

**MINUTES St. Croix Bike & Ped Trails Coalition Board of Directors**  
**Town of Somerset Town Hall, 748 HWY 35, Somerset, Wisconsin and Via Zoom**  
**October 14, 2020, 6:30 p.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER** - André Johnson, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at ~ 6:30 p.m.

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

**ROLL CALL** – Board members present in person were Susan Heuser, André Johnson, Pam Kaiser, Kyle Lindstrom and Mark Vanasse as well as Ben Heuser and Janet Lindstrom. Board members present via *Zoom* were Mark Gherty and Paul McGinnis as well as William Johnson from Polk County.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA** – A **motion** (Kyle Lindstrom, Kaiser) 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. Janet Lindstrom reported the Town of St. Joseph Nature Preserve has begun to develop trails on the property. The 80 acre property has a parking lot for 5 or 6 cars, approximately 2 miles of non-motorized trails, and can be accessed via Valley View Road. There is hunting allowed on the Preserve so she cautioned visitors be sure to wear blaze orange while on the property.

William Johnson a trail advocate from Polk County attended to share some trail news. **1)** He has been appointed to the Governor’s non-motorized trail council. That group meets quarterly, gets information from WisDOT and WisDNR and he will put the Trails Coalition on the January virtual meeting list. **2)** Polk County received a WisDOT Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) grant award to develop a Bike & Ped plan connecting to all the surrounding counties, with St. Croix County connecting to the south. **3)** The new state WisDNR trails coordinator is officed in Hayward and becoming familiar with the area trails. **4)** He invited St. Croix trail enthusiasts to join the Friends of the Gandy Dancer and Stower Seven Lakes organizations. **5)** The Gandy Dancer October meeting is cancelled.

McGinnis indicated he and Jill Berke, Town of Troy Parks Board Chairperson, along with two other Troy residents met with St. Croix County Community Development staff regarding trails in the Town. Indications from the County were that the County has several trails in the Town planned for signage that will likely go up in the spring of 2021. Those signs along with work in the City of Hudson at Hanley Road and the Town of Hudson will include Troy in a loop that connects River Falls and Hudson.

**APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES** – September 9, 2020 – A **motion** (Vanasse, Kaiser) to approve the September 9, 2020, minutes as submitted. **Carried** with no opposition.

**REPORTS** - from subcommittees and/or individuals about information gathered for the Board of Directors Communications Committee – Gherty reported on a September 14<sup>th</sup> gathering regarding visioning for the Union Pacific Railroad Trestle Property and surrounding properties. Board members in attendance at that meeting thanked Gherty for an excellent job of handling the meeting and the questioners in attendance.

Financial Report – Vanasse discussed the October financial report. There were no questions.

Healthier Together – McGinnis reported the Physical Activity group is talking about the Library Backpack program and how to secure St. Croix County Park passes for the 2021 park season. In addition, a trail activity map of the St. Croix Valley area in both MN and WI created by Health Partners for kids was placed on the Trail Coalition’s web site as well as included in other organizations’ outreach tools.

Pathways – Susan Heuser discussed a number of trail projects being completed in the New Richmond area, some to be completed this fall and some to be constructed in 2021. A large portion of the work is around the Nature Center and Doar Prairie portions of the City located in the areas surrounding Business Highway 64 and County Road A juncture.

Beyond the Loop – Susan Heuser discussed discussion at the Pathway October meeting about placing more signs and perhaps brochure holders at the turn to Somerset and at the end of the trail in New Richmond.

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Suggestions were to add an arrow pointing to New Richmond at the end of the trail for people unfamiliar with the area.

Others that may be available

Bike Rack Initiative - Johnson reported WITC classes are currently mostly online. However, the welding lab is open. He continues to be in contact with welding instructors to see when creation of the racks would be possible.

**ITEMS for discussion and/or action**

1. Goals and Objectives Update – Gherty suggested this topic be moved to next month. General consensus among Board members concurred.
  - Framing – Defines Context
  - Narrative – Telling the Coalition Story
2. Fund Raisers/Membership Dues in 2021 – Vanasse reviewed a document containing the history of what the Coalition has done over the last seven years as it pertains to creating a flyer containing membership fees to join the Trails Coalition in 2021. He suggested a \$30 membership fee, statement about what the money would be used for and methods of collecting the funds. More discussion at the Communications Committee will further develop the brochure.
3. Go Daddy ownership issues – Susan Heuser discussed the costs of owning 4 domain names and maintaining a web site and methods of paying for same. Currently all costs are paid through 2023 so further action will take place closer to the time renewal is required.
4. Purchase of Zoom – Susan Heuser discussed the monthly and yearly costs associated with a Zoom membership that allows more than a 40 minute meeting. General consensus was to purchase the package at a monthly rate. Heuser will sign the Coalition up.
5. UP RR Project Issues – Gherty led the discussion about the multiple prongs of the Coalition’s activity regarding this issue indicating considerable coordination between stakeholders is required. He also discussed connections made to the National Park Service (NPS), retired NPS employees, and associated organizations concerned with the St. Croix scenic river issues. He indicated strong interest and strong support from these organizations as well as several helpful referrals the Coalition is pursuing. Some of the critical issues were discussed as seen below.
  - Ownership of RR Trestle Property – Identifying an owner for any project that might occur on the property is a high priority.
  - Fiscal Agent for Grant Awards and Gifts – Identifying a fiscal agent to manage any grant or donation money is also a priority.
  - Use of UP Right of Way Surrounding Active RR Line – Filing an application with the Union Pacific to determine whether the active railroad line Right of Way could be used in any plan that develops for the property will determine the final details of any plan undertaken.
  - Use of Coalition Grant Writing Capabilities – Could exceed \$50,000/year simple reporting limit – Concern continues to be an issue regarding any money the Coalition might attain through grants or donations for this project and how it affects the financial filings for the organization. Gherty indicated no decision is required at this point in time.
6. Others – No other items were presented.
7. Set next meeting date – November 11, 2020 or Other – The next meeting was scheduled for November 11, 2020.

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**ITEMS FOR NEXT BOARD of DIRECTORS AGENDA** – Goals and Objectives Update, Fund Raisers/Membership Dues for 2021, UP RR Trestle and Property

**ITEMS FOR NEXT COALITION AGENDA** – None presented at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT** – A **motion** (Vanasse, Kyle Lindstrom) to adjourn. **Carried** at ~ 8:00 p.m. with no opposition.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Susan Heuiser, Secretary