

Friends of the Blue Star Trail

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

November 15, 2018

PRESENT: John Adams, Clark Carmichael, Richard Donovan, Jack Eisinger, Laura Jager, Dan Keller, Jeanne VanZoeren, Sunny Hill
ABSENT: John Ludlow

1. Call to Order — 4:03
2. Review and approval of October Minutes — motion by Jack, second by Laura, passed unanimously
3. Treasurer's Report — Jack reviewed the latest balance sheet. It was confirmed that we are obligated to make a modest contribution to the Allegan County Community Foundation maintenance account by year end.
4. Saugatuck City Study Update — John learned from Kirk Harrier today that the City Council prefers to have another workshop in order to provide its feedback to the engineers, rather than provide its comments in writing. The next available date is December 6.

As far as the City's announced update to its Parks & Recreation plan, Kirk Harrier stated that the Council does not intend to amend the plan but merely to incorporate the addendum passed last year into the full plan. Council will hold a hearing on this topic. Jeanne explained that the Trail is not eligible for certain grants unless the applicant provides for the trail in its five-year plan.

Clark noted that STRAVA data reflects usage of the corridor along the Blue Star Highway comparable to other parks in the City.

Amy Matisoff of MDOT responded to an inquiry from John about some confusion that had arisen regarding whether TAP funding would be affected if a section of the Trail (e.g., the Kalamazoo River Bridge) was built in a way not compliant with MDOT standards. Amy stated that under current policy TAP funding would not be available for other sections if one section is non-compliant.

5. Community Outreach Update

SC communications strategy — we discussed whether it is time to send an update to some or all of the City residents at this point, and agreed to do so.

Saugatuck Township Update — John reported that he had attended the meeting this week of the Saugatuck Township Board of Trustees, during which it was announced that the Board has accepted the resignation of Aaron Sheridan, the

Township Manager, as of year-end. A meeting is planned with Bill Wester, the newly elected Clerk, and Chris Roerig, the Township Supervisor.

6. Annual Campaign — Laura reported that she has continued to work on a draft letter, which we plan to mail within the next two weeks. We discussed whether to send a letter or email to riders in the Harvest Ride and attendees at the Toast event. We also discussed the logistics of getting the letters out with personal notes from Board members.

8. Grants Update – Jeanne reported that we were recommended to the Board of the DNR Trust Fund for the next section (the North connection within the Township). However, the Township was unable to commit to make up the difference of approximately \$250,000 that we were unable to obtain from the TAP program because we were unable to provide a letter of support from the City.

Jeanne is working on a master plan that was recently requested by the MDOT staff. We expect to obtain the permit from the Federal Highway Administration regarding the Exit 36 overpass by year-end.

MDOT is now working on allocating funds for calendar year 2021.

10. Next meeting date: December 19, 2018 at 3:00 PM @ Casco Township Hall

11. Adjournment — 6:05

Respectfully submitted,

Richard E. Donovan

Richard E. Donovan, Secretary