

**Friends of the Blue Star Trail
Board Meeting Summary
Thursday, July 21, 2016**

Present: John Adams, Clark Carmichael, Sonia Hill, Jeanne Van Zoeren and (Rosie Burke Guest)

Absent: Jan Blaising, James Sullivan

Welcome and introduction-Rose Burke was introduced as a perspective board member.

Review and approval of June Minutes:

The minutes were approved with the caveat that there was an error in the Allegan County Blue Star Development Fund.

Action: John Adams will obtain the correct number and the minutes will be revised accordingly.

Treasurer's Report:

John reported on the results through July 19, 2016. The Toast Party expenses have been reconciled. John will transfer surplus more than 10K to the Allegan County Community Foundation (ACCF).

The invoices from Hurley and Stewart, LLC were reviewed with comment. The board discussed in detail the logistics and expense related to the road acquisition, permitting and easement costs. Jeanne presented to the group the actions contributing to the high expense. The group concluded that the actual easement costs were significantly higher than what was budgeted. Jeanne will go back and speak to the consultant about the disparity and reset expense expectations going forward. It was suggested that all invoices state the original budget figure adjacent to the actual charged amount as a reminder of the original agreement. John relayed that the Casco Township contractor is asking for 50% of the grant amount. The board agreed that John should go back and request that the contractor takes a third of the grant amount.

The group was briefed by Jeanne Van Zoeren on the status of Land Matters, LLC, subcontractor of Hurley Stewart, LLC. The group discussed options at length to complete the easements in Casco Township. Jeanne recommended to continue the relationship on a contractual basis. In the arrangement Land Matters, will perform clerical functions including organizing individual resident files and the like. Land Matters will work on per hourly basis and submit invoices accordingly.

John requested approval to renew the DNO and General Liability with Westbend Mutual Insurance Company. Following this request, the board made a motion and approved the renewal of the aforementioned.

Action: Jeanne will consult with Land Matters on an as needed basis.

President's Report:

Jeanne reported on her discussions with Hurley-Stewart, our engineering firm, regarding the status of North Sector construction. She reported that they were confident that ground could be broken before the end of the year. She also reported that there will be a public hearing in Saugatuck Township in September. The Hearing will require a slide presentation and an overview of the trail development plan going forward. Saugatuck Township staff will send out communication in advance of this meeting.

Jeanne reported that we must have a design plan submitted to MDOT and the DNR by October 1, 2016 showing how the Cities of Saugatuck and Douglas and Saugatuck Township will connect the trailway with one another from 64th St and (124th Avenue) M-89. A task force has been formed and a presentation will be made to Saugatuck Township, the City of Saugatuck and Douglas trustees for approval.

Last, Jeanne gave an updated review of grants supporting the project. She emphasized the urgency for raising matching funds so that we can be ready when the government grants are awarded.

Lakeshore Harvest Ride:

Clark updated the board members on the project plan and enrollment for the Lake Shore Harvest Ride. He reported that event is running 15% behind last year. He plans to send Email blasts out before the end of the month reminding people of the early bird special. He finished by stating that the event is gaining momentum but it is slower than expected.

John made an appeal for coolers and awnings for the Harvest Ride to the board members.

Parades:

Sonny reported on her recruitment results for the Michigander Blue Star fund raiser at Fenn Valley Winery, the South Haven Blueberry Parade and the Douglas Social. She appealed to the Board members to staff these Socials. Clark volunteered for the upcoming Douglas Social.

Sonny announced that Ellen Donahue will write an article about the construction this Fall and include a map of the current development plan.

Name Change:

The Board discussed the proposed name change issue and decided to keep the current name until further notice.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM and the date of the next meeting was confirmed.

Next meeting date: Thursday, August 18, 2016 4:00 PM @ Casco Township Hall

Notes:

