



State of Wisconsin
GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

FINAL - as of 4/22/10

Monday, January 11, 2010

Teleconference – GEF 2 Building, 101 S. Webster Street, Madison

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

State Trails Council Members Present: Randy Harden, Tom Huber, Jim Joque, Dave Phillips, Skip Maletzke, Mike McFadzen, Tom Thornton, Robbie Webber

State Trails Council Members Not In Attendance: Ken Carpenter

Wisconsin DNR Staff Present: Brigit Brown, Joseph Warren, Pat Zatopa

Others Present: Alex Bub, Claire Cannon, Ken Linzmeyer, Rob McConnell, Bryan Much, John Newton, Tom Rulseh, Gene Roberts, Denise Schmidt, Luana Schneider, John Schnorr, David Yochum

10:00 A.M. – Agenda review/repair and approval of October meeting minutes

- Harden called the meeting to order. Harden introduced Lindor “Skip” Maletzke, new appointee to the State Trails Council representing Tourism/Business. Amendment to the agenda: Phillips asked to add a discussion on the process used for the new appointment to the Council, after the chair report. Approval of the October 16, 2009 meeting minutes by Thornton. Seconded by Phillips. Minutes approved.

10:10 A.M. – Chair Report

- Harden stated he had been in contact with staff in the Governor’s Office to inform them of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee (AHC) and the recommended changes that the Council has proposed. The Council needs the Governor’s feedback before moving forward as the Governor has the final decision on any appointment-related recommendations proposed by the Council. There has been some turnover in the Governor’s Office which has slowed the communication process, but current staff have been very receptive to the Council’s efforts.

10:15 A.M. – Discussion of Appointment Process

- Phillips stated he had concern for the process used to fill the open seat on the Council. He was surprised that the seat was filled with someone who was not representing Water Trails, as members had worked for a long time to have a water trails seat on the Council, or that the appointment was not in accordance with the AHC’s recommendations. Harden stated that the appointment of the Tourism/Business seat on the Council was likely already in the appointment process while the Council was reviewing the AHC proposals for restructuring membership.
- Maletzke stated that Senator Holperin had contacted him regarding serving on the Council but could not remember if their conversation was before or after the October 16 STC meeting. Maletzke stated he would confirm the exact date for Council Members. *Note: Following the teleconference. Maletzke verified that his conversation and contact with Senator Holperin was on September 29, 2009, preceding the October 16 STC meeting.*
- Phillips stated the appointment is disappointing because the Ad Hoc Committee sacrificed a lot of time and energy, and it would be difficult to ask the public to sit on future committees when their recommendations are ignored. Harden stated that it is the Governor’s prerogative in making



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appointments and the next steps of the Council should be to continue to move forward with the recommendations.

10:30 A.M. – Review of Ad Hoc Committee Recommendations

- Harden stated that in moving forward with the recommendations passed at the last STC meeting, the next steps would be to work on how to implement the recommendations. Almost all of the Ad Hoc Committee recommendations were accepted with some changes by the STC. McFadzen stated that the appointment process takes a reasonable amount of time and the Council should look at how to replace each seat well before the terms are to expire.

- Harden asked if the Council would like to form implementation teams, possibly with some members of the Ad Hoc Committee, to work on furthering the recommendations. Phillips stated the recommendations were now at a point for Council Members to work on internally. Harden stated the idea would be to draft a proposal for implementing the recommendations (concerning the Governor's Office) to share with and get the opinion of the Governor's Office. Phillips offered to work on the recommendation to outline a process for new appointments to the State Trails Council (Recommendation 7). With regard to STC membership, the Ad Hoc Committee report identified that the STC will need to:

- Create a job description for STC positions
 - Create an application for new members
 - Revise STC Bylaws to specify (or outline) the appointment process

- Brown stated the Council may also want to consider adding "Identify a specific appointment process" to the list of STC action items for this recommendation.
- McFadzen and Phillips stated they will work on the recommendation to restructure the Council into three trail use categories (Recommendation 2). The Ad Hoc Committee report identified that the STC will need to:

- Revise STC Bylaws to identify three trail use categories

- Phillips and McFadzen also offered to work on the recommendation to identify seats for a 9- and 11-member Council (Recommendation 4). The Ad Hoc Committee report identified that the STC will need to:

- Define roles and attendance for non-voting members
 - Start the process to increase STC membership to 11
 - Revise STC Bylaws to identify Council seats.

