donations - Bike Rack Initiative														700.00
Donations - giveBIGscv														500.00
Donations - Hwy. 64 Corridor														1,000.00
Donations - Lake Mallaleu RR Bridge														700.00
Donations - Lift and Loop														700.00
From Donations - Projects														7,320.00
From Membership Dues														
Fund Raiser - General														1,000.00
Fund Raiser/Raffle - Baldwin														-
Fund Raiser - Bench Project														-
Fund Raiser - Hwy. 64 Corridor														1,000.00
Fund Raiser/Raffle @ Barley John's														-
Fund Raiser - Oliphant														1,000.00
Fund Raiser - Raffle @ Oliphant														1,000.00
From Fund Raisers/Raffles:														4,000.00
Sales/Admission														200.00
Total Disbursements:	957.81	1.50	35.50	5.32	751.50	79.50	1.50	1.50	41.03	68.11	41.34	101.50	2,086.11	24,840.00

Funds Available

General	209.83	258.33	322.83	817.51	566.01	986.51	1,035.01	1,033.51	992.48	924.37	883.03	1,851.53
Fund Raiser/Raffle @ Barley John's												
Fund Raiser @ Oliphant's	294.79	294.79	294.79	294.79	294.79	294.79	294.79	294.79	294.79	294.79	294.79	294.79
Baldwin												
Bench Project												
Bike Rack Initiative	1,686.00	1,686.00	1,686.00	1,686.00	1,686.00	1,686.00	1,686.00	1,686.00	1,686.00	1,686.00	1,686.00	1,686.00
Hwy. 64 Corridor												
Total Funds Available:	2,190.62	2,239.12	2,303.62	2,798.30	2,546.80	2,967.30	3,015.80	3,014.30	2,973.27	2,905.16	2,863.82	3,832.32

St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trail Coalition
2021 Annual Report for 2020
Appendix B – Communication Committee White Paper Report

The Communications Committee meets approximately quarterly, with 3 meetings in 2020 - in January, August and November. The Communication Committee's guiding theme, dictated by the Coalition Mission Statement and responsive to the changing nature of trails implementation in the area, is *to continue the bicycle rack initiative, continue getting accurate information to interested parties via various methods to be discussed with the Board of Directors as time requires and continue working cooperatively with groups interested in trails and trail promotion in the area.*

2020 was the year of the Pandemic affecting all aspects of daily life including meetings of committees. Meetings of the Committee as the year progressed took place outdoors and virtually. Outreach efforts, in particular, were affected by restrictions necessitated by the Pandemic with several events in the planning stages postponed. What follows are 2020 specifics.

Celebration of the Grand Reopening of the Historic Stillwater Lift Bridge.

The Historic Stillwater Lift Bridge opened June 1, 2020. That opening completed the entire 4.7 mile Loop Trail, a part of the St. Croix River Crossing Project. Members of the Committee had been working collaboratively with the Minnesota contingency in charge of planning a large celebration on that historic day. With the continuing hope of celebrating in 2019, the celebration was scheduled and then postponed several times during 2020 because of Pandemic restrictions. Ultimately, however, the nature of the celebration, with large gatherings of various types, was not possible as Pandemic guidelines continued to restrict large gatherings. At the end of 2019, the hope was the events, or at least some of them, could be celebrated close to the 1-year anniversary of the Lift Bridge opening in June of 2021. Pandemic restrictions will guide the timing of any celebratory events in 2021.

Bicycle Rack Initiative

The Committee decided placement of bicycle racks around the area to create *bike friendly spaces* was a positive long-range undertaking that would enhance locations developing amenities to attract and serve trail users. A grant application was awarded from the Hudson Daybreak Rotary Club to place bike racks within the Hudson School District boundaries with acknowledgement on the installed racks going to both the Rotary Club and the Trails Coalition. This action creates several positive local connections and good public awareness of both the Rotary Club's and the Trails Coalition's contribution to communities. Unfortunately, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College's (WITC) classes in the Spring and Fall of 2020 were largely online. The welding classes needed to construct the bicycle racks were not meeting and, consequently, no racks were created in 2020. A list of places interested in having bicycle racks installed will be kept awaiting welding class capabilities in 2021.

Economic Summit

The Coalition Board continued its membership in both the St. Croix County Economic Development Corporation and the Hudson Chamber of Commerce into 2020. Both these organizations were part of a team that included the Trails Coalition to plan an Economic Summit highlighting the many benefits of trails to local communities' prosperity. An April date was set, speakers were lined up, a meeting place and other logistics were arranged, and then Pandemic restrictions caused the postponement of this large gathering out of an abundance of caution. The hope is to pick up plans and hold this event when Pandemic restrictions begin to ease, hopefully sometime in 2021.

Bicycle Summit

The St. Croix County Bicycle & Pedestrian Trails Plan, passed in May 2017, contains a provision to hold an annual or semi-annual summit to provide details, share information and generally talk about implementation for the trail networks detailed in the Plan. This kind of summit has not been held to

St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trail Coalition 2021 Annual Report for 2020

Appendix B – Communication Committee White Paper Report

date but the Trails Coalition is committed to joining with others to hold an event at some time in the future when Pandemic restrictions have eased and economic factors will allow for consideration of trail initiatives across the County.

Union Pacific Railroad Trestle and Surrounding Property

There were numerous ongoing efforts to acquire the Union Pacific abandoned railroad bridge and associated property located between the City of Hudson and the Village of North Hudson. Meetings were held with the 4 governmental entities owning the railroad trestle and surrounding properties. Contacts were made with the Union Pacific Railroad personnel to clarify details. In addition, there was a September 14th public visioning meeting regarding the property to get information to people in the area and to receive input from attendees about the property's potential as a park on a scenic river. There was an article published in stcroix360.com, an online informational website about the St. Croix River. Significant complexities regarding this property are ongoing and plans are in the development stage regarding how best to deal with the property.

