

**MEETING MINUTES OF
PRAIRIE TRAILS CLUB INC.**

**BLPOA Community Center
6996 South S.R. 10
Knox (Bass Lake), Indiana**

March 14, 2019

MEMBERS

Diane Blais
Russell Blais
Linda Byer
Paul Byer
Bruce Fingerhut
Kathy Lucas
Steve Lucas
Brian McMillin
Anita McMillin
Deb Mix
Sharon Smead
Rick Vlaming

GUESTS

Bob Albert, HVRM Liaison

Call to Order by President

Bruce Fingerhut, President, called to order a meeting of the Prairie Trails Club Inc. ("PTC") at 6:08 pm, CDT (7:08 pm, EDT) on March 14, 2019 in the Bass Lake Property Owners Association Community Center, Bass Lake, Indiana.

Approval of December 6, 2018 Minutes

Brian McMillin moved to approve the draft minutes as written as the final minutes of the December 6, 2018 meeting. Paul Byer seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Election of Membership Officers

Bruce nominated Carolla Heilstedt as President and Steve Lucas seconded the motion. No other nominations were made. Carolla was elected by consensus.

Sharon Smead moved to reelect Rhonda Milner as Vice President, Steve Lucas Secretary, Kathy Lucas Treasurer and Linda Byer Liaison to the Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum.

(HVRM). Anita McMillin seconded the motion. No other nominations were made. These officers were reelected by consensus.

Report of Board of Directors Meeting Held on February 9, 2019

Steve said the main purpose of the meeting was to take action on commitment of \$5,000 from PTC unrestricted funds as contribution toward the 20% local match required for our Next Level Trails Program grant request. Bruce, Diane Blais, Carolla and Steve (a quorum) were present in person for the meeting. Voting was in person or by electronic means. Six of seven members voted to approve the \$5,000 match. One member did not vote. The \$5,000 commitment was approved and should be reflected as Restricted funding.

Treasurer's Report

Kathy circulated copies of the Treasurer's Report for the period beginning January 1, 2019. The report provided in substantive parts:

I) First Farmers Bank & Trust (FFBT)

Balance forward from 12/31/18 **\$ 20,021.47**

INCOME

02/05/19 Deposit <i>Memorial to B. Lucas: Norem, Kallin, Berg</i>	200.00
02/07/19 Deposit <i>Lifetime Membership: G. Wittig</i>	250.00
02/07/19 Deposit <i>Memorial to B. Lucas: McLaughlin</i>	30.00
02/08/19 Deposit <i>Memorial to B. Lucas: Dolezal</i>	50.00
02/08/19 Deposit <i>Hardesty Grant: Local Match Grant</i>	5,000.00
02/11/19 Deposit <i>Memorial to B. Lucas: Croyle, Ezra</i>	125.00
02/15/19 Deposit <i>Luminous Fund: Local Match Grant</i>	5,000.00
03/05/19 Deposit <i>Memorial to B. Lucas: Stalbrink</i>	50.00
03/05/19 Deposit <i>Memorial to B. Lucas: Blais</i>	25.00

03/11/19 Deposit 48.25
Membership & Donation: J. Milausnic (less PayPal fee)

03/11/19 Deposit 50.00
Memorial to B.Lucas: BK Givens

Total Income 10,828.25

EXPENSES

01/03/19 Check #1026 -1,000.00
SCILL: Bike Rack materials

01/23/19 Check #1031 216.00
Webmaster, Precept Partners, signage link

02/04/19 Check #1030 35.00
OTES: discounted signs

Total Expenses -1,251.00

Total Transactions 9,577.25

Ending FFBT balance as of 03/14/19 29,598.72

II) Northern Indiana Community Foundation (NICF)

NICF balance as of 12/31/18 3,930.82
Reflects Interest of \$30.16 & Admin Fee of \$100.30

Total of 2 accounts: \$33,529.54

Kathy said that included were more than \$500 donated in honor of Betty Jean Lucas, a long-time member of the PTC who died this winter. These donations were “particularly gratifying and were also much appreciated by Steve and me and our family.” Steve added his concurrence to these comments.

