

Meeting Minutes of the River Trail Commission

(Towns of Cloverland, St. Germain and the City of Eagle River)

Feb 25, 2022 9:00 PM

Vilas County Courthouse, Conference Room B. Eagle River 54521

1. Meeting called to order at 9:02 AM public present included:

Gary Meister (GM) - Eagle River,
Carlton Schroeder (CS) Eagle River,
Jeff and Ann Currie (JC)- Cloverland,
Dan Kramer (Lincoln),
Jim Meiers (Lincoln),
Francine Gough (FG) -Supv. Cloverland,

Robin Ginner- Eagle River Administrator
Holly Tomlanavich- Cty. Board (Wash.)
Todd Bierman- Vilas Cty. Parks and Rec.
Marv Anderson-Vilas Cty. Board (St.G)
Karen Anderson (St. G.),
Walt Maciag- Cty. Board (Cloverland)

Jim Meires-GHT
Carolyn Ritter – Cty. Board (St. G)
Pat Weber -Cty. Board, (Washington)
Cindy Burzinski – Vilas Cty. Tourism

2. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Meeting Posting was verified for all 3 participating municipalities.
4. Roll Call - **Ron Kressin** (RK), **Joe Spitz** (JJS), **Jim Swenson** (JS) - Chairman. Quorum Present.
5. No objections were made to taking the agenda in any order at the discretion of Chairman.
6. Minutes from the Jan.26, 2022 meeting of the RTC had been distributed prior to the meeting. JS moved to approve the minutes, RK seconded the motion. Board vote approved the minutes.

7a-c. Jim Swenson explained the formation of the River Trail Commission for the guest Vilas County board members. He explained that the main purpose of this meeting was to enlist the support from the County Board Members representing affected townships near the proposed River Trail from the County Board, at a full meeting eventually. The proposed final link of the Great Headwaters Trail system is the River Trail system. He told them how visible the extensive use is by so many people/families.

Hand-outs were discussed and displayed regarding the trail completion plan and how it fits into the other trails in Vilas. Some significant issues include **a bridge over the WI River** with Bike/Ped and Snowmobiles, ATV/UTV. Also, the **crossing on Hwy. 45 from River View Park to Division Street**. DOT was initially against putting in another stop light at the Snowmobile crossing because of the proximity to the "Kwik Trip" stop light. Bike routes are already approved within Eagle River (basically everything but Wall St.) and parking is at the Depot along with other vehicles.

"**Eagle River Bermuda Triangle**" was discussed (from River View Park to get into Eagle River on Division Street and on to the area near Dairy Queen to connect to Three Lakes Trail entrance) might include a "on-demand" crossing signal where the Snowmobiles currently cross over 45 into the Depot area.

Equestrian group is also thinking about some possible expansion in this area. Vilas County Forest, Recreation and Land Committee (FR&L) did not support the original request for moving forward with a TAP grant which would have limited the bridge uses. They also had some concern about encumbering the County with the maintenance of the trail. Honey Bear Bridge is key need for all user types. Todd Bierman stated that the estimated price tag was \$1.5MM for a combined use, 20' wide, separated lane for bike/ped, bridge. Snowmobile funds wouldn't fund something that included this and ATV/UTV so a solution is yet to be determined. An ATV trail now comes to CTY H& HWY70 so limited DOT Right of Way to get to the river from there and then from the river to Zeman Road could link that to St. Germain and Vilas Co. Forest land in Cloverland.

The probable future round-about at 17&70 needs to be taken into account. Eventually the DOT will be resurfacing that stretch west to Hwy H. This needs to be taken into account in the planning of the River Trail so we need to interface with the DOT on this area as well. To review the impact of that potential change.

JS mentioned also that the new campground along Hwy 17, just South of 70 will add camper bikes and ATV's wanting to cross through that area to get to the bike trail and future ATV trails. JS mentioned that after the elections this April, will be the time to try to get someone assigned to the RTC. The county board members present thought it was a good idea to add a Vilas Cty. Board member and be part of the RTC. The RTC has been working with FR&L committee to get a motion on perhaps their April agenda, to recommend it before the full County Board at perhaps the May meeting.

Cindy Burzinski spoke about the need to educate the public about the designation of "multi use" that Heart of Vilas Trail currently holds. It has very specific meaning and restrictions with the Federal Dept. of The Interior. The application was filed as a "Multiuse" and must be what was in the application designated. The "generic" term has various meanings and like the term "shared use" needs qualifiers that explain what uses it accommodates. There is an interest in having the River Trail become part of the Heart of Vilas trail so the classification needs to be taken into account in the planning.

8. CS mentioned that they have engaged MSA to do a more detailed potential "all user" bridge design that should be ready in about a week.
9. There were no public comments or letters and communications noted
10. Next regular meeting was scheduled for April 27th at 4:00 PM
Motion to adjourn was made at passed at 10:17 AM

Meeting minutes submitted by Joe Spitz