

TOWN OF SHELBY

County of La Crosse

State of Wisconsin



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APPROVED

Park and Vacant Land Committee Draft Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, August 1, 2022

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Location: 2800 Ward Ave, La Crosse, WI 54601

Present: Co-Chairperson Renee Knutson, Co-Chairperson Tim Ehler, Committee Members Jeffrey Butler, Monica Redmond, Jean Wiggert, Brad Reinhart and Josh Blum, Administrator Christina Peterson, and Town Clerk Fortune Weaver.

Excused: Committee Member Meredith Tomesh

Attendance List: Jed Olson (ORA, Bluffland Coalition & 3401 Farnam St).

1. Meeting called to order by Knutson at 5:34 p.m. Knutson noted the gap since the last meeting. Knutson encouraged members to vote on logo options. Welcomed everyone back.
2. Minutes from 5/9/2022. Knutson noted typo under number 8. Discussion on Number 5, Knutson wanted to know if the sand removal at trailheads has been addressed. Peterson stated it hasn't been communicated to Public Works as an issue that needs to be addressed. Public Works will receive communication from either Knutson or Peterson. Motion by Butler to approve minutes from 5/9/2022 with changes, second by Redmond. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Citizens' Concerns. Jed Olson (ORA, Bluffland Coalition and Shelby resident, 3401 Farnam St)- Olson commented on the Bluffland Traverse projects. Olson encouraged the town to minimize blanket restrictions on things like bikes, noting that mountain bike teams use the trails near his home as practice trails. Olson believes a blanket closure to bikes is something that would hurt trails in this area. Blum stated he was unaware of discussion on banning bikes in any certain place, wants to know when it was discussed. Knutson agrees that there has never been a specific ban on bikes, she knows that motorized bikes are less welcome on trails. Knutson noted the focus should be on no motorized vehicles on trails as that is being seen more often and more concerns by residents are being communicated about motorized vehicles being utilized on trails. Ehler asked about electric bikes, Blum noted no issues with type one pedal assists. Reinhart and Blum agree if there is a throttle then that should be prohibited. Olson reiterated the need for acceptance about E-Bikes, Blum noted it's being talked about more in other communities in a good light. Type one pedal assist bikes are the closest to a motorized vehicle that would be allowed on a natural ground trail. Knutson will make sure to pay attention to terminology that will be proposed. Peterson noted when the Nelson Property was discussed and its right next to the Baier Property, but Baier does not allow bicycles. Olson noted that the signage could say no bikes past this point and then visitors either must walk their bikes past that certain point or they will have to turn around.
4. Trail Signage. Knutson passed around the trail signage examples she has seen. Knutson noted a larger sign that includes all information could be an option. Knutson added any signage that stood out and would be useful for town parks, should be shared with the committee. Knutson noted that the town needs to rework ordinances to reflect issues that pertain to parks and trails. Reinhart commented that the signage should have the ordinance listed to make it enforceable. Blum noted getting more positive use of parks and trails would be helpful. Knutson noted the overgrowth makes certain areas less inviting. Knutson reiterated if the committee members see any signs for public or private property that could inspire the creation of a sign that would be for town of Shelby trails, it should be passed along. Knutson noted there is still work to do on the Nelson Property connection.

Knutson noted options for notifying users about the restrictions with bikes. Blum noted Friendship Gardens require visitors to dismount their bikes. Ehler noted the Town Board would make the final decision on this. Blum noted that Hixon has some trails that do not allow bikes. Reinhart stated where the trail is conducive to bike use with amicable property owners and terrain, he would be in favor of bikers use, and where those things don't exist, no bikes should be allowed. Redmond also noted that the committee needs to keep in mind shared use, narrow trails should probably not allow bike traffic. Redmond reiterated that bikes could be permitted on some trails and not others. Reinhart mentioned responsible use. Butler noted the signage overall needs updating. Knutson noted that the Butterfly Trail will connect through the Beyer property and down to La Crosse Floral. Discussion on options for less able-bodied individuals. Jed noted areas where campfires could be allowed. Blum noted primitive camp pads, that allow for undeveloped camping for walk-in/hike-in campers could be explored on certain lands. Peterson noted committees and boards need to be mindful of the limited town staff and resources.

