

# McLeod County Trails Committee



Date: 10/23/2017 @6:30 pm

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McLeod County Fairgrounds Meeting Room

Committee Members: (X=present)

X	Keith Froeming	X	Mary Behrens		Jon Christensen
X	Steve Cook	X	John Gillard	X	Tony Hausladen
X	Dean Nissen	X	Tim Olson	X	Kyle Strobel
X	Tim Haag		Kevin Klucas		

Others in attendance:

John Brunkhorst, Kent Exner, Al Koglin, Cindy Ludewig, Jim Bobier, Bruce Butler, Craig Bishop, Joel Mellenthin, Tim Smith, Sheldon Nies, & Mahon representative

## **1: Call Meeting to Order**

John Gillard opened the meeting at 6:34pm

## **2: Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Upon making no revisions; Steve C motioned to approve minutes, seconded by Keith F, all were in favor to approve and publish.

## **3: Open Questions**

Bruce Butler:

Mr Butler, came to talk to the committee about the importance of supporting the snowmobiling community, and allowing them to use the Dakota Rail trail. He stated that other trails, when paved remove the rights of the use of snowmobiles on the trail and he would not like this to happen on this trail. He believes that the snowmobilers bring revenue to the local business along the trail, and that the business would like to see this continue. He is asking McLeod County parks and trails for their support and would like

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us to work with Carver county to come up with an agreement to allow snowmobiles on the Dakota Rail.

## **4: Discussions:**

Steve C motioned to allow snowmobiles on the Dakota from County Rd 9 to the carver county lines, as long as the carver county allows snowmobiles in Carver County first. The committee did not receive a 2<sup>nd</sup>, so this motion died for lack of support.

Tony H made a motion to accept the following motion as written:

### **Promoting Snowmobile Use on the Dakota Rail Trail to New Germany**

**WHEREAS**, snowmobiling is a popular form of winter recreation and enjoyment of both Carver and McLeod County's scenic beauty;

**WHEREAS**, Southwest Trail Association of Carver County (est 1982) in conjunction with its associated member volunteer snowmobile clubs; Carver County Snowrunners, Chaska SnoHawks, and Westonka SnoBlazers, and the Crow River Sno Pros of McLeod County (est 1986) and its volunteer members have devoted thousands of hours of maintaining trails to support the safety and well-being of multiple trails users;

**WHEREAS**, Southwest Trail Association will work with the Carve County Parks and Trails Dept. to allow snowmobile traffic on the Dakota Rail Regional Trail from New Germany to the Carver/McLeod County boarder connecting the McLeod and Carver County snowmobile trail systems.

**WHEREAS**, snowmobile riders generate high levels of economic benefits from purchasing fuel, food, lodging and supplies that benefit small businesses;

**WHEREAS**, snowmobile riders directly support trail maintenance by paying for required Minnesota registration and trail permits and Minnesota sales taxes;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the McLeod County Trails Committee supports and promotes snowmobile use on the Dakota Rail Regional Trail as part of its Multi-Use initiative. Further, it supports the use if the Dakota Rail Regional Trail as a connector route to allow McLeod County snowmobilers' access to the Carver County Southwest Trail in New Germany and vise versa;

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**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that McLeod County Trail Committee will likewise support and promote snowmobile use on the Dakota Rail Regional Trail into McLeod County to promote winter recreation and economic development across both counties.

Adopted by the McLeod County Trail Committee on this 23<sup>rd</sup> Day of October 2017

Discussion by the trails committee to take the initiative to move forward.  
Seconded to accept motion by Kyle S  
John G asked for committee approval, All were in favor, passed.

**John G (the Chairman)** asked that the guests in attendance hold off asking any questions until after the committee is finished with their meeting.

## **Sheldon N – presented to the group a history of the Dakota Rail Trail**

- 1978 the Shippers Association (use of Railroad)
- Jerry Ross operated Dakota Rail until it went bankrupt
- Started in 1984 as a Rail Authority
- 1984 Ray Zimmerman went to the County Board to form a Rail Authority and was granted permission.
- Carver, Hennepin and McLeod County purchased the Rail
- McLeod County could not afford the Rail at the time, so we borrowed the \$\$ from the State of Minnesota, and we cannot collect rent from the land owners, as a county until we own it; currently Hennepin county is collecting for McLeod County
- Currently no tax \$\$ are being used for the Dakota Rail
- The Rail authority was forced to be created because \$\$ could not be given from grants for maintenance unless a rail authority was in place.
- Tony H asked to know how much \$\$ is generated each year from McLeod County properties to this fund that is being collected in Hennepin county; Sheldon said he would get back to us.
- McLeod County still owes the state 500-600 thousand; Sheldon was asked to bring this number back to the committee as well.
- Sheldon would like to use the \$\$ that has been in the rental fund to pay off the state, but that will take time, support and dedication to get accomplished
- The DNR leases the trail for insurance purposes and liability reasons and will release back to the county as needed.
- The DNR must give owners the authority to make changes to property along the Dakota Rail
- Al commented; if the county does get the 16 miles done, do we have any guarantees that it will stay a trail and the answer is no; if freight trail or mass-transit wants it, it will have to re-vert back.
- The following are members of the Dakota Rail Authority:

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- Sheldon Nies
- Tom Dagget
- Al Koglin
- Kristy Rice
- Chris Schultz
- Jay Freedland
- Chad Gunderson
- Tim Smith

## **SRF update:** (Al Koglin)

- Boaring will take place on the 2 bridges
- Next week, walking & surveying
- DNR moved up mowing to help with walking and surveying.

## **Legacy Grant:** (Al Koglin)

- Al received a letter that this was approved; not official until the paperwork comes through and is approved by the county board.
- Al will take the County board for approval as soon as he receives it.
- Targeting 2018 construction

## **5: Set Next Meeting date:**

Next meeting will be setup using doodle.

**6: Adjourn Meeting:** Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Keith F, seconded by Tim O, all in favor, meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm