

PECATONICA PRAIRIE TRAIL COMMISSION

**Friday, December 13, 2024
Pecatonica Public Library
400 W. 11th Street
Pecatonica, Illinois
9:30 a.m.**

Call to Order

1. Roll Call -
2. Approval of Minutes – September 20, 2024 (Tim B.)
3. Presentation –
4. Treasurer’s Report – (Steve E.)
5. Special Accounts Report – (Steve E.)
6. Legislation – None
7. Reports –
 - a. Staff –
 - i. Winnebago County – (Carlos M.)
 - ii. Stephenson County – (Steve E.)
 - b. Publicity / Marketing
 - i. PPT Website
 - ii. Trail Brochure Update
8. Old Business –
9. New Business –
 - a. Next PPT Meeting – Friday, March 21, 2025
10. Adjourn / Recess –

PECATONICA PRAIRIE TRAIL COMMISSION

Friday, September 20, 2024
Pecatonica Public Library
400 W. 11th Street
Pecatonica, Illinois
9:30 a.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order Meeting called to order at 9:37

1. Roll Call

Directors Present: Tim Bragg, Alt. Delegate, Rockford Park District; Steve Ehlbeck, Delegate, Freeport Park District (Retired) Carlos Molina, Delegate, Winnebago County Highway Department, Rob Boyer, Delegate, City of Freeport and Jim Gastel, Delegate, Stephenson County.

Others Present: Eric Moe, Mike Brien, Robert Hunter, Janet Klinger, Carla Vassmer and Greg Vassmer.

2. Approval of Minutes – June 21, 2024

Rob Boyer moved, Carlos Molina seconded approval of the meeting minutes from the June 21, 2024, meeting. Motion passed.

3. Presentation-

None

4. Treasurer's Report – (Steve E.)

Steve Ehlbeck distributed the report which reflected a combined operational balance (General Account balance and Special Accounts balance) of \$53,726.19 through August 2024. The Operational Budget currently stood at \$12,531.61 Rob Moyer moved, Carlos Molina seconded a motion to place the Treasurer's report on file. Motion passed.

5. Special Accounts Reports

See meeting agenda item #4.

6. Legislation – (24-003) Resolution Electing the Pecatonica Prairie Trail Commission Officers for FY 2025

Steve Ehlbeck opened the floor for nominations. Steve noted the current slate of officers (Steve Ehlbeck, Chair; Carlos Molina, Vice-Chair; Michelle Richter, Treasurer and Tim Bragg, Secretary) all agreed to continue in their current role. The resolution was up for Commission approval today, as discussion occurred at the June 2024 meeting. Steve Ehlbeck closed the floor due to a lack of additional nominations. Carlos Molina moved, Jim Gastel seconded approval of the resolution. The approval was affirmed by a unanimous roll call vote.

7. Reports

a. Staff

Winnebago County (Carlos M.)

Winnebago County continues to address miscellaneous washouts along the trail. There's also a need to address the missing kiosk near Degarmo Trail. The trailhead in Pecatonica needs the map replaced. Six signs in various locations along the trail are also in need of

replacement. An inquiry was made as to any knowledge regarding the purpose of 4 x 8 concrete pads in in the Village of Winnebago (Commission had no knowledge regarding the purpose of said pads). The Commission discussed a need to follow up regarding the installation location for a bicycle repair station.

Rockford Park District (RPD) reminded the Commission of the pending RCP grant application (planning grant) for the RPD section of the trail. Staff believes this submittal will have more focus on existing barriers, health and wellness. Likewise, staff is not aware of any other agencies seeking funding (thereby reducing competition from other agencies). A Spring 2025 grant award notice is anticipated.

Issues continue regarding a resident adjacent to the trail. A brush pile and trailer may be encroaching into ComEd's right of way. ComEd may need to intervene as locale police have not demonstrated this a priority matter.

Stephenson County (Steve E.)

Work continues in attempting to negotiate a lease extension with ComEd (Stephenson County lease expires in 4-5 years). Staff anticipates a minimum of six months to negotiate/execute an updated lease. Other factors regarding a lease extension include aligning the lease extension with any future ITEP grant cycles. An ITEP grant award requires a minimum 20-year lease commitment. Staff noted a successful ITEP application will comprise of a combined engineering/phased construction.

The City of Freeport is working in conjunction with Highland College for a 4-mile walk/ride connections between several neighborhoods and commercial areas. Freeport has also completed some work under the Hancock Bridge and mowing.

Freeport and Winnebago County staff also discussed the possible reuse of a pedestrian bridge within the Stephenson County section of trail (Winnebago County has a pedestrian bridge in storage available for possible reuse).

Publicity/Marketing

Website issues persist with Winnebago County staff having comments not showing up in their email. The current configuration also is not allowing an ability to reply to posted comments. The Commission will need to reach out to the webpage vendor (Astute Web Group) regarding the webpage functionality.

8. Old Business-

Commissioners revisited the topic of animal driven sleds/carriages. Commissioners discussed the possibility of a prohibition along the trail. Sumner Park Staff noted seeing an individual with a wheeled carriage recently. Other vehicles of concern include pedestrian driven "party bus"- a hay wagon with one person steering and patrons powering the device via pedaling. A concern regarding the "party bus" lies in the alcohol consumption. Both the size of these vehicles, along with the alcohol consumption with a party bus gave pause as to current trail signage. During the discussion, however, there was talk of existing signage stating no alcohol was permitted.

9. New Business

None. The next meeting will take place on December 13, 2024.

10. Adjourn / Recess

The meeting adjourned at 10:41 am.