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REGULAR MEETING of the PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION
Via Teleconferencing – GoToMeeting
Access code: 637300933, or by phone 1-872-240-3311

CALL TO ORDER: The Tuesday, February 16, 2021 Regular Meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairperson Olijnyk at 7:00 p.m.

Voting Members Present: Brian Blust, Robin Buxar, Ken Elwert, Linda Gamage, Steve Sage (*arrived 7:31 p.m.*), Jeff Stout, David Walker

Voting Alternates Present: David Becker (*voting until 7:31 p.m.*)

Non-Voting Alternates Present: Dave Mabry, Theresa Mungioli, Martha Olijnyk

Voting Members Absent: Donni Steele

Alternates Absent: Julia Dalrymple, Ann Peterson, Chris Shepard

Village of Lake Orion Non-Voting Member Absent: Doug Hobbs

Village of Lake Orion Non-Voting Alternate Absent: Jerry Narsh

Others Present: Melissa Ford, Trail Manager, Chris Gray, Assistant Trail Manager, Sandi DiSipio, Recording Secretary

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: All rose and recited the Pledge.

VIRTUAL MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT: Vice-Chairperson Olijnyk stated the purpose of the electronic meeting is to maintain social distancing and comply with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Emergency Order. The meeting will be held electronically by video conference through GoToMeeting.com. The video conference can be accessed by downloading the GoToMeeting app, the meeting number is 637300933. Public comment and questions will be accepted during the meeting at an appropriate time. Please silence your audio and wait for direction from the Chair of the meeting. Please be advised there will be a three minute limit for public comment. You may also send correspondence regarding this meeting to the Paint Creek Trailways office addressed to 4393 Collins Rd., Rochester, Michigan 48306. You may also email your comments or concerns to manager@paintcreektrail.org. A copy of the meeting materials may be found on the Commission's website or may be reviewed at the Commission office by appointment.

Per the virtual meeting requirement, all members present stated their name, that they are attending virtually, and where they are calling in from – Martha Olijnyk, Oakland Township, David Becker, Rochester, Brian Blust, Oakland Township, Robin Buxar, Oakland Township, Ken Elwert (having audio problems, but later stated he was attending from Orion Township), Linda Gamage, Rochester, Dave Mabry, Oakland Township, Theresa Mungioli, Rochester Hills, Jeff Stout, Orion Township, David Walker, Rochester Hills.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: It was noted there was a mistake in the December Treasurer's Report, which was approved at the last meeting. Vice-Chair Olijnyk feels this needs to be added

to the agenda to be re-approved as this is a voting item. Ms. Gray explained she spoke with the auditor to get his guidance. His suggestion was the report be redistributed with the correction, but because the amounts were correct and only tied to the wrong revenue item, he didn't feel it needed to be approved, but it's up to the Commission. She also talked to Chairperson Steele, and she concurred with the auditor. Ms. Olijnyk feels that because it was approved as part of a consent agenda, it would be appropriate to bring it back to make sure we're approving the correction. This issue will be brought up after the invoices are discussed.

MOTION by Buxar, seconded by Becker, *Moved*, to approve the February 16, 2021 agenda as amended.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Becker, Blust, Buxar, Elwert, Gamage, Stout, Walker

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CONSENT AGENDA:

a. Minutes – January 19, 2021 Regular Meeting, approve and file

b. Treasurer's Report – January 2021

MOTION by Buxar, seconded by Stout, *Moved*, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Becker, Blust, Buxar, Elwert, Gamage, Stout, Walker

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF INVOICES: Ms. Ford presented the list of invoices totaling \$1,875.04. In addition to the recorder's fee, this amount includes credit card charges for postage, one year renewal to WebHosting Pad and GoToMeeting charges for January and February; Mounted and Bike Patrol Services for October 2020, and the attorney's invoice for license agreement review. Estimated unrestricted fund balance is \$80,000. Mr. Stout asked if there is a breakdown from Oakland County for the October services. Ms. Gray explained this invoice was for the second half of October, and they came in under budget by 480 hours due to COVID and the very warm weather in August.