Kathy reported that among the receipts were a welcomed lifetime membership by Dr. Greg Wittig. “We all miss him and hope he can rejoin us in person in the near future at the PTC.”

Steve said he wanted to make a few remarks about a \$2,000 donation from the Mitchel-Kane Charitable Fund. “This donation was received in mid-December and so is reflected in the December minutes that included financial activities through the end of last year, rather than the March minutes. Jennifer (Mitchel) Kane was the long-time paralegal for my office in the Indiana Natural Resources Commission until her December retirement.” She and husband Jim made the donation after she learned about PTC efforts to obtain

the Next Level Trails Program grant. Jennifer’s expressed hope was that we can extend the Erie Trail but understood we might not receive the grant so its availability is not limited to this purpose. “She told me in early December she intended to have her Charitable Fund make a donation, but on receipt I was stunned by the level of generosity.”

Kathy then distributed a written breakdown of restricted and unrestricted funding. The substance of the distribution is set forth below:

RESTRICTED GRANTS/DONATIONS

Luminous Fund 1 (2017)	Signage for Bass Lake Spur	\$386.56
Luminous Fund 2 (2018)	Signage for Bass Lake General	5,000.00
Luminous Fund 3 (2019)	Match NLT Grant	5,000.00
Hardesty Memorial Grant	Wayfinding/Interpretive Signs	8,557.28
Hardesty Memorial Grant (2019)	Match NLT Grant	5,000.00
PTC Commitment	Match NLT Grant	5,000.00
K&S Lucas Donation	K. Witting Mem. Landscaping	100.00
Jain Trucking	Picnic Tables	100.00
Arlene Noble	Bench at 300 East	350.00
Peggy & Rich Stalbrink	Bench (Location TBD)	350.00
Steve & Kathy Lucas	Bench at Lena Park	350.00
	TOTAL	\$30,193.84

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS	TOTAL	RESTRICTED	UNRESTRICTED
First Farmers Bank & Trust	\$29,500.47	\$27,193.84	\$4,306.63
Northern Indiana Community Foundation	3,930.82	3,000.00	930.82
BREAKDOWN	\$33,431.29	\$30,193.84	\$3,237.45

Kathy provided a verbal update of Restricted and Unrestricted funds. She said that even though commitments to the Next Level Trails Program grant application have reduced available Unrestricted funds, the PTC continues to have a reasonable margin for current operations.

Bruce reflected the bench donated by the Bass Lake Wine Club for the Karen Wittig memorial has been purchased, a foundation set and the bench affixed. He asked why \$100 would remain in the restricted category described as a “K&S Lucas Donation”. Kathy answered it was an auxiliary donation to provide funding for landscaping—perhaps the purchase of a tree or other plant. The landscaping has not yet been completed.

Bruce reported he spoke to Murray Jain of Jain Trucking. Murray told Bruce the \$100 amount for picnic tables could now be used for any purpose associated with management of the Erie Trail. With this information Kathy said that she would, in the next Treasurer’s Report, include Jain Trucking’s \$100 donation in the Unrestricted category.

Sharon said that she had understood one bench had been reserved by the Marshall County Horse Association for dedication along the Erie Trail. Steve said one of the five benches obtained from Green Tree Recycling in November was slated for dedication by the Horse Association. If the trail extension grant is approved, it might be a good fit for placement of this bench along the new trail section, but the PTC should accommodate the wishes of the Marshall County Horse Association. Kathy said if the Horse Association passes along to her a \$350 donation before the next meeting, she would reference the donation and include an April reference in the Restricted category. The grant application seeks the inclusion of an equestrian trail to County Road 700 East.

