

PECATONICA PRAIRIE PATH COMMISSION

Friday, September 21, 2018
Pecatonica Public Library
400 W. 11th Street
Pecatonica, Illinois
9:30 a.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order Meeting called to order at 9:32

1. Roll Call

Directors Present: Steve Ehlbeck, Freeport Park District (Retired); Dennis Carr, Delegate, City of Freeport; Tim Bragg, Alt. Delegate, Rockford Park District; Mike Holan, Delegate, Forest Preserves of Winnebago County; Jim Gastel, Delegate Stephenson County, and Claire Webb, Delegate, Stephenson County

Other Staff Present: Carlos Molina, Winnebago County Highway Department; Others Present: James Brechlin, Michelle Cunningham, Vivian Gaines, Merrill Hubbel, Janet Klinger, Rick Sager and Garelt Stahl.

2. Approval of Minutes – June 15, 2018 (Tim B.)

A correction was made to denote Dennis Carr as Delegate for the City of Freeport. Mike Holan moved; Clair Webb seconded approval of the minutes as amended from the June, 15 2018 meeting of the Pecatonica Prairie Path Commission. Motion passed.

3. Presentation

Merrill Hubbel, Winnebago Village Lion's Club, gave a presentation regarding a proposed bench donation, along the path. The Lion's Club is handling the bench construction/installation costs. The commission deferred to the Village of Winnebago (Vivian Gaines present) as to the bench location. Mike Holan also mentioned the commission consider having standards regarding the upkeep/maintenance of memorials/benches.

4. Treasurer's Report – (Claire W.)

Treasurer Claire Webb stated there were no transactions since the last meeting. The commission account was switched to a money market account (to avoid monthly service charges; the account interest rate is forthcoming). Mike Holan moved; Tim Bragg seconded approval to place the Treasurer's report on file. Motion passed.

5. Legislation

(18-003) RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE PECATONICA PATH COMMISSION OFFICERS FOR FY 2019.

Steve Ehlbeck stated the current slate of officers (Steve Ehlbeck, Chair; Mike Holan, Vice-Chair; Tim Bragg, Secretary, and Clair Webb, Treasurer) were polled and all were willing to continue in their current positions. Steve Ehlbeck opened the meeting for any additional nominations. Steve Ehlbeck then open the meeting for a call of additional nominations. Hearing no additional nominations, Steve Ehlbeck closed the call for nominations. Mike Holan moved, Claire Webb seconded approval of a Resolution to approve the election of officers for FY 2019 (continuation of current slate of officers). Motion passed.

6. Reports –

a. **Staff**

Winnebago County (Carlos M.)

County staff will discuss under the “Maintenance Report” section of the agenda.

Commissioners also discussed the potential of an additional trailhead and additional poster size trail maps on aluminum sheets. Winnebago County Highway staff will get pricing and survey the commissioners to proceed.

Stephenson County

IDOT has agreed to a path realignment and the City of Freeport is currently working with a property owner to secure an easement (additional easements may be necessary). The project is currently scheduled for a Spring 2019 bid letting.

ComEd Bridge Issues

The Commission has shared maps/exhibits with ComEd, but has no further updates as to the construction schedule of ComEd or whether the bridges will have handrails.

b. **Publicity/Marketing:**

The recent meeting minutes/agenda are posted on the Commission’s website. The recent 5k charitable event was successful and the “Turkey Trot” will occur along the path in the fall.

c. **Maintenance Report:**

County Highway staff mowed an area (from the path underpass to the Stephenson County line). Winnebago County has also identified repairing a structure west of Conley Road as a 2019 project. Mr. Molina also commented the site restoration from the RRWRD project is substantially complete. Commissioners also discussed whether emergency contacts were listed for path users (Winnebago County path section lists Winnebago County Highway Department; Stephenson County needs to confirm the proper contact number). Rick Sager, path user, offered to volunteer to mow sections of the path. Carlos Molina stated liability issues of volunteers operating Highway Department equipment.

7. **Old Business**

a. Commissioners revisited the topic of using commission funds for trail maintenance expenses (funds were intended for common expenses, such as path amenities and marketing).

Discussions continued about drawing down funds and leaving a modest account balance; but suggestions arose as to have standards/policies rather than spending dollars on a case by case basis.

A suggested policy was approving an approved allotment per county (for example \$8-9,000 per county). Tim Bragg mentioned as to whether an allotment could be used to update the plans for the Rockford Park District section of the path. Mr. Bragg also mentioned about the initial goal of extending the path from the Rockford Park District endpoint (Liberty Park) and coordinating with the City of Rockford to ultimately connect to downtown Rockford/riverfront. He mentioned the recent citizen survey conducted by the Rockford Park District show paths as a priority. However, but no path in general was listed as a specific priority.

Rick Sager inquired as to whether the commission had a priority to extend the path towards downtown Freeport or downtown Rockford. He mentioned that with his past

experience in law enforcement (and investigating/responding to calls) he would not suggest extending the path east of Meridian Road. He stated no one will ride this section of the path and suggested this section of the path be “thrown out”.

Dennis Carr, citing Stephenson’s County project, stated engineering fees could easily reach into six figures. As such, the proposed allotment would not provide much assistance in terms of completing “shelf ready” plans.

- b. The Commission took action on installation of trail map signage in various locations along the path. Sign fabrication is approximately \$1,080; sign posts and labor installation is anticipated at approximately \$1,000. Mike Holan approved, Dennis Carr seconded, approval of paying the invoice in the amount of \$1,080, subject to receipt of the signs. Motion passed by roll call of all agencies.

8. New Business

Janet Klinger brought up discussion about discussion of historic signage along the path, such as signage denoting the former Interurban rail that ran along the path alignment. The Winnebago Village Historical society would be a potential resource in writing the sign content. Another potential amenity might be installing of exercise equipment/exercise stations at various locations along the path (possible naming/sponsorship opportunities by local health providers). Other possible funding sources included the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois. The commission noted amenities like these would require conversations with ComEd tied to the lease.

Discussion of said amenities could also tie into finalizing plans for a memorial to Mary Mohaupt.

9. Adjourn / Recess

The meeting adjourned at 11:14 am.