Fund Raisers

Fundraisers became a topic of conversation as the Committee considered outreach since large gatherings where fund raisers could be held were closed because of Pandemic restrictions. In addition, funding organizations were heavily supporting pandemic responses to the exclusion of everything else. A proposal to charge a membership fee for the first time was eventually implemented by the Board of Directors and an online way to contribute to the Coalition was in the planning stages for implementation in 2021. A history document detailing the initiatives the Trails Coalition had been a part of since its inception in 2013 was also created to inform donators about Coalition activities.

Updating Trails Coalition's Goals and Objectives

David Brooks' book *The Second Mountain...* was discussed as a tool to frame the Trails Coalition's discussion about Goals and Objectives. Suggestions were also made about how to keep this topic a part of an ongoing discussion item at Coalition Board of Directors' meetings to keep the issues at the forefront of the future management of the organization. Ultimately the decision was this discussion needed in person participation, so implementation of the discussion was postponed until Pandemic restrictions on meeting loosened.

Further Outreach Tools used by the Coalition include a *Facebook* page with 300+ followers, an email account with 300+ persons receiving messages from the Coalition and a website that provides a wealth of information about trails in the area and information about how to start and manage trail initiatives. The website was updated in 2020 and now includes two entire pages of trail maps users can access as they plan visits to western Wisconsin and its trail related many amenities.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Going forward, the Committee's activities will be to support collaborative efforts to place bicycle racks around the area as requested, to continue to provide accurate information about connecting trails throughout the county, and to work cooperatively with other organizations that support trail networks in the area.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Mark Gherty, Chairperson
Susan Heuiser
Andre Johnson
Andrew Lamers

Janet Lindstrom
Tim Wtitzmann
Mark Vanasse, Alternate

St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trail Coalition
2021 Annual Report for 2020

Appendix C – Highway 64 Trail Corridor Committee White Paper Report

The Highway 64 Corridor Trail Committee was created by the St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trail Coalition in mid-2016 to research and provide a variety of information to the Coalition regarding collaboration between and among the Highway 64 corridor communities. Organizations identified as part of the Hwy 64 corridor were the Towns of Richmond, St. Joseph, Somerset and Star Prairie, the Village of Somerset, New Richmond's Pathways Committee and the City of New Richmond. Each of the organizations has passed the Committee Charter at their Town/Village/City/Committee boards/councils/meetings and a representative from six of the seven organizations has been appointed.

2020 was the year of the Pandemic affecting all aspects of daily life including meetings of committees. The Committee met only once in 2020 on March 9th but there was considerable action along the corridor in 2020 nonetheless.

2020 was also the year that the WisDOT Multi-modal Local Supplement (MLS) grant awards were announced. Several communities along the corridor applied for those funds but nothing on the corridor was funded.

The issues with WisDOT excess ROW on the 32nd Street cul-de-sac in the vicinity of St. Croix National's property continued. The Town of Somerset purchased a part of that property to assure an entrance into any trail developed along the Landing Hill area. As 2020 proceeded and the St. Croix National Golf Course pursued a new venture that included that ROW, more research was needed to determine the accurate ownership of those properties. At the end of 2020, a final determination had not been reached but the golf course and the Town of Somerset are committed to working together to assure access to all activities planned along those properties.

In the Town of St. Joseph, WisDOT's turnover of portions of the abandoned STH 64 was accomplished. Road reconstruction along that now town road was completed in 2020. The Town is now working to plan, finance and construct a trail along STH 64 from where the Town road currently ends to the cul-de-sac on 23rd St. From there plans are to connect to CTH V, then travel a short way to 32nd Street and finally down to the Landing Hill area with close connections to the St. Croix National Golf Course.

The City of New Richmond used WisDNR funding in 2020 to build a connection from the Doar Prairie site to the Nature Center site across the Willow River using trails under the bridge on BUS 64 and the bridge itself to cross without traveling on the busy BUS 64 roadway in the area. Final paving and landscaping along the trail will occur in 2021.

The City anticipates working with the Pathway Committee to use WisCorp teams in 2021 to assist with maintenance on the Willow River Water Trail.

On June 1, 2020, the Historic Stillwater Lift Bridge opened to bicycle and pedestrian traffic completing the entire 4.7 mile Loop Trail which is a part of the St. Croix River Crossing project. The Trails Coalition partnered with New Richmond's Pathway organization in 2019 to create a map leading from the Loop Trail in the Town of St. Joseph through the Town and Village of Somerset, the Town of Richmond and into the City of New Richmond. The project goal was to have a trail map/brochure letting Loop Trail visitors know that there are places to visit *Beyond the Loop* (the eventual name of

St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trail Coalition
2021 Annual Report for 2020

Appendix C – Highway 64 Trail Corridor Committee White Paper Report

the committee) in Wisconsin. The map was completed in early 2020, in the early spring St. Croix County placed signs along the route for bicyclists to use and brochures were distributed in multiple locations hoping for at least some distribution in spite of the pandemic situation. Anecdotal reports showed strong usage of the on-road trails during the warm months of 2020.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

With the established base of knowledge in place and with approval of the county's updated bike and pedestrian plan, the Committee intends to continue quarterly/semiannual meetings to keep all members apprised of each community's plans so preparations to support those plans as a group initiative can be made as proposals come forward.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Laine Belter
Susan Heuiser, Chairperson
André Johnson, Vice Chairperson

Kyle Lindstrom
Jim Peirson
Jim Remington
Tim Witzmann

Mark Vanasse serves as minute taker but is not a member of the Committee.