

PECATONICA PRAIRIE TRAIL COMMISSION

Friday, March 15, 2024
Pecatonica Public Library
400 W. 11th Street
Pecatonica, Illinois
9:30 a.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order Meeting called to order at 9:40

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, Jim Gastel, Delegate, Stephenson County.

Others Present: Richard Backeberg, Eric Moe, Mark Hazzard, Joey Dienberg, Al Hanson, Daniel Payette, Russell Kaney, Chad Insko, Carla Vassmer and Greg Vassmer.

2. Approval of Minutes – December 8, 2023

Carlos Molina moved, Jim Gastel seconded approval of the meeting minutes from the December 8, 2023, meeting. Motion passed.

3. Presentation-

None.

4. Treasurer's Report – (Carlos M.)

Steve Ehlbeck distributed the report which reflected a combined operational balance (General Account balance and Special Accounts balance) of \$53,701 through June 2024. The Operational Budget currently stood at \$12,507. Carlos Molina moved, Jim Gastel seconded a motion to place the Treasurer's report on file. Motion passed.

5. Special Accounts Reports

See meeting agenda item #4.

6. Legislation – (24-001) Resolution Establishing the Pecatonica Prairie Trail Commission Budget for FY 2025, 2026 & 2027

Carlos Molina initiated the discussion regarding the resolution. The resolution was up for Commission discussion today, and formal action at the June 2024 meeting. Mr. Molina also suggested the commissioners consider amending the resolution if needed to reflect potential projects (additional brochures, bike repair stand and website maintenance). Commissioners discussed a potential budget addendum for the June meeting to reflect some of the potential projects.

7. Reports

a. **Staff**

Winnebago County (Carlos M.)

Mr. Molina stated the Winnebago County Highway Department completed some repairs last fall and crews will be going out in the coming weeks for brush removal. County Highway staff will also be working with the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County to troubleshoot errors with the comment section of the website.

Village of Winnebago discussed Eagle Scout mile marker sign projects in several locations within the village. Village staff also discussed possible collaborations with Winnebago County Highway Department staff to utilize crushed asphalt road millings as an alternative trail surface material.

Mr. Bragg mentioned the Rockford Park District received communication indicating the RNC (Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods) grant application was not awarded funding. The funding was intended for preliminary engineering, to facilitate an updated Project Development Report.

Stephenson County

Stephenson County stakeholders met recently to discuss funding options (grant opportunities) for preliminary construction engineering. A PEL grant (public engagement grant) cycle opened, with grants applications due mid-April. A successful PEL grant award may lead to securing funding for construction at a later time. Stephenson County will try to seek 100% grant funding without a local match requirement (under the premise that Stephenson County may qualify as a distressed community).

Stephenson County also needs to work with ComEd regarding a lease extension to align with time needed for future path construction. Meetings to secure updated cost estimates are forthcoming to justify the funding requests.

Publicity/Marketing:

The Commission fielded inquiries as to the timeliness of responses to questions posted on the PPT website. Commissioners discussed checking in with the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County as to their frequency of monitoring the website. The Commission may need to consult with Eli Nicolosi, whose company created the Commission's webpage.

8. **Old Business-**

None.

9. **New Business**

Mark Hazard, Tri-County Snowmobile Alliance and thanked the Commission for the Commission's collaborative efforts with the snowmobile user group. Village of Winnebago staff also discussed recent installation of pet waste bins and a bench installation near Faulkner Road.

10. **Adjourn / Recess**

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.