

Recreational Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015

Committee Members Present: Karen Mulari (C), Larry Knutson, Ben Grimsley, Lonnie Neuner, Hank Ludtke, Steve Lindow, Del Bergseth, Katherine Warren, Dennis Hopman

Staff Present: Guy Fischer

Audience/Guest Participation Per Agenda: James Olson, Mark Fritz, Ryan Mathisrud, John Vaida, Willis Mattison

1. Chair Welcome/Introductions:
 - April Meeting Minutes approved; Ludtke motion, Lonnie 2nd – motion carried.
 - June Agenda approved; Lonnie motion, 2nd Hopman – motion carried
2. Open Forum: -
3. Heartland Trail Update:
 - Frazee to DL: James Olson provided update – he had a meeting with Frazee reps (Ludtke/Jonathan Smith) to discuss trail routing near Frazee along Co. Rd. 10. Discussion items: Preliminary layout/design, offsets from road, maintenance, drainage ditches, permanent/temporary easements (acquisition issues). Urban design may be called for to reduce need for easements, but brings trail closer to road which creates other issues in particular as it relates to snowmobile traffic. Increased cost is also a factor per areas which would incorporate more urban design elements into the trail development. Will be providing their recommendations to the Heartland group meeting on July 6th.
 - Preliminary route design/funding discussion: Fischer reported on recent meeting in Fergus Falls hosted by Clay County (Dan Farnsworth, Metro Cog) where discussion centered on next steps associated with preliminary design/scope (Hawley to Buffalo State Park and/or from Clay County line to Moorhead. Clay has \$100,000 in federal funds and requested using \$20,000 in DNR bonding funds as a 20% match to the federal funds. Approx. \$85,000 put aside for preliminary design; At the meeting Fischer had expressed interest in utilizing remaindered funds to do preliminary design from the Clay/Becker County line to LP-Audubon-Detroit Lakes, Frazee to Wolf Lake, Wolf Lake to Navillus Rd. and Park Rapids to Itasca; trail segments in which preliminary design has not yet been completed. The idea would be to utilize the remaining funds to hire a consultant similar to what had been done between Park Rapids and Navillus Rd. Ryan Mathisrud (Park Rapids) was on hand and expressed his interest in bringing the Heartland Trail west and also connecting the Heartland Trail to Itasca State Park. Ludtke noted the help that legislators all along the Heartland Trail can provide. Fischer sought support from the RAC as precursor to discussing the proposal at the Heartland Trail meeting on July 6th. It was the general consensus of the RAC that this was a good idea and they expressed their unanimous support for this effort to proceed.

4. Mt. View & Status of IMBA study (International Mt. Bike Assoc.- Detroit Mt. funded) and next steps

- Mark Fritz spoke to the IMBA study; Detroit Mt. provided \$20,000 for development of a Master Plan which is exploring various criteria as part of assessing the potential for ride center status/eventual IMBA certification within 25-30 miles of Detroit Mt./Mt. View. Noted other areas that he had reviewed such as Copper Harbor and Bentonville that had incorporated mountain biking. The master plan would be completed in late June and Mark expressed interest in providing a presentation to the RAC at its next meeting (July) and in working together (“join us in our effort”).

Discussion of Mt. View and Detroit Mt. submitting a single application to the Greater Mn Regional Parks and Trails Commission (GMRPTC) for grant funding the end of September. Fischer noted high ranking of Detroit Mt. vs. medium ranking of Mt. View as part of last years regional designation request to the GMRPTC and the feedback from the GMRPTC which sought to eliminate redundancy and questioned the proximity of Mt. View to Detroit Mt. (2 regional parks?) and wanted more language as to how the two entities were going to work together. Mulari mentioned the economic benefits of the recreation development. Ludtke noted the regional draw that this will create. Bergseth noted that thought would have to be given as to the public and private aspects of the two recreation areas. Knutson expressed concerns about paying for recreation at Mt. View and that this would need to be considered further (Grimsley concurred). General consensus of the RAC was that it made sense to work together as part of developing the GMRPTC request.

5. Shell Lake Block – Meeting in Shell Lake Block

- Discussion focused on Shell Lake Block meeting minutes; Mulari – any comments from those RAC members that attended? Neuner – pretty open to the discussion (participants). Mulari – consensus in general was to not sell the property; discussion of references to Mary Yellowhead and Knutson noted hearing from a constituent that found the road to tough to get to his hay fields. Vaida provided more information about current condition of Mary Yellowhead and maintenance needs (fill mud holes, smooth out ruts). The general RAC consensus was to get it done; do the blading. Item will be brought up for discussion at next NRM meeting.

Deer Stands on the SLB (permanent, temporary) were also discussed with the consensus being that a more county wide policy would need to be explored. Also discussion about hunting in the SLB and that it does not mix with recreation; signage would be needed to increase awareness. Mattison wondered why did the RAC engage in this particular outreach process for the Shell Lake Block. Bergseth wondered why the meeting was focused on township residents when there were 30,000 people in the County. Mulari noted that it was not just Shell Lake Township residents, but that efforts were made to increase participation from outside the township as part of mailing efforts (meeting notice also posted on County website), but that it was important to talk to people who lived nearby this area because a change in use affected them and that it was a good thing to bring them to the table and talk.

Fischer noted other opportunities for creating connections (Wolf Lake to SLB and NCT) that would come out as part of the IMBA study. Mattison expressed interest and wondered what the next steps might be relative to the SLB opportunity area and offered to make some planning tools available. Discussion about the planning process and next steps ensued. Knutson expressed an interest in sharing the SLB meeting minutes with commissioners to solicit their comments. Additional discussion centered on development of a recreation plan, prior Board interest in developing a master trails plan, camping was discussed in relation to the SLB and elsewhere in the County – that there were opportunities for making connections and that the planning effort should be more county wide. A motion was made to recommend Development of County wide recreation planning (Bergseth motion; Neuner 2nd) Motion passed unanimously .

6. Next RAC meeting scheduled for July 21st at 4 p.m.
7. Meeting Adjourned.

DRAFT