

DRAFT

Meeting Minutes of the River Trail Commission
(Towns of Cloverland, St. Germain and the City of Eagle River)
January 18, 2024 4:00 PM
Eagle River City Hall 525 E Maple St, Eagle River, WI

1. Meeting called to order at 4:00 PM public present included:

Jeff & Ann Currie - Cloverland	Dan Meier - Lincoln/GHT
Francine Gough - Cloverland Supervisor	Todd Biermen – Vilas Park & Rec
Gary Meister - GHT	Mike Robillard - Zoom GHT
Karen Margelofsky - Eagle River Revitalization	Michael Anderson- Zoom Press
Holly & Tom Tomlanovitch - Washington	Diane Marquart - Zoom
	Robin Ginner - Eagle River- Administrator -Zoom

2. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Meeting Posting was verified for all 3 participating municipalities.
4. Roll Call - **Jim Swenson** - Chairman, **Joe Spitz** - Cloverland, **Ron Kressin**- present Quorum Present.
5. No objections were made to taking the agenda in any order at the discretion of Chairman
6. Kressin motioned to approve the Nov. 6, 2023 meeting minutes, Spitz seconded. Board vote approved the minutes.
7. Commission Continued Support for the River Trail Project - no change
8. Routes for Trail and Updated Costs - Commission still recommending the central route. At last ER Council meeting that didn't go over well. There was not support for South Trail. Spitz said that the feed back from Scott Maciosek was not comfortable with the trail going along Sunset given the nature of the danger of the road and terrain. He espoused considering something more like Wilderness to get from 70 up to Hwy G. There was just discussion (no vote).

The ER City council meeting of January 9 to discuss the findings regarding alternate North and South routes devolved into discussion of the cost of the trail more so than the safety issue. Council asked for more detail on the build costs for the trail because the feeling that the costs will eventually fall on the city relating to maintenance/replacement. Jerry Burkett text message re MSA engineer that works for Phil ER \$500K/mi for wetland trail segments and \$200K/mi for plain trail. Seems uncomfortable with the statements of "\$1 million/mile". Robillard said that GHT experience 660' x10 wide was \$200K on a trail. Burkett wants a "feasibility study for the north trail route". As well he wants examples in other states or WI of if with "trail being 10' from road way" and not having issues with safety. DOT snow removal needs clarification. Mayor won't entertain on agenda until the north feasibility study and costs and safety issues are ready to be presented. Burkett suggested a subcommittee that could work on these issues ?council members, engineers? It wasn't not really clear.

- a. Feasibility Study of Northern route along with costs
- b. Safety along 70 in town of Lincoln (volume of traffic) 45 mph
- c. ?

Burkett indicated that City of ER would consider contributing to the cost of the feasibility study.

Holly Tomlanovitch related their trail building experience required to . Attack the most critical issues first. in this case it is the Lincoln and the need for SMA and the private easements. " Maybe you need to work on the private landowners easements in Lincoln."

Ginner drew attention to the fact that Lincoln will never sign a SMA with the DOT unless "the entire board turns over to more trail sympathetic parties.

Reporter for Northland Times stated Sherriff Hartman of Onieda County went on record as stating that an off road bike/ped path is always going to be safer than having to be on the road.

It would be great if we could get Cloverland to get on board to Denoyer's area. "Every trail has to end somewhere" was cited.

Kressin said that the City of ER doesn't have a concern with safety issues if the trail ends/starts at the water station and comes into the fairgrounds. There aren't any safety issues. It is not their jurisdiction to worry about the issues in the town of Lincoln that are perceived. The City of Rhinelander/DOT put an addition to the sidewalk to allow bike/ped use all the way along the the 35mph Hwy 17 rebuild project. It is very close to the curb of the 4 lane stretch. Spitz asked Kressin if he thought that if GHT wanted to build a trail from the fairgrounds to the water pump station if the Council would support that. He felt they wouldn't have any problem with it.

Spitz mentioned that the cost of construction is inversely related to the maintenance cost. The better it is built, the longer it lasts. He also suggested that we do not have an educated public. We should consider a forum where can educate the public and the hence municipalities. Maybe the High School Auditorium as a venue for presentation and questions and answers. Could invite all four municipalites.

Robillard suggested that 4 engineers together to get a report after considering the North and Central routes E.R. City engineer Phil (MSA), Chad (MSA), Carlton, Mike to put together a study/ opinion. Could E.R fund Phil's work on such a report? Safety, cost, engineering obstacles instead of full feasibility study. We need a list of questions. Mike Robillard and Robin Ginner will work on a list of questions then see if we can go forward.

9. Budget for 2024 - Tabled

10. Trail Care Plan - Tabled

11. Plans for 2024 -

10 Next meeting date was set for Thursday, February 29

11. Meeting adjourned at 5:29 PM

Minutes Submitted: Joe Spitz