

Friends of the Blue Star Meeting

March 26, 2015

Present: Jeanne Van Zoeren, John Adams, Jim Sullivan, Clark Carmichael

1. The January, 2015 Minutes were approved as distributed.

2. Follow Up (January 2015 meeting)

-Data Management: Jeanne commented on the Data Base email John Adams sent on 12/14/14. She requested that under the heading of Volunteers that we add an Identifier called Committees (Standing and Ad Hoc) plus another called Bike Tour. Also, she requested that the Identifiers of Businesses and Individuals be added under the Prospect heading. Clark plans to focus on how to use the Access software program in April so that he can create an initial contact list per the Headings and Identifiers previously discussed.

-Easements: All of the easement research is done and legal descriptions of each property are being created. A monetary value will be assigned to each property and the Board will need to approve them. Our consultants will contact each property owner to provide them with this information per the prescribed procedure. The entire process should be completed in 3 months. Next step is right of way certification.

3. Treasurer's Report- John

- John reported that the Development Fund has a current balance of \$215,996 and the total with pledges is \$265,096.
- The Allegan County Community Foundation is the independent holder & Administrator of the Development Fund. They provide reports, handle donations, arrange for audits and as such; our donors know their gifts to the FOBST are in good care. For these services, the Allegan County Community Foundation recently proposed a fee structure of 1% per annum with a minimum annual fee of \$1,000 and a maximum of \$2,000. John

Adams recommended that we seek clarification. Jeanne will scan and send the proposed arrangement to John for his review.

- John recently purchased Intuit's QuickBooks software program that will help him with the accounting and other duties he performs as Treasurer.

4. Bike Tour Sponsorship – Clark

Grace Gilmore and Clark have been working with Jim Van Buren to update the materials that are needed to approach sponsors for this year's Bike Tour. We reviewed the Sponsorship Levels & Benefits form. Jeanne will contact Meijer to ask them to be the lead sponsor for the Tour this year. If they agree, we hope they will also be willing to display the Tour banner in the South Haven store. The banner will prominently recognize them and all of the other sponsors for this year's tour. The banner will also display the date of the Tour and contact information so as to increase ridership. With few exceptions, the Board members who worked with last year's sponsors have agreed to contact them again this year. Grace and Clark will start contacting other potential sponsors in the beginning of April. Our goal is to obtain sponsor commitments by mid to late May so that we can create the banner(s) for recognition and promotion.

5. Capital Campaign 2015 Work plan Draft

- Highlights of the discussion that ensued are as follows:
 - Individuals who contribute at least \$25k will receive art work from Cynthia McKean. Cynthia is currently working on (8) of these thank you gifts. Cynthia is also willing to complete some of the larger caricatures to raise funds but we would need to reimburse her for her costs. See minutes of January 2015 meeting for more details.
 - Given the proximity of Phase III to the Douglas/Saugatuck area and how the Trail will benefit them, we should focus our efforts on reaching out to potential donors that live there. We should meet with the leaders of the Saugatuck Area Business Association (Jim Petzing) and Visitor's bureau (Felicia Fairchild) to update them and seek their assistance. Also, we should contact members of the Women's Club (Jeanne to contact) &

Garden Club (possibly Sunny and/or Denise to contact) for help in doing community information sessions.

-Jeanne and Jim Sullivan will be making a presentation to the South Haven Chamber of Commerce in May.

5. President's Report – Jeanne

- Jeanne reported on a number of exchanges and a meeting with representatives from MDOT, DNR, and Hurley-Stewart (engineering firm handling construction) that occurred earlier this month. The goal of everyone's efforts was to address the outstanding requirements for the TAP application, i.e. - 1) determine the best way for the trail to go over Interstate 196 (share the Blue Star Hwy. Bridge south of Douglas) and 2) update the estimated costs for this crossing and the other components of the Trails' phase III. Overall, Jeanne thought everyone worked well with each other. The DNR staff continue to be positive and supportive of the trail. We may need to end somewhere between Fallen Leaf Trail and Maple Lane for Phase II depending upon the line construction costs.
- We discussed the pros and cons of increasing the Capital Campaign Goal. The DNR Trust application needs to be submitted by April 1, 2015.

Following lengthy discussion it was agreed that:

- (1) Jeanne will contact MDOT and the DNR to learn more about the grant process in terms how often we can apply and the timing implications of our decision.
- (2) John will update his numbers (new pledges and expenses) so as to provide the most accurate projection he can.
- (3) The decision about increasing the Capital campaign will be postponed so that Jeanne and John can get this information for the Board to consider at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM.

Next meeting: April 23, 2015, Thursday, 4:00 pm at Casco Township Hall