

MINUTES St. Croix Bike & Ped Trails Coalition Board of Directors

Somerset Library, October 12, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

Items in Italics were added after the agenda was published

CALL TO ORDER – Mark Vanasse, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

ROLL CALL - Board members present were Mark Gherty Susan Heuser, Pam Kaiser, Kyle Lindstrom, Paul McGinnis and Mark Vanasse. Board member Dave Mandel was absent. Bob Gunther (7 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.), Village of Somerset, Ben Heuser, and Tim Witzmann (after 7 p.m.) were also present

ADOPTION OF AGENDA – A **motion** (Lindstrom, Kaiser) to adopt the agenda as presented. An amendment to take Bob Gunther’s comments when he arrived was added and approved. Amended motion **Carried** with no opposition.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Opportunity for comments on subjects not on the agenda when recognized by the presiding officer. There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES – August 31, 2022 – A **motion** (Lindstrom, Kaiser) to approve the August 13, 2022, minutes as presented. **Carried** with no opposition.

REPORTS - from subcommittees and/or individuals about information gathered for the Board of Directors
Communications Committee – In Witzmann’s absence, Susan Heuser reported possibilities for future outreach plans are on hold waiting for clearer definition of several project.

Financial Report – Vanasse discussed the monthly report which contained some format changes. There were no questions.

Healthier Together – McGinnis indicated the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is complete. It provides guidance for the group for the next 2 years. He will forward the entire report to the group.

Hwy 64 Trail Corridor Committee – Susan Heuser indicated a meeting before the end of October of the group to review the status of trails and TAP grant awards along the corridor.

Pathway – Susan Heuser reported on the Cycling Without Age Tri-Shaw program in place in New Richmond to provide people who would like to experience a bike ride an opportunity to make an appointment for a *pilot* to drive them to a destination of their choice. The vehicle is an ebike with a seat in front of the bike rider for 2 passengers. New Richmond currently has 2 tri-shaws and is looking at the possibility of purchasing two more for the city. There are currently 17 trained pilots and an active list of people signing up for rides. There were other updates, most scheduled for next year, in an active trail program in the city.

Beyond the Loop – Susan Heuser reported that, after discussion with various interested parties, a County Board member will discuss the misplaced signs issue County personnel hoping to get the signage more accurate in several areas along the trail.

Autumn Trek/RVT – Gherty reported he placed signs in preparation for the ride and then participated in the event. He reported changed routes this year and another fine event.

Middle St. Croix Valley Regional Trail – Susan Heuser reported on work in progress in Washington County for creating a Master Plan for a trail from the Boom Site (located along Hwy 95 several miles north of the City of Stillwater) all the way to downtown Afton generally along the St. Croix River bluffs of Hwy 95. Plans are in the preliminary stages and input is being sought.

Wisconsin Healthy Community Summit – Kaiser had attended this 2 day conference reporting many interesting and helpful sessions about trail/outdoor recreation issues and how they contribute to the overall health of a community.

Others that may be available – Several other reports were available as detailed below.

- Susan Heuser indicated two of the organization’s domain name renewals would occur in October with the amount being less than \$50 for both renewals.
- Gherty indicated he will attend a tourism workshop in Polk County on October 13th as a representative of the Hudson Chamber of Commerce’s Tourism Committee and bring back information from that gathering.

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ITEMS for discussion and/or action

1. Village of Somerset TAP Grant Information – Bob Gunther – Gunther discussed a map showing the planned trail improvements to an area defined by WisDOT’s 2023 construction project on STH 35, specifically, down Church Hill, turning at the Dairy Queen and proceeding toward the STH 64 junction to New Richmond. The TAP grant moneys will be spent to funnel traffic toward the off-road trails being constructed by WisDOT to create greater safety for people, i.e. walkers and bikers, using non-motorized methods of transportation to reach destinations in the Village. He also detailed some of the challenges to receiving a TAP award after many tries.
2. Memorial to André Johnson – Vanasse discussed items to be pursued with a committee of Somerset people about several possibilities for a memorial for Johnson. A meeting will be set for later in October to work on specific details.
3. Bike Rack Initiative – Susan Heuser reported contact with the Camp YMCA on-site person who hopes to have concrete poured by the end of October so a bike rack can be installed on the property.
4. Union Pacific Railroad Trestle Project – Gherty reported on a gathering of regional Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) employees at the trestle site. The RTCA staff person working with the stakeholders for the project had brought them as a part of their annual meeting to see the property and brainstorm solutions based on their experiences in other locations in the 13 state National Park Service region. Gherty reported very positive feedback from the group and perhaps more to come.
5. Outreach – long and short term – Witzmann wondered about approaching River Valley Trails to see whether there’s interest in working toward common goals. It was agreed that one of the principals should be approached about that possibility. He also wondered about the possibility of an Economic Summit. Gherty has been in contact with St. Croix County’s Economic Development Corporation’s (SCC EDC) executive director who is enthusiastic about a spring event. It was agreed that action should wait until Gherty attends a Polk County Tourism gathering on October 13th before determining how to proceed.
6. Economic Summit – Gherty indicated the Executive Director of the SCC EDC believes the spring of 2023 would be a good time to gather local government officials and other stakeholders to highlight the benefits trail construction brings to communities. A similar previous event was canceled just as the pandemic began. Contact will be made soon to begin that discussion/planning.
7. Others – There were other issues discussed and acted on as follows.
 - The group agreed it was good to meet in person again and that, barring complications, that should be the intent moving forward.
 - The group agreed that the online meeting capabilities provided by *Zoom* software was still valuable to the organization. Ultimately, a **motion** (Lindstrom, Gherty) to change the Zoom purchase agreement to a yearly fee. **Carried** with no opposition.
8. Set next meeting date – November 9, 2022 – Next meeting date set for **November 9, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. at the Somerset Library.**

ITEMS FOR NEXT BOARD of DIRECTORS AGENDA – Memorial to André Johnson, Union Pacific Railroad Trestle Project, Economic Summit, Outreach – long and short term, 2023 Budget

ITEMS FOR NEXT COALITION AGENDA - Nothing at this time.

ADJOURNMENT – A **motion** (Lindstrom, Gherty) to adjourn. **Carried** with no opposition at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Heuser, Secretary