



Oakland County Trails Advisory Council

Oakland County Parks and Recreation Administration Office
2800 Watkins Lake Road, Building 97 West Waterford, Michigan

Minutes

February 25, 2009

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Kristen Myers at 9:10 a.m. in the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission Room.

PRESENT:

Kristen Myers, Kristen Wiltfang, Merle Richmond, Mark Spencer, Jenny Frederick, Andrew Mutch, Mindy Milos-Dale, Stephanie Marchbanks, Kristen Bennett, Sharon Greene, Nicole Klepadeu, Dot LaLone, Kathleen Daugherty, Paul Miller, Rock Blanchard, Todd Scott, Buck Cryderman and Sue Thibodeau

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the minutes from December 3, 2008 were moved by Dot LaLone and supported by Kristen Bennett. The motion passed on voice vote.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

The Genesee Regional Trail Report was added to the agenda as item 6B to be presented after the OTAC Survey Results.

TRAIL NETWORK UPDATE

Paint Creek Trail—Kristen Myers:

Encroachments were found and we're asking for help to develop a policy. Also coordinating a "Friends of Paint Creek" group. The Master Plan is finished and a map and brochure are being processed.

Polly Ann Trail—Troy Farwell

No update at this time, however, a new member of that group, Buck Cryderman, attended his first OTAC meeting today and asked to be on the mailing list.

Clinton River Trail—Brian Marzolf

Kristen Wiltfang reported that the City of Pontiac and the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner's Office are exploring the potential of constructing the North Spur of the Clinton River Trail.

West Bloomfield Trail—Dave Burley

(No update at this time)

Lakes Community Trail—Deanna Magee

(No update at this time)

Huron Valley Trail—Chris Doozan

(No update at this time)

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Headwaters Trail—Dot LaLone

The December 12, 2008 drawing for the Kayak package and other prizes was held. Architect drawings for the three mile connector trail between Highland Oaks and Rose Oaks is shovel ready.

Merle Richmond reported the Highland Equestrian Conservancy received a grant for \$10,000 to purchase a parcel adjacent to Highland Oaks County Park. The parcel has been purchased and will provide a trail link from the park to Water Road.

Kristen Bennett reported the engineering for a connector path at Seven Lakes State Park is 75% complete.

Woodward Corridor Trail—Todd Scott

The City of Troy has hired Hamilton-Anderson and the Greenways Collaborative to create a non-motorized plan for the city. Royal Oak's Bicycle Task Force has met with the city manager; however, there isn't any available funding from the city to create a non-motorized plan. The Woodward Avenue Action Association (WA3) has some state transportation money to use for planning. For Detroit, the greenways brochure project (70 miles) still needs approximately \$50 million in funding.

I-275 Pathway—Jeff Edwards

Todd Scott reported on the I-275 Bike Path being recommended for MDOT final cut in stimulus.

Kristen Wiltfang reported that MDOT will be hosting a public open house to discuss one phase of the I-275 bike path extension along M-5 from 13 Mile Rd. to 14 Mile Rd. The meeting will be held on March 12 at the Novi Civic Center from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMA): Managing Invasive Plants Along Trails & Greenways. The Stewardship Network/Headwaters Cluster presentation by: Lisa Brush and Heather Huffstutler

Caring for natural areas using a network of local clusters within the CWMA was presented. CWMAs are funded by federal dollars and local clusters also function as CWMA's. There are currently seven clusters in Michigan. The Headwaters Cluster covers all of Oakland County and will expand to Macomb County. There is an overlapping collaboration between clusters. CWMA has to have a binding memorandum (formal agreement) and clusters don't need that. The Headwaters Cluster formed a planning group steering committee last fall. They will explore how to make partnerships, share dollars and equipment. They're looking at certain invasive species along trail ways. The group is also looking into invasive plant management program with OTAC. The Stewardship Network provides educational information on the largest invasive plant problems and suggests having boot cleaners at trail heads. No funding currently available through USDA, even though Springfield Twp. got their money through USDA. The Headwaters Cluster offers monthly webcasts, workshops and workday opportunities. Workdays can be set up through this cluster with the individual trail groups.

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See the online searchable events calendar to check dates and post events. A management planning workshop for our groups to learn how to manage trails with invasive plants can also be scheduled. Sunday, June 7 is the Native Plant Festival from 10:00 to 3:00 at the Paint Creek Cider Mill.

Handouts: Sample brochure of a CWMA entitled "Northwoods". Michigan Stewardship Network's brochure, "Connect to protect our natural areas". Headwaters Cluster brochure, "Land and Water Stewardship Workshops".

Questions and discussion took place between the audience and presenters.

OTAC Survey Results—Kristen Wiltfang

The survey was sent to 75 people and approximately 44 responded to all questions. A slide show was presented displaying the survey results for each question.

Genesee County Regional Trail Summit (Discussion)

There were four workshop sessions offered to attendees. The OTAC presence at this summit was good. Some of the presenters were from MDOT, Attorney General's office, Partnerships, Volunteers, and Collaboration. A couple of topics included bike paths and the importance of horse trails. A couple of Genesee County planners offered to assist us with planning. Kristen Wiltfang will send out a website link to access the presentations.

Oakland County Trail Summit (Discussion)

A Trail Summit Subcommittee has been formed and anyone interested can attend Wednesday, March 25, 9:00—11:00 a.m. in the small conference room at Oakland County Parks and Recreation administrative offices, 2800 Watkins Lake Rd., Waterford, MI.

Announcements/Public Comments

Merle Richmond announced "The Vision 2" sponsored by the Highland Equestrian Conservancy to connect greenways with trails will be held March 16 at 6:30 p.m. at the Highland Station House. L. Brooks Patterson and Larry Falardeau are among the speakers.

Stephanie Marchbanks announced that she has plenty of the 2008-09 Oak Route Maps available for OTAC members. The Mid-America Trails and Greenways Conference will be October 25-28, 2009.

Todd Scott announced that MDOT will soon be providing a draft of the four-county bike map that will contain average daily traffic information and major trail connectors. SEMCOG is also working on a seven-county map that will have information on separate roads, traffic volume and bike paths some time in April. Todd attended a conference in Albuquerque and learned that the business relocations have rated geographical moves to areas with bicycle-friendly towns as high. The Road Commission for Oakland County has approved \$237,000 to finish the missing section of Silverbell Rd. to Joslyn Rd. for the Polly Ann Trail Extension.

Kristen Wiltfang brought up the need to review the bylaws for any changes needed. The PDF on Trail Events is a work in progress. Mindy Milos-Dale expressed her gratitude for the MNRTF. She spoke about the changes and criteria for urban initiatives and community recreation development.

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Merle Richmond shared information on the Horses Count in Michigan website and said there has been an increase in the horse population in this state. There are more than 74,000 horses in Michigan.

Todd Scott will be attending the International Bike Summit in Washington D.C. in March.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next OTAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 22, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commission Room at the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Administrative Offices.

Minutes taken by Sue Thibodeau, Oakland County Parks and Recreation