- McFadzen stated that both Senator Holperin and Representative Mursau indicated at the last STC meeting that they would be willing to sponsor legislation to increase membership on the Council.
- Warren and Brown will work on updating the STC website. The recommendation for a web-based user guide detailed the items to be included on the website (Recommendation 9). Warren will send out to Council Members to review before the April STC meeting. The other recommendations that required action from the STC included the review of RTP criteria (Recommendation 8) and the review of trail use categories/major user groups (Recommendation 3). The STC did review and recommend changes to the RTP criteria at the July 2009 meeting. Future reviews of the RTP criteria will need to be coordinated with the Grants Program.



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- Phillips and McFadzen stated they will work on the recommendations, and invited other Council Members to help. They will send a draft for all the action items to Council Members to review and for Harden to share with the Governor's Office before the April STC meeting. Council Members should let Harden know of their interest in participating in the recommendation implementation committees.

10:45 A.M. – State Trails Council Member Reports

- *Bicycling.* Human Powered Trails in La Crosse have a situation with some of the trails they have built on property purchased with Stewardship funds. Representative Blumenauer from Oregon is working on an Active Community Transportation Bill to expand transportation modes and opportunities for bicyclists and pedestrians, and is working to expand the pilot program for non-motorized transportation. Communities who get grants could possibly get \$75 million over a 5-year period. Milwaukee and Madison submitted case statements to the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and are well-positioned to benefit from the program. Dane County will host a pro-level bike race this summer, and there will also be two bike events focused in state parks.
- *Hiking/Walking.* Work on the Ice Age Trail over the past year has opened new sections of the trail. The trail is being built with sustainable layout and design practices and is very aesthetically done. As more sections of the trail are completed to these standards, it is becoming more popular.
- *Department of Transportation.* The DOT is on schedule for releasing an updated bicycle map for 2010. The map, which lists bike trails and routes for all counties in Wisconsin, is one of the most popular pages on the DOT website. The color scheme will be changed, to help make the maps accessible for the colorblind. Topography will also be added as a new feature. The map will be available in spring/summer on the DOT website and also through the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin. The Federal Stimulus package, otherwise known as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), will help fund bike and pedestrian trail projects. The deadline for Transportation Enhancements applications has been postponed to July (or possibly later). Zatopa asked when sponsors would be notified if they received funds. Huber stated that notification could possibly be up to six months after the application deadline.
- *Cross-country Skiing.* With great snow conditions the last few years, youth programs are growing and cross-country ski numbers are increasing overall. About 1,400 skiers have signed up for the American Birkebeiner so far. Lights have been added to the ski trails at the Greenbush Recreation Area in the Northern Kettle Moraine State Forest, a major improvement that will give people more opportunities for skiing. The lighting system in place is being paid by the Ski Club at the property and minimizes light pollution by directing the beams down to the trail. Phillips stated there are some great skiing opportunities in state parks, but staff and volunteers could use new equipment to cut down on the labor needed to keep trails groomed. Phillips stated it was important to pass the non-motorized trail bill to be able to supply funding where it is needed.
- *Snowmobiling.* There have been good snow conditions across the entire state providing a good start to the season. As of January 4, there have been nine snowmobile fatalities, with a preliminary report indicating that six of the nine are alcohol related. Thornton stated it was important that the OWI bill regarding operating a recreation vehicle be passed by the legislature.
- *Users with Disabilities.* Joque stated he would like to invite Andy Janicki, DNR Accessibility Coordinator, to the next Council Meeting to give a presentation about what is involved to "Open the Outdoors" for users with disabilities. The presentation covers the big picture for accessibility.



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Joque stated it was good to hear the DOT was working to make their bike maps more accessible. Joque stated it was important for webmasters of sites with trail and outdoor information (and all websites) to make their pages accessible to everyone, including persons who are deaf or blind.

