

MEETING MINUTES OF PRAIRIE TRAILS CLUB INC.

BLPOA Community Center
6996 South SR 10
Bass Lake (Knox), Indiana

April 13, 2023

MEMBERS

Diane Blais
Russ Blais
Paul Byer
Joan Hardesty
Kathy Lucas
Steve Lucas
Anita McMillin
Brian McMillin
Rhonda Milner
Deb Mix
Rich Vallicelli
Larry Wickert

GUESTS

Bob Albert, Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum Liaison

Call to Order by President

On April 13, 2023, Rhonda Milner, President, called to order a membership meeting of the Prairie Trails Club Inc. ("PTC") at the BLPOA Community Center, 6996 South SR 10, Knox at 5:38 pm, CDT (6:38 pm, EDT).

Review and Approval of Membership Minutes of March 16, 2023

Paul Byer moved for approval of the membership meeting minutes of March 16, 2023. Joan Hardesty seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Review and Approval of Treasurer's Report and Report of Restricted and Unrestricted Funds

Kathy Lucas distributed written copies of the Treasurer's Report which, with a technical correction to the allocation of Restricted Funds, provides:



Treasurer's Report
April 13, 2023

FIRST FARMERS BANK & TRUST (FFBT)
Balance forward from March 16, 2023

\$67,823.05

INCOME

03/13/23	Rich Stalbrink Memorial Donation ("RSMD"): L. Chester	\$76.72*
03/17/23	RSMD:N. Baehr	96.02*
03/21/23	RSMD: LaCrosse Library, Braje Law, Knoll, Bowe	390.00
03/27/23	RSMD: Blais, Holliday	95.52*
03/27/23	RSMD: Kelly, Delaney, ISPP, Newby Law	350.00
03/27/23	RSMD: LaCrosse Library, Hardesty, Lucas	300.00
03/28/23	RSMD: Oss, Hilbrich Law, Oberlie	350.00
03/28/23	RSMD: Staulbaum, Hunter, Baker	305.00
03/28/23	RSMD: Bohac, Jackson, Snyder	120.00
03/29/23	RSMD: Sienkowski	96.02*
04/05/23	RSMD: Patterson	250.00
04/11/23	RSMD: Knight	18.81*
04/11/23	RSMD: Nikle	25.00
04/11/23	NEW MEMBERSHIP: Mark & Shirley Rippy	<u>50.00</u>
	Total Income	\$2,523.09

*(Reflects Pay/Pal fee)

There were no expenses paid during this period.

ENDING FFBT BALANCE AS OF 4/13/23 \$70,346.14

RESTRICTED/UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

**TOTAL AMOUNTS
PER CATEGORY**

Benches

Blais-Vlaming Bench	For 210/450 site or other	\$350.00	
McMillin Bench	For Bass Lake area	350.00	
			\$700.00

Signage/Web

Luminous Fund Grant #2 (2018)	Signs Bass Lake (incl UR Here)	1,418.54	
Hardesty Memorial Grant	Wayfinding or historic signage	4,055.10	(Reduced \$150 brochure design)
Lucas Lakehouse Guest Donations	Future Vision/Website	662.50	
			\$6,136.14

Northwest (or Other Extension)

Luminous Fund Grant #4 (2020)	NW Extension or operations	5,000.00	
Luminous Fund Grant #5 (2021)	NW Extension or operations	5,000.00	
Luminous Fund Grant #6 (2022)	NW Extension or operations	10,000.00	
Mitchel-Kane Charitable Fund	NW Extension or operations	6,000.00	
VFW Grant	For "trail improvements"	5,000.00	
PTC Contribution to ITP Match	Trail Extension	10,000.00	
Gene Novello	Trail Extension	1,200.00	
Naylor Pipe	Trail Extension	400.00	
			\$42,600.00

Maintenance

Mower Sale Funding	General maintenance	3,368.42	
Hardesty Memorial Fund (Joan)	Trail maintenance	2,518.42	
HVRM (and Buckeye Pipeline)	Trail maintenance	2,368.42	
Rich Stalbrink Mem, Donations	Maintenance or Most Needed	2,473.09 (NEW)	\$10,728.35

Miscellaneous

Stalbrink donation	Scholarship or "most needed"	<u>100.00</u>	\$100.00
--------------------	------------------------------	---------------	----------

TOTAL RESTRICTED 60,314.49

FIRST FARMERS BANK & TRUST	TOTAL IN BANK	\$70,346.14
	— RESTRICTED FUNDS	<u>\$60,264.49</u>
	= UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	\$10,081.65

Kathy said Peg Stalbrink generously identified the Prairie Trails Club for those who wished to donate in Rich Stalbrink's memory. Rich was a great member and friend who had a kind and focused manner that helped us move forward in a productive way. The respect he garnered from those who knew him is shown by the breadth of donations made in his honor. Our hearts go out to Peg and family. Rich will be deeply missed.

Kathy thanked Mark and Shirley Rippy for joining the PTC. She said their commitments and service to Starke County had already been well established.

Diane Blais moved moved to approve the Treasurer's Report and the Report of Restricted and Unrestricted Funds. Paul seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

"North Judson Celebrate Trails Day April 22, 2023" Final Preparations

A workgroup met twice at Rich Vallicelli's home to help formulate plans for the PTC's role in the North Judson version of "Celebrate Trails Day April 22, 2023", a "signature event" of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. These meetings were supported by numerous phone calls, texts, and email messages among the workgroup and with the Conservancy. Final preparations for the event were made during the meeting by the membership as a whole.

Northwest Trail Extension Workgroup Report

The DNR's Division of State Parks is reviewing the PTC's application for an Indiana Trails Program (ITP) grant to determine whether the application achieves technical compliance. The agency sought clarification regarding credit sought for the easement valuation, and regarding steps the PTC would take for the protection of a rare plant (commonly called

"Leiberg's witchgrass"), which has been documented in the project area, if the grant is issued. The PTC has responded to the requests for clarification and is awaiting DNR's reply.

Maintenance Workgroup Report

On March 17 (St.Patrick's Day), Paul, Larry Wickert, Russ Blais and Steve Lucas met with Nick Cohen, CEO of Doral Renewables, LLC, and members of his staff, at the Fell Ditch bridge. Previously, Larry had requested funding from Mammoth Solar, a subsidiary of Doral Renewables. The funding would assist with rehabilitation of the bridge, as well as with vegetation control for areas along the trail east of Range Road. The onsite meeting was cordial and encouraging, but no final decisions were made.



Paul developed an agreement with a local farmer to have brush removed along the trail in the vicinity of Fell Ditch. Work completed in mid-March illustrated how the PTC could benefit from Doral funding for brush removal on other parts of the trail.

Informal Review of HVRM Activities

Bob Albert, Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum Liaison to the PTC, reported upon the great success of the Easter Trains. Ten thousand eggs were distributed from hunts among 1,100 riders. He said regular Saturday train rides resume on May 6. No special events are planned for that day. He also reported the Northern Indiana Railroad has been sold.

Wayfinding Signage

As anticipated in our March meeting, Yancy Lucas prepared high-resolution proofs for all eight of the wayfinding (you-are-here type) signs needed to either replace obsolete or supplement existing signs. Proofs for the signs were sent electronically to OTES Signs & Graphics, and on April 10 OTES stated it would place them in production.

Riley 5K Run

PTC member, Kevin Kennedy, passed along that Peru schools are hosting the Riley Run on Saturday, May 13, beginning at 8:00 a.m., CDT (9:00 a.m., EDT) at 907 West Main Street, Peru, with tickets starting at \$25. The event is a 5K Walk/Run to raise money for Riley Children's Hospital in Indianapolis.

Trail Counters Update

Joan Hardesty provided an update on data collected at the PTC's two trail counters on the eastern portion of the Erie Trail. She circulated printouts documenting recent trail usage.

Membership Meetings

Rhonda confirmed the membership meeting previously set for Thursday, May 11, 2023 at 5:30 p.m., CDT (6:30 p.m., EDT) in the BLPOA Community Center, Bass Lake (Knox).

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m., CDT (8:03 p.m., EDT).