5. Timing on Updating the Gazebo and Painting Pickleball Lines at Upper Wedgewood Terrace. Discussion on gazebo repairs needed. No structural issues on gazebo. Wimberly from the road crew shared issues with putting lights on last winter. Peterson will reach out to Public Works and confirm status. September 1st is likely the date to finish road work and some miscellaneous projects will be finished after that, but it does sound like the lines will be painted this year. Landscaping projects will be completed soon. Weaver noted the plant delivery was delayed twice.
6. Logo Review. Knutson reminded everyone to vote for logos. Knutson noted the logo options are grayscale, and the review should be for the design. This committee should narrow it down to three choices and the board will make the final decision.
7. Donation Request for Park Bench. Eagle Scout will be at the town board meeting to donate funds for a bench to complete the project in Mormon Coulee. When the scout came to propose his project, the bench didn't meet the town standard, and the funds he raised would not cover the entire cost of a bench that would meet the standard.
8. Metal Benches for Mormon Coulee Park. Knutson noted as of December 2021 a bench was \$1,421.00, freight was \$210.00, an optional plaque was \$360.00. Knutson noted costs have gone up and now a bench will cost \$1,506.00, freight will cost \$260.00, and an optional plaque will cost \$365.00. Knutson asked if the committee wants to reach out for more donations with the funds or should they try and revisit the drawing board. Reinhart and Redmond agreed the committee should try to keep the aesthetic the same. Benches are built for longevity. Ehler and Knutson agree Mormon Coulee is a Premier Park and consistency is important. Potential to choose a different bench style for other parks. Committee agrees to move forward with metal benches for consistency. Donation brochure for benches and trees for memorials will be drafted.
9. Nelson Property Update and Bluffland Coalition recommendation to County to Approve. Peterson noted the Purchase Agreement has been completed. Peterson requested reimbursement from the Bluffland Coalition. Bluffland gave their blessing to apply but county must receive and approve the application for approximately 50%. The Nelson Property in addition to the in-kind property (Birnbaum Property) would give the town the full refund of the \$5,000.00 spent. Peterson will check on all options to obtain the best reimbursement for the town.
10. Bluffland Traverse – Bluffland Coalition Trail revamped and named. Knutson noted initially the Bluffland Coalition had a rough game plan of where they wanted the trails to be, they've been reworking it and have decided to name the new trail system the Bluffland Traverse Route. Major changes include a few points where the trail is all on public lands and roads. Olson noted it's similar to the Ice Age Trail and Appalachian Trail. This trail is a total of 60 miles from Goose Island to the northern border of La Crosse County and can be completed in a few days. As different connector trails are built on, less and less will be on public roads and streets. The trail is useable right now, but

not all is just trails (some connections are on public roads). Knutson noted limited access with some of the areas in the northern border and certain restrictions from DNR from the minutes from the last Bluffland Coalition meeting. Peterson noted improvement of existing trails would assist with making some of those connections. Olson mentioned survey for parks and rec sent to Shelby residents in 2015-16 and county comprehensive plan. Blum mentioned the trail from Alpine Inn behind Arbor Hills existed before the gateway trails were even planned, and the trail makes even more sense now. Butler noted the Trane Property where they are thinking about building the high school, property behind trail connects to Chad Erickson trail. This committee wouldn't be able to formally discuss or decide anything about the property, but the town may take a stance with the Bluffland Coalition.

11. Shelter Rental Info. Knutson mentioned ideas for receiving feedback from Mormon Coulee Park. Forms for Renting the shelter and a QR code that people can scan and refer to the website to rent should be added to the shelter. Knutson added a plexiglass holder for forms for renters who can take information home with them would be an easy way to get the word out. Peterson noted the town should investigate renting the concession stand for extra revenue. Committee agreeable to the idea. Discussion on special pricing for nonprofits and employees.
12. Low Grow Sumac for Steep Park Areas. Knutson noted areas in Shelby that are getting dangerous to mow, discussed with Public Works. Knutson noted low grow sumac is native, does not require a lot of maintenance, and is easy to grow. Knutson recommends for Public Works to investigate something like this, that would eliminate the need for mowing. Steep slopes could be planted with this and eventually steps could be added to help park goers get down a steep slope. Wiggert noted putting in steps means needing to put in handrails and ramps to allow for accessibility. Knutson noted the accessibility of all the parks needs to be addressed.
13. Budget Status. Peterson noted that out of the \$20,000.00 this committee has spent around \$7,000.00, noting gutters for Mormon Coulee Park were about \$2,000.00, and block and concrete for the retaining wall was about \$4,600.00. Knutson noted the logo still needs to be decided on and then the signage will be completed for frisbee golf.
14. Administrator Report.
 - a. Peterson reported that the Shelby Ball season has officially ended. No final numbers yet, but it looks like the program will be breaking even. The Shelby Ball Committee will investigate options for making some money to support the needs of the program.
 - b. Peterson reported on the Transportation Alternative Grant for the Goose Island Connector Trail. This is a DOT regional project; Shelby is the sponsor. This will be ready to go after the DOT does the second phase of their project (a few years out). The US Fish and Wildlife Service is to commit to paying a portion for a Federal Land Access Project. Once the agreement is settled, the parking lot will be put in. The Town should not be responsible for any funds for this project.
 - c. Peterson called for anything park related for the newsletter. No responses.
15. Public Works Report.
 - a. Peterson reported a few projects ongoing, namely, Gazebo and Pickleball Courts.
 - b. Peterson reported that Public Works will be focusing on roads and brush for the foreseeable future.
16. Co-Chairperson/Commissioner Reports.
 - a. Knutson reviewed a request received from a new resident via email who has a disabled son and wanted to ask the town to consider installing inclusive chairs on the swings that are useable by individuals with mobility and stability issues.
17. Future Agenda Items. None.
18. Adjournment. Motion by Butler, second by Blum to adjourn at 6:54 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting on November 7, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall (2800 Ward Ave, La Crosse, WI 54601)

Respectfully Submitted, Fortune M. Berg