- *Tourism/Business.* Maletzke provided the Council with some background information. Maletzke stated he has been involved with the Tourism industry for 10 years, since purchasing a ranch resort in the town of Mountain. Maletzke stated he has contact with many users as the ranch provides all kinds of recreation opportunities and is near the Nicolet National Forest and the Nicolet State Trail. From a Tourism standpoint, the last year and a half have been tough. Hotel stays are down significantly from a year ago. The term “stay-cation” has gotten a lot of attention, and trail systems provide a good place for people to recreate close to home. Overall Tourism budgets have been dramatically cut, especially in advertising and promotion. Neighboring states however have been spending money, with Michigan setting aside \$40 million for next year.
- *Off-Highway Vehicles.* The bill has been drafted for an OWI tie-in for a second offense while operating a recreational vehicle, and is moving forward. The ATV community is working on a joint project with the Ice Age Trail on a bridge crossing on the Tuscobia State Trail. Off-Highway Motorcycle and Vehicle groups continue to work on registration programs. There will be another 2-year pilot program beginning for UTVs to test the compatibility of the vehicles with the trails.

11:15 A.M. – Stewardship Program Access Update

- The Wisconsin Legislature reauthorized funding for the Stewardship Program for 2010-2019 for \$86 million per year. At issue is what activities will be allowed on properties purchased with Stewardship funds. The three primary reasons to limit access for the five “nature-based” outdoor activities (NBOAs) (as determined by Statute), are public safety, protecting unique plant and animal communities, and keeping within usership patterns, which deal with such things as size and location of the property. A Citizen Advisory Committee was created to provide input on developing the Stewardship recreational access rule (NR52). The committee came up with four concept papers to help guide the rule-making process. The Natural Resources Board will be taking up the issue at the January 26-27 meeting. The NRB can choose to adopt, modify, or send the rules back to the DNR.
- Gene Roberts with Human Powered Trails (HPT) stated that access to properties in the La Crosse area is an issue HPT is working on with the DNR and local and state representatives. Roberts stated that conservation and maintaining the integrity of the Stewardship Program is important, but citizens also need to be able to use properties purchased with the funds. The properties at issue were purchased using funds from one of two pots of Stewardship funds that the DNR has determined to prohibit bicycles and other non-NBOA uses.
- Claire Cannon with the Wisconsin Off-Road Series asked why bicycles are not included on the list of allowed uses (NBOAs). McFadzen stated that the five activities defined in existing administrative code are hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking and cross-country skiing. Bicycling is not one of the five primary uses.
- Pat Zatopa, DNR Financial Assistance Specialist, stated the phrase “nature-based outdoor activity” has only been added since the last Stewardship authorization in 2000. Up to this point more priority has been given to the five uses, but other uses are not necessarily excluded from being allowed on properties purchased with Stewardship funds. To add bicycling or other uses to the “nature-based” list would require a legislative change.



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11:30 A.M. – DNR Report

- Master Plans are underway at the Cross Plains Complex of the Ice Age National Scientific Reserve and at Capital Springs State Recreation Area. The Black River State Forest Master Plan will be going for approval at the next Natural Resources Board meeting. Some of the trail issues in the plan will focus on ATV Trails. The Peshtigo River State Forest will be working on some horse trail planning. Master plans for High Cliff State Park and Point Beach State Forest are beginning and public meetings will be held in spring/summer.
- Wyalusing State Park will be following through on recommendations for the trail system at the park and will be going through the master plan amendment process to allow for a singletrack off-road bike trail. The Wisconsin State Park System Trail Crew finished up their work for the year at Wyalusing State Park, working until the first week in December. The crew finished the Sugar Maple Nature Trail and will continue work on the Sand Cave Trail in 2010.
- The DNR will be helping to sponsor a master trail building training in La Crosse, May 11-14. The training will cover sustainable trail design and maintenance practices. Brown stated that if Council Members wish to attend, the DNR would be able to cover their registration fees.
- There has been no official application to revert the rail corridor the Cheese Country Trail is on back to rail use as of January 10. The deadline for these applications is about two weeks away. Brown will let the Council know if there are any applications for the rail reversion, or other new developments.