MOTION by Becker, seconded by Buxar, *Moved*, that the invoices presented for payment are approved in the amount of \$1,875.04 and orders be drawn for payment.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Becker, Blust, Buxar, Elwert, Gamage, Stout, Walker

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

DISCUSSION OF DECEMBER 2020 TREASURER'S REPORT: Ms. Gray explained the treasurer's report that was approved, in the revenue items for the Friends of the Paint Creek Trail, the amounts were flipped between the donations and the reimbursement on the Pollinator Garden sign. The amounts were correct, but not in the right line items. A corrected report was displayed. The Vice-Chair suggested a motion be made to receive and accept the corrected Treasurer's Report.

MOTION by Gamage, seconded by Buxar, *Moved*, to receive and accept the corrected December 2020 Treasurer's Report.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Becker, Blust, Buxar, Elwert, Gamage, Stout, Walker

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

DISCUSSION/APPROVAL: Eagle Scout Project – Tienken & Atwater Kiosks: Ms. Ford introduced Mr. Quinten Schell, the Eagle Scout proposing to replace the kiosks at Atwater and at

Tienken. Mr. Schell stated he plans to replace the two kiosks which are the last original signs built from cedar. He plans to make them standard with the other kiosks. Ms. Olijnyk indicated we recently had another scout that replaced one of the kiosks, and asked if the applicant is using the plans from that project. Mr. Schell said it should be, but may have to make some subtle changes as the plans are not too clear from a construction standpoint. Overall, it will be the same plan. Ms. Ford provided Mr. Schell with the plans the last scout compiled, and this is what's included in the application. They will be uniform with the other three kiosks' design. Mr. Elwert commented the applicant is proposing fundraising for his project, and this is appreciated. Ms. Olijnyk suggested Mr. Schell let Ms. Ford know when he is collecting the cans, so the Commission can help out with donations. Mr. Schell offered to pick up any cans donated. In looking at the plans, Mr. Becker asked if a shelf is proposed protruding from the bottom of the device. Mr. Schell said he was provided with the plans and the kiosks will be uniform with the others. Ms. Ford confirmed the other kiosks do not have a shelf. Mr. Schell explained the square represents the ground level (can't understand recording). A rendering of the plans was displayed. Ms. Buxar confirmed the square is just the ground surface, and you can see what actually will be sunk into the ground. A question was asked of the applicant if he is proposing a concrete pad, or concrete in the post holes. Mr. Schell responded in the post holes, like the other ones. The Commission thanked the applicant for his project and asked him to keep in contact with Ms. Ford in order to plan the project's completion.

MOTION by Elwert, seconded by Blust, *Moved*, to approve the project.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Becker, Blust, Buxar, Elwert, Gamage, Stout, Walker

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Commissioner Steve Sage, attending from Rochester, joined the meeting at 7:31 p.m. and will now be a voting member.

UPDATE: Website Hosting Contract: Last month we had a conversation about the web hosting contract, and Ms. Ford explained that Mr. Elwert graciously offered to assist staff with looking into the issue. He was able to go into the back end of the website and complete some cleaning up to resolve a lot of the problems. There were a lot of errors and they worked with WebHosting Pad to clear these out. It seems to have sped up the website. He also looked into the domain and freeing that up, and was able to get us access to unlock it. Talking with Mr. Elwert and some of the vendors that Ms. Ford was looking at, there was some concern that we would lose our email history if we were to switch hosting providers. Staff is very concerned about this because they rely heavily on past emails to conduct business on the trail. Because of that and making the improvements with the website, we have decided to renew our existing contract, so we are with WebHosting Pad for another year, and will keep an eye on everything. Ms. Gamage thanked Mr. Elwert for his help on this issue, and asked if there was a way to archive existing emails in order to be able to search them off-line in case we would like to migrate to something different in the future. Ms. Ford believes there is and will look into it as it's a good idea for backup, but was in a time crunch for the hosting contract. She needs to go through the emails and delete what's not important anymore so it's a more manageable size in case we transfer in the future. Mr. Elwert said he's happy to continue working with staff on an as-needed basis; maybe the Commission wants to give him credit for it being committee work. He's willing to do so on a limited basis. The Commission appreciates and thanked Mr. Elwert for his assistance. Ms. Olijnyk agrees emails should be backed up as we don't want to be beholden to any one company for our emails or domain name. She appreciates getting the domain name straightened out, and suggested emails are archived in such a way that we can still use them. No action is required on this issue.