Sharon moved to approve the Treasurer's Report including the update of Restricted and Unrestricted funds. Russell Blais seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Trail Extension Workgroup Report

Bruce reported the Workgroup submitted a timely application on February 15 for a Next Level Trails Program grant request. If granted the result would be a 2.1 mile extension of the Erie Trail southeast of US Highway 35. He said Carolla coordinated efforts of the workgroup and accomplished the requisite electronic filing.

Kathy reflected on the extraordinary team effort that was required. Members of the Workgroup were Larry Wickert, Kathy Carrier, Carolla, Bruce, Russ, Steve and she. Kathy identified the special efforts by Carolla in organizing financials, by Larry in getting several local endorsements, and by Larry and Bruce working in concert with the HVRM to address the needed property consent documentation.

Russ said the cooperation by local officials and citizens was remarkable. He offered thanks to them.

Kathy said Steve worked with representatives of the American Discovery Trail and US Bike Route 35 to keep these organizations in the loop. After the PTC had submitted the grant application, the ADT provided a letter of support. Carolla tendered the ADT letter to the DNR following the application deadline, and the agency agreed to accept it as part of the application. She said Steve also spoke with an INDOT representative who recently called to say the agency intended to work with the PTC to modify its route if the extension is constructed.

Steve circulated a paper copy of the application submitted by Carolla, including addition of the ADT support letter. He said when the PTC first discussed last September what was to become the Next Level Trails Program grant program, the understanding was that the competition would be intense and the likelihood of receiving funding a long shot. The understanding has proven to be accurate. Governor Holcomb issued a press release on February 27 that reported "the first round of the Next Level Trails grant program has received 82 applications requesting a total of nearly \$144 million in funding. The applicants are from 42 of the state's 92 counties and their requests total more than 240 potential miles hiking, biking and riding trails." Only \$25 million are available for grants in this first allocation stage.

Bruce reflected that the PTC would provide more trail miles per dollar than the average by grant applicants. Russ added that the PTC project is "shovel ready" and would benefit both the ADT and USBR35 which DNR has said are priorities. Kathy said similarly the Erie Trail is a "Visionary Trail", as defined by DNR, and the extension would bring the Erie Trail closer to making connections with two other Visionary Trails, the Panhandle Pathway and the Nickel Plate Trail, other factors said to be priorities. Deb she has had experience with seeking Federal grants, which are demanding, and the documentation for this application is better than she has seen for most Federal applications. The sentiment was that whether the application succeeds, the effort is one about which membership should be proud.

Updates on Signage

Steve reported Paul and he did the final seasonal placement of ADT-USBR35 signage on December 17. Most intersections now have these signs, but placement is yet needed at Erie Trail intersections on Starke County Roads 250 West, 700 South, 125 East (Aldine) and 800 South. “We might hold off on anything more for 800 South until the pending grant application is decided.” If the grant application is approved, adjustments to planned signage would be needed for the east portion of the Erie Trail.

During our December meeting, the membership made recommendations to the Town of North Judson for a directional sign at Norwayne Field. Proofs for two size options were subsequently printed by OTES and delivered to Andrew Rowe, Clerk Treasurer. Steve said a meeting has been scheduled with Andrew for tomorrow (March 15) to facilitate a final decision by the Town concerning size selection, as well as location of the sign within Norwayne Field.

During the December meeting, Rick Vlaming volunteered to develop a template for a structure to erect the you-are-here signs. He said after consulting with builders who are familiar with plastic posts, he recommended that wood be used instead. Plastic posts have “memory” and will become permanently bent following serious wind events. He brought a plywood backing that can be used to affix the you-are-here signs. Rick and Bruce discussed strategies for extending the life of signs and discouraging vandalism or theft. Paul said wooden posts removed during the recent ADT-USBR35 signage effort could be repurposed for the you-are-here signs.

Kathy circulated small print-outs of interpretive signage prepared by Yancy Lucas for a site at Bass Lake and for a site at Lena Park. She again thanked Bob Albert for allowing the use of his postcard depicting a C&O Railroad stop for promotion of Lena Park in the early 20th Century. The depicted stop is south of the Erie Lackawanna railroad, now the Erie Trail, but within the former platted limits of Lena Park. Bob said he was pleased with incorporation of the postcard which he had purchased on eBay. The electronic files for the interpretive signage are large, but when successfully delivered, will be printed by OTES on the same material as used for the you-are-here signs.