11:45 A.M. – Other Business

- There will be a hearing on January 20, 2010 of the Joint Legislative Council regarding two of the proposed bills from the Non-motorized Trails Legislative Committee (Senate Bill 264 relating to trespass by operators of snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, and other off-road vehicles; and Senate Bill 266 relating to creating a Non-motorized Recreation and Transportation Trails Council). Written testimony is accepted if people are not able to attend the hearing. Harden stated that the Wisconsin All-Terrain Vehicle Association (WATVA) has supported the bills. Phillips stated that even though there may not be current funding available for a Non-Motorized Trails Council, it is important for the bill to pass, so that the option is available in the future if a funding mechanism became available to support the council.
- Webber stated there will be a hearing on snowmobiles on January 20 at the same time (Assembly Bill 598 relating to snowmobile registration, trail use sticker requirements, intoxicated snowmobiling, snowmobile speed limits, calculating the estimated snowmobile gas tax payment, funding for alcohol education programs and state trails, providing penalties, and making appropriations). Brown will send out information on these hearings following the meeting.
- The NRB will continue to discuss the issue of hunting seasons at the January 26-27 meeting. Phillips stated he would like to see no hunting seasons during the month of October because it is a month which sees a lot of outdoor recreation by trail users. McFadzen stated the public comment period is over, but any rules the NRB proposes would still have to go to the Legislature for a final decision, and the public will be able to keep involved at the legislative level. Brown stated that the proposed seasons were different for the Kettle Moraine Forest. Phillips asked if the Council would be interested in drafting a letter or statement regarding the hunting seasons. Thornton stated the Council may want to wait until after the NRB meeting before deciding on what action to take. Harden stated he would like to add the topic to the next meeting agenda. Brown will invite a DNR wildlife representative to the April STC meeting.



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11:50 A.M. – Public Comment

- Ken Linzmeyer stated he was appalled at the Council for accepting the new Tourism/Business seat on the Council that was influenced by Senator Holperin's recommendation to the Governor. Linzmeyer stated he was disappointed that there have been no firm dates to take action on any of the recommendations proposed by the Ad Hoc Committee, was very disappointed at the slowness of the Council to work with the Legislature to make the necessary changes to increase the membership on the Council, and asked that Maletzke and the most recently reappointed council members to resign immediately. Harden stated that the appointment process for the open seat was already in progress before the STC had their formal vote to pass the revised Ad Hoc Committee recommendations on October 16. Harden stated he was confident the Council could move forward with the recommendations, if accepted by the Governor, but the timeline may not be as fast as everyone would like. Thornton stated that it is important to remember that the STC is the Governor's Council, and the Governor has the power to appoint or remove any member, and can accept or deny any recommendation.
- John Newton with the Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association stated he was willing to assist the Council as they work to restructure the membership. Newton stated it is important for the public to get involved in the process even if their recommendations are not always accepted.
- Luana Schneider stated she agreed with everything Linzmeyer presented and was disappointed how the STC appointment process has occurred. Schneider stated she would like to see the Tourism/Business representative removed to open the seat for a trail user. Schneider asked if there was an update on a motorized state recreation area. Brown stated there has been no update since the last meeting. Schneider asked if anything in writing was sent to the Governor's office. Harden stated he had sent the Ad Hoc Committee report and the minutes from the October STC meeting which highlighted the changes the STC made to the committee recommendations.
- John Schnorr stated that WOHVA has reached an agreement with the Mole Lake Band of Lake Superior Chippewa to extend the use of motorized vehicles on their trails through 2011. Schnorr invited Council Members and DNR staff to see they type of recreational opportunities the 4-Wheel Drive community is working on. WOHVA will be out on the trails every summer weekend in 2010 and 2011. Brown stated the DNR is interested in having trail design and construction training focused for motorized trails in the future and welcomed involvement from WOHVA.
- Tom Rulseh with the Oneida County Biking and Walking Trails Council stated it was important for trail advocates to emphasize the health benefits of trails, especially when appealing for funding, or achieving other goals. Rulseh stated he has seen the economic benefits of trails in Wisconsin highlighted, most recently in the economic impact study for the Gandy Dancer State Trail, but not health benefits, and encouraged the Council to use creative thinking for new ideas to promote healthful activities. Brown stated the DNR has a webpage on the health benefits of trails and would appreciate input on that page. Webber stated she has worked for many years on this issue with the Wisconsin Partnership for Activity and Nutrition (WIPAN), which is a coalition of health groups, and will give Rulseh more information following the meeting.

12:00 P.M. – Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn by Huber. Seconded by Webber. Meeting adjourned.

April Agenda Items

- Presentation for "Open the Outdoors"
- Discussion of Hunting Seasons, DNR Wildlife Representative(s) to be Invited