DISCUSSION: 2021 Goals: Ms. Ford indicated she compiled the goals according to last month's discussion and the members' rankings and provided the average for priority. Goals in red are what staff feels are important to accomplish. She is looking for any further comments before moving ahead on these goals for the year. Vice-Chair Olijnyk thinks the goals look good and there is a lot that has been started on or have plans to move forward on. Mr. Walker said we added the technology plan last month, but the progress is listed as TBD. Ms. Ford explained that is because she hasn't done anything with it yet, but it is high priority on the list and will be worked on this year. Ms. Mungioli referred to the goal of making presentations to the member communities, and suggested Ms. Ford set some time on Rochester Hills' agenda to make a presentation on what's going on. There was discussion recently at a Council meeting relative to their transportation plan and the use of motorized wheel vehicles on trails, so having some feedback from staff on what our plans are would be helpful as they move forward with this plan. Mr. Sage appreciates staff's thoughts on priorities, and asked if the members should re-prioritize goals based on the goals in red. Ms. Ford said the chart is just a listing to gauge where everyone's thoughts were, and the goals in red reflect the staff's priorities as they work daily on the trail and may feel things are more of a priority than the members are aware of – this does not change what the members' priorities are. The Commission thanked staff for putting together the chart, feels we have a good plan coming up and a lot of work to do.

UPDATE: Friends of the Paint Creek Trail: Mr. Louis Carrio, President of the Friends Group, indicated everyone has received graphics that he produced for the packet and summarized them. As listed in the goals, the Friends wants to install a bike rack at the garden at the location displayed on the graphic. He is recommending the purchase of a customized rack, or possibly two racks. The customization shown as Example A is available from a producer with a four to six week timeframe for production and shipping. He would like to see the installation in the spring in time for the ribbon cutting ceremony proposed in June. The recommended rack is for in-ground installation that would not require a concrete pad, just securing the posts in concrete. The graphic depicts Example A and B, and he's looking for feedback from the Commission. The cost to produce Example A is approximately \$400 including the shipping. If we get two racks, the second one could be located where the Little Library is shown on the graphic, and then the library would be moved slightly to the north to accommodate the second rack. He talked with Mr. Blanchard who has worked on this project and they feel it might be best to accommodate more than two bikes. If you wanted to accommodate four bikes, you have a choice of moving to a larger rack as in Example B, or putting in a second rack like Example A. Mr. Blanchard took a drawing of the proposed customization to a blacksmith for production costs – the first quote was \$2,000. Mr. Blanchard indicated he is attending the meeting via phone from Rochester Hills and can explain if it's okay with the Commission. He has been working on this project and thought it would be special to have a local blacksmith make it, so it wasn't a design bought off the shelf. When he asked the cost, it came back extremely higher than anticipated, but during his research he found that some of the multiple bike racks can run as much as \$1,500 for a plain one. He thought for the trail, it would be great to have something made locally by a metal artist, rather than something you can buy from a manufacturer. But due to the timeline, he only got one quote from one blacksmith. He's disappointed, but with the timing we would probably have to go with something you can purchase from a manufacturer. He and Mr. Carrio talked about the two bike racks, as he's only noticed one time at the garden where there were three bikes inside the garden. They would like to propose two racks, and the thought would be to secure donors who signed up to donate a bench to pay for the rack. The benches are about \$800, so maybe we could get one donor to buy both bike racks, and get them installed by volunteers or get some help from Rochester Hills Parks who have been very helpful in the past. We have talked about art projects in different communities; maybe the customized bike rack could be an art project. Whatever the Commission decides, he's on board with it. Mr. Carrio asked for feedback. Mr. Elwert indicated