Depicted on the next page is a proof for one of two panels that would make up Lena Park interpretative signage. This panel includes the postcard shared by Bob Albert. Support for development and placement of the Lena Park panels was provided by the Hardesty Memorial Endowment Fund. Similarly, support for the Bass Lake panels was provided by the Luminous Fund. The PTC is most appreciative of Bob and these wonderful Funds for their continuing commitment to our organization, the Erie Trail, and the people of Starke County.

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LENA PARK is the new Manufacturing Town, less than one year old and is 2 1/2 miles long and 1 1/2 miles wide; has three railroads, a number of factories now being built and is rapidly becoming a Great City; only surpassed by the World's most rapid growth town, Gary, Indiana.

MANY PERSONS who bought lots there during the great rush to Lena Park last Fall, have sold them for many times the amount paid. Many bought lots and sold them the same day for more than double the amount paid.

THOUSANDS OF LOTS are now being platted and sold at prices many times the amounts at which they sold last Fall.

BOULEVARD ADDITION, is a new subdivision and in order to get people interested in it, we are **GIVING AWAY** a limited number of the lots in each Block, knowing that if we give you a lot, you will tell your friends and will probably want one or more adjoining, or your friends may want one.

ANYONE OWNING A LOT or lots any place in the town will make a handsome profit in a very short time as this is a new Town and is rapidly growing.

A small charge will be made for furnishing **Guarantee Policy** or **Abstract of Title** showing title free and clear.

Don't fail to make your application at once as there is but a limited number of these lots to be GIVEN AWAY and they are going fast.

J. H. KOREN & CO.
 Phone 5087 Central Room 506, 100 Washington St.
 See Back Sheet for Location Plat

Unloading 2500 People at
LENA PARK, IND.



Made Especially
for
The Square Realty Co.
(Not Inc)

"Lena Park Special"

"Cut glass had to be cut before it was covered with a wax (on the inside) then placed on wire racks and dipped into an acid filled vat - left for a number of minutes - taken out - wax removed and washed.

They employed about 40 people. The factory was right along the C. & O. Railroad approximately five miles from North Judson, C. & O. excursions came from Chicago each Sunday to promote lot sales.

Those who worked at the factory came from adjoining farms. Many of the employees purchased pieces. I still have one piece I treasure."

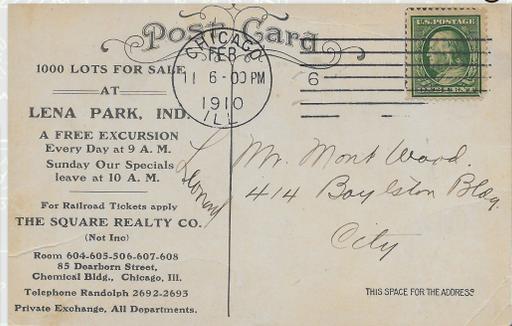
-Minnie Dell Lacy

Transporting the Future

Advertising flyers hoped interest in the Lena Park development and featured promotional offerings such as free lots (6). The *Lena Park Special* offered excursions from Chicago on the C. & O. Railroad in an effort to promote lot sales. Picture postcards touted groups of 2,500 people attending the grounds (7), though newspaper accounts of the time suggested lower turnout.

Check out the *Prairie Trails Club* website for more information!





Special thanks to Bob Albert and the Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum for allowing use of their images!
 visit their website at hoosiervalley.org

Consideration of Spring and Summer Group Bike Rides

The North Judson Mint Festival 2019 will be held, as has been the Mint Festival tradition, on Fathers Day Weekend. The theme this year will be "Celebrating Our Hometown Champions". A parade closes the event on Sunday, June 16. Bruce agreed to chair a committee to develop a bike ride to highlight PTC presence and activities as part of the parade.

