

Friends of the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail

Minutes of the Meeting on April 21, 2015

Jeff LaValley: called meeting to order

Roll call: Clerk, George Hart - members present: Mark Joe Giffune, George Hart, Demetrios Kanavaros, Jeff LaValley, Sally Memole, Bob Pac, Don Podolski, Alice Flyte

Jeff LaValley: read Open Meeting guidelines and asked for approval of March minutes, Joe G requested they be sent one week after each meeting to avoid delaying approval; motion made, seconded, vote passed.

Old Business:

Interpretive signage: George Ramirez gave example of exact size and gave the printed samples of the 3 companies' samples and a picture of damages in Northampton; West Springfield Sign design recommendation to offer each company a chance to come to show theirs; Joe G asked what we need to do and George R said "give our blessings" and decide which materials (aluminum or fiberglass); he also said MJ Bull made updates; Jeff L mentioned maps/businesses and Don P suggested to update info on Q__?__ on website; George R noted distances (miles) on map as MJ B requested, he and MJ are proceeding regarding vendors signs; Bob P asked that West Springfield Sign come in to explain material and maintenance.

Public Participation:

Janet Larese – interested in progress and hope we table at the Westfield Fitness Expo on May 15 at noon at WSU Woodward Center.

Christina Beeke – interested in signs, etc.

Rick Saloomey – general interest

John (last name unknown) – interested in trail construction progress; Jeff L explained current phases projects (levy and East Silver St. bridge and underpass) for which the money must be spent by June 30, but work would be done by Sept.; Don P noted this section (East Silver St. to Main St.) will be 2 feet wider (12 feet); Bob P asked of any updates of the bid process and Jeff L said he'd check with Mark Cressotti.

Reports of Directors:

Jeff L, chairman - apologized for not sending minutes and skipping the financial report.

Joe G, vice chairman – he did a talk at Westfield Water Symposium and spoke of how we need to get into community questions,

Joe G, treasurer's report – we are at \$19,000.00 which is down \$2,300.00 due to last year's golf tournament; in good shape regarding signage and awaiting Westfield Bank's decision on signage grant money

Jeff L mentioned pet clean up station and is asking for other donors to support the second station, he will reach out to other options

Sally M, director of outreach – photo contest for kids 12 years old and younger on their favorite part of the rail trail; we have a WEN judge, prize of choice of a bike from New Horizon Bike shop, display at Rinnova building, we could do for under \$500.00; also do a silent auction, time suggestion is mid-August; Jeff L said we need a committee and to get more information re what other groups have done; Sally asked about school flyers; Joe G noted to have time to meet in sub-committee before our full meeting

Don P, director of education and research – he worked with Kiwanis regarding a helmet program for 6th graders and they're looking for \$200.00 and volunteers to fit helmets at schools in May (no date yet) and if interested contact Mary at his shop and they want money after this meeting; Don noted bike week: mayor's ride on 5/11 at 8:30am at city hall for 3 miles, 5/13 is bike breakfast at 6:00 to 10:00am, photo display/reception at Rinnova building and it could be opportunity for us to display; 5/20 is the Ride of Silence and we need to contact Eric Hall; MassBike challenge.org and FOCG should enter a team of 250 participants (now at 57) so board members should join and noted assorted inner-challenges for assorted prizes monthly, so we should contact business donors for prizes and organizations for teams (such as the YMCA) and friends to join; Jeff L asked for a motion to provide \$200.00 for the Kiwanis helmet program; motion made, seconded, vote passed; 2nd motion regarding swag for national bike challenge (Joe G said we need a money cap); motion made to cap at \$250.00, seconded, vote passed.

Bob P, director of maintenance – reported on handout (no copies) that he sent to DPW, in regards to new multi use of levy area on South Broad St. near trail and it requires access from the rail trail. Next, he noted new erosion next to rail trail. Also, noted that vehicles are going up the grass on hill at side of rail trail near the Dry Bridge and Jeff L asked him to contact police. Next, noted graffiti on fencing and that he has repaired it. Last recommendations: we should post the police brochure in the kiosks, remove Mofroyo signs, he replaced doggie bags, and ___?___ (7 others). Jeff L asked about a sign posted on the trail, and we need to meet with traffic commission; Jeff noted improvements to Shaker Rd crossings to be discussed at tonight's city planning board meeting. Jeff L mentioned the Pope award.

Jeff L, board chairman –

A. discussed Amazon Shine regarding % of sale support to non-profit of choice and he feels we should do both, that is, seek all forms of profit and we should be aware of support of local businesses; Don P expressed local small business opposition because it (our very small % from sales) is a small dollar amount and that the state is losing \$10M in taxes due to online purchases. Much discussion of advantages and mostly of disadvantages; Jeff L stated personally that it is a difference of philosophy; Joe G stated FOCG should be aware of being in support of outdoor activity; Don P said we should drive people to point of outdoors; Joe G made a motion to disconnect our membership of Amazon Shine, seconded, vote passed.

B. Rinnova building use: continue another month

C. Mark Fenton event: no date set, but WSU support of \$2,800.00

D. website redesign: invite website designer to our May meeting

E. tabling at Noble Run on 5/2 from 7am to 11am: we need a table and the map and need 1 hour training of our volunteers and he will set up with responders

F. Kate Phelon needs volunteers to promote bike friendly Westfield

G. noted possibility of new forms of note taking for George H

Motion made to adjourn, seconded, vote passed.

Next meeting 5/19/15