

**MINUTES St. Croix Bike & Ped Trails Coalition Board of Directors
Virtual Meeting via Zoom- January 13, 2021, 6:30 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER – André Johnson, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC NOTICE – The agenda was posted at the Town of Somerset and on the Coalition website.

ROLL CALL - Board members present were Mark Gherty, Susan Heuiser, André Johnson, Pam Kaiser, Kyle Lindstrom, Paul McGinnis and Mark Vanasse. Board member Dave Mandel as well as alternates Andrew Lamers and Brandi Popenhagen were absent. Also present were Ben Heuiser, Janet Lindstrom and Tim Witzmann.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA – A **motion** (McGinnis, Kyle Lindstrom) to adopt the agenda as presented. **Carried** with no opposition.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Opportunity for comments on subjects not on the agenda when recognized by the presiding officer. Witzmann reported details about St. Croix National Golf Course approaching the Town of Somerset for the approvals necessary to build a future ski slope on the property. Entrance to a planned future trail along the Landing Hill portion of Hwy 64 is a part of that discussion. There are some ownership issues that need to be more clearly defined to assure there is room for a bike trail there. The Somerset Town Board is in favor of that future trail and intends to keep a path open on the cul-de-sac to allow that trail to be constructed in the future.

Susan Heuiser reported on a discussion with a well credentialed individual interested in volunteering relevant services for the Coalition. She will attend the February 10, 2021, Board meeting to visit with the group.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES – November 11, 2020 – A **motion** (Kaiser, Gherty) to approve the November 11, 2020, minutes. **Carried** with no opposition.

REPORTS - from subcommittees and/or individuals about information gathered for the Board of Directors Communications Committee – Gherty reported the committee hadn't met since November so nothing formal to report except the fundraising efforts. Susan Heuiser reported the fundraising monetary amounts, the number of memberships that were received up to December 31, 2020 and that those moneys came in via solicitation on email distribution lists, Facebook posts and the web page. Other marketing ideas are needed if further funding marketing is done. **Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, February 2, 2021**, for more in-depth discussion.

Financial Report - Vanasse discussed details of the revenue and disbursement sides of the statement. There were no questions.

Healthier Together – McGinnis reported the Library Backpack program has backpacks in 24 libraries in Pierce and St. Croix Counties. Pierce County 2021 park passes are in place; still working on St. Croix County park passes. Libraries report good usage of the backpacks despite the Covid 19 library diminished hours with many repeat users.

Hwy 64 Trail Corridor Committee – Susan Heuiser reported this committee hasn't met since spring of 2020 and likely won't meet again until warm weather allows outside meetings in the spring of 2021. There is lots going on in the corridor especially on the New Richmond end of the trail.

Pathway – Susan Heuiser reported lots going on in the New Richmond area as follows: 1) A disc golf course is being added to the outdoor recreation options in the City – likely in 2021, 2) New trails connecting the Nature and Center and the Doar Prairie under the Hwy 64 bridge is complete with paving to be finished in the spring of 2021, 3) The railroad car transfer station in the Town of Richmond is a completed contract.

Beyond the Loop – Susan Heuiser reported there are changes in signage required at the Doar Prairie juncture of this trail because of new construction. St. Croix County and the City will determine signing in the spring. This change will also require sticker placements on the remaining brochures to reflect the changes.

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Lift and Loop – Susan Heuser has not contacted Stillwater and MnDOT officials yet because pandemic issues still unknown will determine whether this celebration of the Historic Stillwater Lift Bridge event will take place at the beginning of June 2021

Friends Groups' Information – Gherty and Susan Heuser discussed meetings with several *friends groups* as an informational gathering task to begin to consider organization documents for friends groups the Coalition may work on in the near future.

Others that may be available – Johnson reported still no contact with a mostly online WITC college. He wondered whether the Daybreak Rotary would be amenable to purchasing the bike racks in the interest of getting racks in place sooner. Gherty will check because the grant was written with the emphasis on partnering with local businesses. Kaiser then wondered whether Osceola High School's Tech Ed class could create these racks. Johnson will talk to the Tech Ed teacher to determine if that's a possibility.

CONFIRMATION OF EMAIL VOTE

The Question: Should the Coalition rejoin the SCC EDC at the \$100 annual membership fee?

Those Responding Yes were Mark Gherty, Susan Heuser, André Johnson, Pam Kaiser, Andrew Lamers (Alternate), Kyle Lindstrom, and Paul McGinnis.

Those Not Responding were Dave Mandel, Brandi Popenhagen (Alternate) and Mark Vanasse. A **motion** (Gherty, McGinnis) to confirm this electronic vote. **Carried** with no opposition.

ACTION TAKEN: Authorization was made to rejoin the St. Croix County Economic Development Corporation at the \$100 annual membership rate.

ITEMS for discussion and/or action

1. Approval of Final 2020 Financial Report – See discussion above in *Reports*. Because this is the year end financial report that will go in the Annual Report, a **motion** (Kyle Lindstrom, Kaiser) to approve the 2020 year-end financial statement. **Carried** with no opposition.
2. Approval of 2021 Budget – Vanasse discussed the various categories of revenues and disbursements and amounts in each category. There were no changes to the proposal. A **motion** (Kaiser, McGinnis) to approve the budget as presented. **Carried** with no opposition.
3. Contribution to Bike Repair Station at New Richmond Library – Following discussion about the particulars of this request, a **motion** (Gherty, Vanasse) to contribute \$500 to the bike repair station at the Library in New Richmond. **Carried** with no opposition.
4. Membership Dues and Donations Update – Vanasse provided information that about half of the membership joiners also donated a sum of money to the Trails Coalition. There was also discussion about creating an online way to register as a member or to donate. He will have information available at the February Communications Committee on February 2, 2021, for consideration.
 - Possible Waiver of Membership Dues – Following discussion, the Board waived the membership fee requirement for a Village of Somerset representative to be a member of a Trails Coalition Committee.
5. Union Pacific Railroad Trestle Property – Gherty discussed several new areas that are being pursued for this project, i.e. organizing people who have indicated an interest in the project, seeking a variety of funding sources for when a fund raising effort to purchase the property is possible, etc.
 - Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Parameters – In particular, the possibility of filing a RTCA application in 2021 has largely lost its momentum for lack of collaboration among the four governmental organizations that own property around the railroad trestle. Following discussion among the group, there was general consensus that the Trails Coalition should pursue other ways to assist with this project until such a time as the organizations are ready to actively cooperate with an

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outside assistance program. Susan Heuser will send a message to the organization detailing that change in emphasis for the Trails Coalition.

- Ramifications of Exceeding Grant Moneys/Donations in Excess of \$50,000 for 2021 – As conversations with friends’ groups ensued, it came to light that many of them file their own yearly IRS documents even when their donations exceed \$50,000 and there was encouragement that the Trails Coalition had the capability of doing the same without incurring a large cost.
- Friends Group Organization for UP RR Project – Following discussion about particulars, there was general consensus that the thrust of the Trail Coalition’s involvement in the Union Pacific railroad project should shift to organizing interested parties and creating a friends group for the property.

6. Others – No other items were presented.

7. Set next meeting date – February 10, 2021 or Other – **The next meeting was set for February 10, 2021.**

ITEMS FOR NEXT BOARD of DIRECTORS AGENDA – Membership Dues and Donations Update, UP RR Project Update

ITEMS FOR NEXT COALITION AGENDA – None at this time.

ADJOURNMENT – A **motion** (Gherty, McGinnis) to adjourn. **Carried** at ~8:15 p.m. with no opposition.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Heuser, Secretary