Rochester Hills can help install the racks but needs some lead time as it's getting into the busy time of the year, and can also store the racks until installed. Mr. Carrio appreciates the offer and thanked Mr. Elwert. Mr. Sage personally prefers the wave design to accommodate more bikes, and in looking at a catalog found that a seven bike wave rack is \$324, and a nine bike rack is \$432 – the same design as displayed in the graphic. Mr. Carrio referred back to the graphic and explained the current landscape at the proposed bike rack only allows parking parallel to the trail. With the wave rack you pull your bike perpendicular into the rack. There is only about three feet of space there before a hill. In order to park bikes perpendicularly, you would have to carve out another three feet into the hill, which would lead to erosion problems. Whether you use Example A or B in this design, you would still need to park perpendicular, unless you want to do some work on the ground. Mr. Blanchard concurs if the wave rack was installed, work would have to be done digging into the hill to park the bikes that way. He thinks it could be done; it would just be more work. The wave rack would not have space for donor recognition, plus it would haven't the butterfly customization to signify the garden. Mr. Becker is in favor of the wave rack (recording is cutting out) ... accommodate more than one bike. He would rather have one rack that would accommodate four bikes, than two racks that would accommodate four bikes. He feels the area is getting over-done and over-built. He feels a fewer number of racks is better for the aesthetics on the trail. He is not in favor of a picture on either rack, even though the butterfly is beautiful, it's just getting over-done. The beauty of the garden is in the garden itself and there is a beautiful sign there with graphics. He feels the addition of more graphics on rack would detract from the overall aesthetics of the site. Mr. Elwert asked what surface is planned underneath the bike racks because there will be more traffic in this area. Mr. Carrio said in Example A you would do nothing to the surface as he feels there won't be that much traffic, just cement the posts in. Mr. Blanchard suggested some of the similar stone on the path be used for the surface because it could get wet and muddy. Ms. Olijnyk commented it seems there would be a lot more use as people would use the rack, and the surface will get worn down, lose the grass and get muddy. She is in favor of something smaller because there's not much space there. She likes the one with the butterfly, but it doesn't look like a bike rack, so people would lean their bikes up against it anyway. Mr. Blanchard said the smaller ones hold two bikes, and if you put two of these in for parallel parking where bikes could pull off the trail and park parallel, that would be the simplest installation. Mr. Sage asked if the intent of the racks is that people lock their bikes for a long period of use or a quick in and out visit. Mr. Carrio said most people are not there a long time, but people are protective of their bikes and could either lock or not lock their bikes. Mr. Sage added that Rochester still has bricks unearthed from Main Street that can be bought for \$1 each and suggested they could be used at the racks. Mr. Blanchard feels using the bricks is a great idea. Mr. Carrio added there is a need for a platform in front of the sign at the garden entrance, so that might be another opportunity to use the bricks, although there would be some leveling required at this site. Regarding the brochure, Mr. Carrio said consistent with the goal of having educational materials available, a brochure was developed including photographs, a map to the location and pointing out that QR coded signs are available in the garden. He has ordered 10 additional signs for the plants in the garden with QR codes, nine new ones and one replacement due to someone stepping on it. The signs are close to the edge of the trail and can't be seen in the snow. In the future, these signs will be removed in the fall. The brochure has been produced but not yet available on the Friends' website. They will be distributed to the Chamber of Commerce, will be a part of Ms. Trent's Rochester Pollinators exhibit at the Farmers Market in Rochester, at the Cider Mill and events on the trail. The Commission thanked Mr. Carrio and the Friends Group for this brochure.

Vice-Chair Olijnyk brought the discussion back to direction to the Friends Group regarding the bike rack and the Commission's consensus. Mr. Carrio does not believe that perpendicular parking is possible without a substantial amount of work that is needless to do. He likes the idea

