

# PECATONICA PRAIRIE TRAIL COMMISSION

Friday, March 17, 2023  
Pecatonica Public Library  
400 W. 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Pecatonica, Illinois  
9:30 a.m.

## MEETING MINUTES

### Call to Order Meeting called to order at 9:34

#### 1. Roll Call

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

Other Staff Present: Tracy Robinson & Andrew Pirrello, Winnebago County Highway Department. Others Present: Robert & Sharon Hunter, Dennis Seaton, Richard Backeberg, Burdette Andersen.

#### 2. Approval of Minutes – December 9, 2022

Rob Boyer moved, Jim Gastel seconded approval of the meeting minutes from the December 9, 2022, meeting. Motion passed.

#### 3. Presentation-

None. In lieu of a presentation, several members of the public were on hand to discuss exploring additional outlets to notify the public of upcoming commission meetings (news outlets, social media platforms, etc.). The discussion turned to comments regarding path maintenance. More specifically comments about surfacing (pea gravel) mowing and tree/brush clearing. Areas of concern were sections east of Berglund Road and sections near Blessingham Park. Commissioner Ehlbeck stated path responsibility is divided between the County and the individual town/villages. Andrew Pirrello, Winnebago County Highway Department, advised he would follow up with staff from his agency.

#### 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 \$53,497.67 through January 2023. Rob Boyer moved, Jim Gastel seconded a motion to place the Treasurer's report on file. Motion passed. The Commission also discussed an invoice in the amount of \$3,500 from Astute Web Group for webpage updates. Carlos Molina moved, Jim Gastel seconded, approval of payment in the amount of \$3,500 to Astute Web Group. Motion passed.

#### 5. Special Accounts Reports

See meeting agenda item #4.

6. **Legislation –**

**(23-001) RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE PECATONICA PRAIRIE TRAIL COMMISSION BUDGET FOR FY 2024, 2025 & 2026 (Final Vote at June 16, 2023 meeting).**

Steve Ehlbeck opened the meeting for discussion regarding the draft resolution. He stated no action was required from the commission at this time (vote to occur at the June 16, 2023, meeting). Steve Ehlbeck closed the discussion citing no further comments or questions.

7. **Reports**

a. **Staff**

**Winnebago County (Andrew P.)**

Mr. Pirrello stated the Winnebago County Highway Department is exploring QR codes in strategic locations along the path. The intent is to reduce the number of paper copies of the path, which at time contributes to litter. The QR code would also be a cost-effective means to address trail updates. The Commission and the public discussed key places to keep hard copies available (bike shops, trailheads, etc.) Mr. Ehlbeck asked agency representatives to check their current inventory of brochures on hand for public distribution.

**Stephenson County**

Mr. Ehlbeck expressed path connectivity heading east from Freeport towards Pecatonica have been on hold. The primary factors have been securing consensus among the public agencies in Stephenson County; the second issue has been the financial obligations for the path alignment “bump outs” ComEd mandates around their utility poles. Commissioners also discussed possible interim path extensions, (a potential extension near Farwell Bridge Road was discussed)

**Publicity/Marketing: PPT Website Upgrade Discussion**

Steve Ehlbeck presented an invoice to the Commission on behalf of the Freeport Park District. Freeport Park District is seeking reimbursement in the amount of \$52.28 to cover costs for the PPT website domain. Rob Boyer moved, Jim Gastel seconded, approval of reimbursing Freeport Park District in the amount of \$52.98. This was further affirmed by a unanimous roll call vote of agencies present (Stephenson County, Rockford Park District, Freeport Park District, City of Freeport and Winnebago County).

8. **Old Business-**

Tim Bragg informed the Commission that the Rockford Park District (RPD) did not receive funding through the *Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Discretionary Grant program*. He stated the Region 1 Planning Council received funding for their project regarding a rail study/relocation project in SW Rockford.

9. **New Business**

New business was covered under Presentation, but additional business included the Commission committing to going back and review past best practices in terms of coordinating volunteer efforts to assist with mowing along the trail.

10. **Adjourn / Recess**

The meeting adjourned at 10:38 am.