A joint bike ride with participation from the Bass Lake Property Owners Association and the PTC was tentatively scheduled for July 20 at 9:00 am, CDT at the BLPOA Community Center. The event would emphasize recent Erie Trail improvements. If the PTC receives a grant to extend the trail across US 35, the event would also bring attention to the new opportunities the extension would provide to Bass Lake residents and visitors. Russ and Steve will assist in coordinating this event.

During the August 2018 meeting, it was reported that PTC member Thomas I. Jones, M.D., urged the members to consider developing monthly bicycle rides from Bass Lake during the spring and summer of 2019. Sharon then said the concept would encourage exercise and provide better public understanding of the Erie Trail. Russ and Diane will work with the BLPOA to measure the level of interest. If there is significant interest, they would help communicate when rides are scheduled. These would be in addition to the joint bike ride with the PTC on July 20.

Update on Bike Racks Grant from KVREMC Operation Round Up

Sharon inquired about the status of the bike racks being developed from a grant by the Trust for Kankakee Vally REMC Operation Round Up. Jerry Gurrado of SCILL agreed to have welding students make bike racks as an in-kind match. She underlined the need to meet the terms of the grant.

Deb responded that she has been in recent contact with SCILL and one of the welding instructors. The instructor said students have fallen behind in class functions with the extraordinary number of school cancellations due to inclement winter weather. Deb said her understanding is “designs are done” for the bike racks, but the racks have not been manufactured. She said she would inquire about the status of bike racks and report back to the membership at the next meeting.

Consideration of Making NIPSCO Action Grant Application

Russ suggested the membership consider making a grant application to NIPSCO for the education portion of our application to KVREMC that was not approved last year. This portion has sometimes been referred to as the “science walk”. Environmental Action Grants from NIPSCO provide funding for restoration and education projects in northern Indiana. Grants are available in the amount of \$500 to \$5,000. Applications are accepted through April 5, 2019, with grant awards announced the week of Earth Day, April 22.

Deb said if Kathy would forward documentation for last year’s science walk application she would take the lead in making a NIPSCO Action Grant application. Kathy responded that she would do so and the effort seemed worthwhile. Russ and Sharon will assist Deb.

Review of AmazonSmile Program

Kathy said she received a February 15 letter from AmazonSmile that indicated “one or more Amazon customers have selected to support the Prairie Trails Club Inc. when they shop at AmazonSmile.” In order to enable the receipt of donations from the program, she needed to register with AmazonSmile. Kathy did so. Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of a buyer’s choice. The charitable organization incurs no fee and the buyer incurs no additional cost. Kathy said she makes her purchases through AmazonSmile and will name the PTC as her designated charitable institution.

Deb asked that the link to AmazonSmile be placed in the minutes. Purchases may be made at smile.amazon.com.

Bruce said he uses the AmazonSmile option when making purchases from Amazon. The amount of charitable donation is small but can be productive. He recommended placing a link to the AmazonSmile option on the PTC website.

Diane suggested a link to the AmazonSmile option for PTC be placed in the Bass Lake Property Owners Association newsletter, *Catch and Release*.

Schedule Workday

The membership agreed to schedule a workday for Tuesday, April 23. If inclement weather precludes work on April 23, the date may be rescheduled for April 25. Any or some combination of activities may be performed depending on site conditions:

1. Form or set bases for benches at 300 East and Lena Park (near 100 West).
2. Seal bridges at Bogus Run and Fell Ditch.
3. Place interpretive signs at Lena Park and 800 South.
4. Trash removal.
5. Place USBR35/ADT signage.
6. Complete landscaping at Karen Wittig bench.
7. Prepare and paint signal bungalow.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for the BLPOA Community Center, 6996 South SR 10, Knox (Bass Lake), Indiana on Wednesday, April 24, 2019 at 6:00 pm, CDT (7:00 pm, EDT).

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm, CDT (8:40 pm, EDT).