

PECATONICA PRAIRIE TRAIL COMMISSION

**Friday, September 19, 2025
Pecatonica Public Library
400 W. 11th Street
Pecatonica, Illinois
9:30 a.m.**

MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order Meeting called to order at 9:34

1. Roll Call

Directors Present: Tim Bragg, Alt. Delegate, Rockford Park District; Carlos Molina, Delegate, Winnebago County Highway Department, Jim Gastel, Delegate, Stephenson County.

Others Present: Eric Moe, Ernie Fuhr, Al Hanson, Robert Hunter, Chad Insko, Russell Kaney, Janet Klinger, Neil Ritter, Carla Vassmer and Greg Vassmer.

2. Approval of Minutes – June 27, 2025

Jim Gastel moved, Tim Bragg seconded approval of the meeting minutes from the June 27, 2025, meeting. Motion passed.

3. Presentation-

None.

4. Treasurer's Report – (Steve E.)

Carlos Molina distributed the report (on behalf of Steve Ehlbeck). Mr. Molina commented on a recent expense (\$465) to cover costs for signs installed in Stephenson County-an expense for the General account. Jim Gastel moved; Tim Bragg seconded a motion to place the Treasurer's report on file. Motion passed.

5. Special Accounts Reports

No Special Account Reports-See meeting agenda item #4.

6. Legislation – (25-003) Resolution Electing the Pecatonica Trail Commission Officers for FY 2025.

Carlos Molina opened the discussion; noting that the current officers (Steve Ehlbeck Chair; Carlos Molina, Vice-Chair; Tim Bragg, Secretary and Michelle Richter, Treasurer) have all indicated a willingness to continue in their current roles.

No additional nominations were brought forward for discussion. Jim Gastel moved; Carlos Molina seconded a motion to retain the current slate of officers for FY 2025.

7. Reports

a. Staff

Winnebago County (Carlos M.)

Winnebago County Highway Department continues mowing and grading along the trail as staff time permits. ComEd has undertaken recent work that resulted in a temporary trail closure. Winnebago County was acknowledged earlier in the meeting for their role in a recent cleanup of materials along the trail (in addition to materials linked to a property owner adjoining the trail right of way)

Village of Winnebago likewise is undertaking various trail maintenance (pet station, filling holes, mowing, etc.) The *Storybook* project is still scheduled to move forward with the Winnebago Public Library. The bike repair station is still awaiting installation (likely installation along Benton Street).

Tim Bragg commented on recent communication with Ders Anderson, advocate for the Grand Illinois Trail (GIT). Mr. Anderson had communicated thoughts on discussing the GIT trail route as it exits Rock Cut State Park and continues east. Mr. Bragg said Rockford Park District (RPD) was open to discussion, but at the present time, RPD's priority would be looking at opportunities for RPD to complete the agency's section of the PPT.

The Commission and attendees also had general discussions of the need for the local villages/towns to assist with day-to-day trail maintenance (invasive weed control and periodic grading of the trail were specific items raised by regular trail users).

Stephenson County (Steve E.)

Jim Gastel mentioned efforts are still ongoing to make headway with completing additional trail sections. Efforts are underway to explore a smaller/incremental trail section (Route 20 bypass/bridge area near Farwell Bridge). Mr. Gastel believes efforts will need to start at the local municipality level while attempts continue to garner support for the trail from the Stephenson County Board.

Publicity/Marketing

Carlos Molina mentioned the updated trail brochures have been received and are being distributed to Commission agencies and other outlets.

8. Old Business-

The Commission acknowledged a second article authored by Greg Vassmer regarding the PPT. The article was recently published in The Gazette. Commissioners and the public also discussed a need for ongoing content/photos for the PPT website.

9. New Business

Neil Ritter, Village of Pecatonica Planning and Zoning Committee member, discussed opportunities for the village to be more involved in supporting trail initiatives.

10. Adjourn / Recess

The meeting adjourned at 10:51 am.