

# PECATONICA PRAIRIE TRAIL COMMISSION

Friday, June 27, 2025  
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 9:35**

#### **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 and Rob Boyer, Delegate, City of Freeport.

Others Present: Eric Moe, Ernie Fuhr, Robert Hunter, Jack Heffern, Janet Klinger, Jacquie Olsen, Carla Vassmer and Greg Vassmer.

#### **2. Approval of Minutes – March 21, 2025**

Rob Boyer moved, Carlos Molina seconded approval of the meeting minutes from the March 21, 2025, 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). The Operational Budget currently stood at \$16,208.94; the Special Account Balance currently stood at \$41,194.58 Rob Boyer moved, Carlos Molina seconded a motion to place the Treasurer's report on file. Motion passed. The motion was further affirmed by a unanimous voice vote of all commissioners present.

#### **5. Special Accounts Reports**

See meeting agenda item #4.

#### **6. Legislation – (25-001) Resolution Establishing the Pecatonica Trail Commission Budget for FY 2026, 2027 & 2028.**

The Commission previously discussed the proposed resolution at the March 2025 meeting. Carlos Molina moved, Rob Boyer seconded approval of the resolution. Motion passed and was further affirmed by a unanimous roll call vote.

#### **(25-002) Resolution Establishing the Date, Time and Location of Each Meeting of the Pecatonica Trail Commission Budget for FY 2025.**

Carlos Molina moved, Rob Moyer seconded approval of the resolution. Motion passed.

#### **7. Reports**

**a. Staff**

**Winnebago County (Carlos M.)**

The Commission discussed mowing needs beyond the area from Hoisington Road to Sumner Park. Mowing is needed further west in addition to mowing the center of the trail. Matters are still unresolved/ongoing regarding the validity of an alleged trail access easement by an adjacent property owner (ComEd may need to weigh in on the matter).

The Commission discussed future volunteer opportunities (scraping the trail from the county line to Farwell Bridge Road to address 4-6" tire ruts). This matter would require additional discussion (including, but not limited to, details regarding the logistics of when/type of equipment would be utilized) prior to confirming this as a viable project.

**Stephenson County (Steve E.)**

Freeport/Stephenson County reported no plans for any significant design/construction at the present time. The uncertainty of ComEd's pole replacement initiative (coupled with approximately \$6-8 million projected costs) are factors for this pause. Freeport will replace as needed "trail under development" signs.

**Publicity/Marketing**

The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County was successful in making improvements to the website to improve readability.

Commissioners discussed numerous updates/revisions for the trail brochure (insets with sections of trails completed; complimentary recreation opportunities; agency contact information; bicycle sales/repair locations; local area attractions. The Commission will also seek out quotes for another printing of the brochure (anticipating a print job of 5,000 copies).

**8. Old Business-**

Rockford Park District was denied again for the RCP (Reconnecting Communities Pilot) grant. The current grant cycle was the last application cycle for the program. Rockford Park District will continue to pursue grant opportunities as they arise. The "State of the Trails" conditions inventory continues (R1 initiative). Staff will be placing tube counters along several paths in the Rockford regions to gather user counts).

The City of Freeport has an ongoing tree sapling project going on within the old Milwaukee Road right-of-way.

**9. New Business**

Jacquie Olsen, Winnebago Public Library, addressed the Commission regarding a proposed community literacy campaign. The "Storywalk" community project would consist of stands with interchangeable panels that would tell a story (and have the cross benefit of improving literacy and encouraging activity through walking). The Library's "Storywalk" will consist of 20 panels that will meander through the Village of Winnebago and eventually make their way alongside the Pec Prairie Trail. The Commission was supportive of the initiative and suggested a minimum 5-foot setback from the trail, development of a map/exhibit that could be placed on the Commission's website. Carlos Molina moved, Jim Gastel seconded approval to participate in the Storywalk initiative. Motion passed.

10. **Adjourn / Recess**

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 am.