of a logo bike rack, the design is optional, and thinks that one small rack, with the option for a second rack in the future, would do the trick given the amount of traffic he expects at this time. Mr. Blanchard said if the Commission just wants one rack at this time, that's fine, but plan for one more. People that donated for benches spent \$800, so if people wanted to donate for the bike rack, that would only be \$400. He suggests we could also charge them for the bricks and installation so we could maximize the donation. He likes the butterfly or a logo as we're out on a trail; having something close to nature so we look different would be appropriate. He would like to see a design on the rack and a place for donor recognition, and likes the idea of using the bricks. Ms. Olijnyk asked how high the rack is, to which Mr. Carrio responded about 36 inches. Ms. Olijnyk indicated she's not a voting member, but likes Example A as it's small enough and has the design. She believes the Commission needs to give the Friends Group a consensus as they are taking on this project, but it's on trail property and we need to be happy with what's installed. Mr. Sage asked what future plans are in the works for the garden and/or structures. Mr. Carrio said some shrubs and tall grass plantings around the perimeters are planned to supplement the plantings with pollinator friendly annual plants for color. Mr. Blanchard does not anticipate any additional hard-scaping, other than possibly a second bike rack. Ms. Ford said a free Little Library will be installed in the spring which is funded by a donor. Ms. Olijnyk called for a show of hands for Option A (six votes) and Option B (one vote). The consensus of the Commission is to go with Option A (butterfly logo), and to start with one bike rack now, with the option to add a second one in the future. Mr. Carrio said this gives the Friends Group enough direction, and suggested an on-site meeting with Ms. Ford and Mr. Blanchard to collaborate on the final submission and arrange for the rack to be delivered to Rochester Hills as discussed. Mr. Elwert said he would also like his grounds person, Darrin Dobbs, to be involved in this meeting so he has an understanding of the project. Mr. Carrio would like Mr. Dobbs to attend as he's been a great asset for the garden since the beginning. Mr. Carrio said the ribbon cutting ceremony is targeted for June, but will keep the Commission informed. Thanks to the Friends Group, the Commission's consensus and Rochester Hills for their assistance in this project.

DISCUSSION: National Trails Day: Ms. Ford said National Trails Day is scheduled for Saturday, June 5th. Last year we were unable to hold it because of the COVID situation, and asked for feedback from the members on how they feel for this year's event, doing something virtual, in person or wait and see what happens and talk about this next month. Currently, the restrictions for outdoor gatherings are 25 or fewer persons, but come June, this could be different based on health conditions. The American Hiking Society, who oversees this event, hasn't put out any guidelines yet on how they would like organizations to approach events. Ms. Olijnyk asked what is required as to ribbon cuttings and upcoming recognitions. Ms. Ford explained the ribbon cutting for Bridge 33.7 is not required; the DNR said we could issue a press release, but the Commission wants to do a ribbon cutting overall. Recognition for past Commissioners could be done at Trails Day as done in the past, or at the Labor Day Bridge Walk. Mr. Elwert commented the City of Auburn Hills and Rochester Hills are planning to proceed with the PaddlePalooza event on the same day (recording cut out) ... he suggests waiting one more month. The PaddlePalooza event is more separated than gathering events. Relative to recognition of former Commissioners, Mr. Becker suggested moving this forward to the Labor Day Bridge event, because in September there will be a better chance we can have in person events with more people there – we should recognize people when we have the maximum turnout available. Ms. Olijnyk asked staff if there was thought as to what to do for Trails Day, as in the past there's been some big events with clean-ups and kids events. She feels we should do something scaled back if we planned something in June. Ms. Ford said there hasn't been too much discussion about this yet as it's up in the air. It's been hosted in Lake Orion for the past two years, and she thinks they would be open to doing it again if we want. Two years ago, we did the event in conjunction with the Clergy, Cops and Kids, and it is unknown if they will be hosting that this year, but will check.

Staff has concerns about sponsorships because they approach small businesses to sponsor, but so many of them have been hurting this year, so on the funding side this is a concern. She can come up with a virtual event, another scavenger hunt or a photo contest, or doing something to incorporate the DIA art installation in conjunction with the Polly Ann Trail. She suggested tabling this issue until next month to give staff time to come up with options for virtual and in person events and bring it back next month for everyone's opinion. As long as the event is on a smaller scale, this would give staff enough time to plan the event. If anyone has an idea or a suggestion, Ms. Ford welcomes the input.

INFORMATIONAL: Spring Clean Up Day: This item was brought forward by Ms. Steele, who is not in attendance today. Ms. Ford indicated there is a memo in the packet. Orion Township has hosted an Orion Green Up Day for the past five years held in tandem with Earth Day and to celebrate Trails Day. They have asked the Commission to reach out to the other communities to see if anyone else would be interested in participating on this day. The staff plans on reaching out to the Adopt-A-Trail groups shortly to let them know that this is happening so if they want to coordinate their work day to coincide with this event, they can do so. Ms. Steele just wanted to make everyone aware of this event. Ms. Olijnyk asked who should volunteers contact if they want to be involved. Ms. Ford indicated if people want to volunteer in Orion Township, they should reach out to them. If people want to volunteer on the trail, staff can connect them to one of the Adopt-A-Trail groups that will be working. Possibly the other communities could bring this idea back to their own Boards. Oakland Township has a Clean Scene they host every year in early May. Ms. Buxar said the Oakland Township Clean Scene is held the first Saturday in May, so her only concern is getting people to do two Saturdays in a row; she doesn't know how many people would get out two weekends in a row. Ms. Olijnyk thought the events could be cross-promoted, so people could choose one day or the other. Ms. Ford indicated our trail is covered with the Adopt-A-Trail groups. She thinks this is more for communities that want to clean up their own parks and do this on the same day as Orion Township. Ms. Buxar will bring this up at the next Board Meeting.

MANAGER'S REPORT: In addition to the written report, Ms. Ford indicated there is a thank you email included in the packet from Dr. Komendera on behalf of the Mill Valley Home Owners Association for the stairs at Bridge 33.7 – all of the residents are greatly appreciative and are using them. She does not have an update from the attorney about the license agreements; she's been in contact with her and provided her with documents she requested last week. More information will be provided. Ms. Ford indicated the artwork for the DIA project has been selected and displayed slides of them.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS: Ms. Gamage indicated she and Ms. Ford participated in the first meeting for the Rochester Master Plan Steering Committee; there are four subcommittees for the areas they are going to focus on – Housing, Sustainability, Downtown Connections and Parking. She feels that three of these issues relate to the Commission, the Downtown Connections is focusing on non-motorized transportation, Housing because the City has seen some rezoning and Planning Commission items that proposed changes to the setbacks from trails, and Sustainability because it relates to the environment and the trail. Ms. Gamage is glad that the Commission was invited to participate in these important meetings and can provide good input. Ms. Mungoli asked if an orientation or a tour is held for new members. Ms. Olijnyk indicated an information packet is provided to new members and usually once a year a field trip is held on the trail. Mr. Samuel Nouhan, 5563 Kirkridge Trail, Oakland Township, arrived too late for public comment and requested to speak. He indicated he is an avid trail user for recreational biking. This past season he's been on the trail 120 times and put on 1,600 miles over five-six months. He addressed the Commission last May about the condition of the ruts on the trail that arose in

March and April on the new surface. These ruts were created during the spring thaw, and the main culprit is the fat tire bikes which are marketed as being good in snow and mud. He noticed repair and maintenance improved over the course of the 2020 season, even removing some of the ruts created in the thaw. He's grateful for the improvements, but still thinks the Commission should emphasize avoidance during the spring thaw, as without maintenance the ruts last all year. He spoke about an additional repair and maintenance issue regarding water erosion during the summer months – the water travels across the width of the trail where it butts up against another surface; e.g. at the Silverbell parking lot and at Gallagher Road. These conditions occur after rain events and should be addressed through the maintenance and repair team. At mile marker 39 in Orion Township, the trail is in bad condition; as well as south of the Ludlow crossing near the Rochester Park through the downtown area – he won't go south of Ludlow because of the condition of the trail. He wants to emphasize avoidance on the ruts and increased maintenance and repair on a regular basis – great job last year on stepping up the trail maintenance and repair.

ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR MEETING:

MOTION by Gamage, seconded by Buxar, *Moved*, to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Blust, Buxar, Elwert, Gamage, Sage, Stout, Walker

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: March 16, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. – Via GoToMeeting

Respectfully submitted,

MELISSA FORD, Trail Manager

DAVID BECKER, Secretary