

PAIN CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION

APPROVED

December 17, 2024



4393 Collins Road
Rochester, MI 48306
(248) 651-9260
Paintcreektrail.org

REGULAR MEETING of the PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION
Paint Creek Cider Mill
4480 Orion Road, Rochester, MI 48306

The December 17, 2024, meeting of the Paint Creek Trailways Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the main conference room of the Paint Creek Cider Mill.

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT

Voting Members:

Steve Sage (R), Chairperson
David Walker (RH), Vice-Chairperson
Ken Elwert (RH)
Linda Gamage (R)
Conner Reiter (Orion)

Voting Alternates:

Dave Mabry (Oakland)
Martha Olijnyk (Oakland) (arrived 7:14 p.m.)

A QUORUM WAS PRESENT.

Non-Voting Alternates: None

Village Non-Voting Alternate: None

Staff: Tom Correll, Trail Manager
Nicole Sands, Administrative Assistant

Friends of the Paint Creek Trail: None

PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION

APPROVED

December 17, 2024

ABSENT

Voting Members: Robin Buxar (Oakland), Julia Dalrymple (Orion)

Alternates: Matt Pfeiffer (Orion), Aaron Whatley (Orion), David Becker (R), Sara King (R), Russell George (RH), Carol Morlan (RH)

Village Non-Voting Member: Jason Peltier (Village of Lake Orion), Stanley Ford (Village of Lake Orion)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Sage led the Commissioners, staff and those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

AMENDMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED BY ELWERT, SECONDED BY GAMAGE, to approve this evening's agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.

Upon further consideration, the Commissioners agreed to add an item to this evening's agenda.

MOVED BY ELWERT, SECONDED BY WALKER, to add an item to this evening's agenda regarding the encroachments on the Paint Creek Trail.

MOTION CARRIED.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Oakland Township Parks and Recreation Commissioner: Jim Fostey

Jim Fostey introduced himself. He is a newly-elected member of the Oakland Township Parks and Recreation Commission ("OTPRC"). The OTPRC has recommended to the Oakland Township Board of Trustees that he be appointed as one of the two Oakland Township representatives to the Paint Creek Trailways Commission, which the Board will consider at an upcoming meeting. The Commissioners welcomed Mr. Fostey.

CONSENT AGENDA

This evening's Consent Agenda consists of the following: (a) minutes of the November 19, 2024, regular meeting and (b) Treasurer's Report for November 2024.

MOVED BY ELWERT, SECONDED BY WALKER, to approve and file the minutes of the November 19, 2024, regular meeting as presented, and to receive and file the Treasurer's Report for November 2024.

MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF INVOICES

Trail Manager Correll and the Commissioners reviewed the list of invoices dated December 17, 2024.

MOVED BY GAMAGE, SECONDED BY ELWERT, to approve payment of the invoices as presented in the amount of \$11,334.04.

MOTION CARRIED.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2025

Chairman Sage thanked all current officers for serving this year. The Commissioners discussed that, with the recent general election, there will be some change in membership of the Paint Creek Trailways Commission. Typically, each of the officer positions is filled by a representative from each of the four voting member municipalities.

Chairperson

Commissioner Walker nominated Commissioner Sage (City of Rochester) to serve as Chairperson for 2025. Commissioner Sage accepted the nomination. All Commissioners were in favor of this.

Vice-Chairperson

Commissioner Sage nominated Commissioner Walker (City of Rochester Hills) to serve as Vice-Chairman for 2025. Commissioner Walker accepted the nomination. All Commissioners were in favor of this.

(Commissioner Olijnyk arrived at this time, 7:14 p.m.)

PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION

APPROVED

December 17, 2024

Treasurer

Commissioner Blust served as Treasurer for 2024. However, he is no longer a member of the Oakland Township Parks and Recreation Commission, so he will not be continuing as a member of this Commission. Commissioner Olijnyk (Oakland Township) offered to serve as Treasurer for 2025 if the Commission so wishes.

Secretary

Commissioner Dalrymple (Orion Township) served as Secretary for 2024. However, she is not present this evening.

MOVED BY GAMAGE, SECONDED BY ELWERT, to consider the election of officers for the Treasurer and Secretary positions at the January meeting.

MOTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTION 2024-001: MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND PROJECT AGREEMENT REGARDING BRIDGE 31.7 RENOVATION PROJECT (TF23-0002)

The Commissioners reviewed Resolution 2024-001, a resolution accepting the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Project Agreement for the Paint Creek Trail Bridge 31.7 Renovation Project (project TF23-0002).

Bridge 31.7 is located along the Paint Creek Trail within the City of Rochester. The bridge renovation is supported by both the Paint Creek Trailways Commission's 2020-2024 Master Plan, and the City of Rochester's 2019-2023 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The total project cost is \$958,800.

In response to a question from Commissioner Gamage, Trail Manager Correll explained that the Trailways Commission must accept the project agreement as we are the body that applied for and has been recommended to receive this grant. The City of Rochester is aware of this.

MOVED BY ELWERT, SECONDED BY WALKER, to approve Resolution 2024-001, a Resolution in Support of the Paint Creek Trailways Commission's Submission of Department of Natural Resources Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund TF23-0002 Project Agreement for Paint Creek Trail Bridge 31.7 Renovation.

AYES: Sage, Walker, Elwert, Gamage, Mabry, Olijnyk, Reiter

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Dalrymple

MOTION CARRIED.

A copy of this Resolution is attached as a part of these minutes.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2024

Trail Manager Correll reviewed the 2024 Summary of Events and Accomplishments.

ENCROACHMENTS

1850 N. Livernois

The Trailways Commission reviewed the history of this matter to present. The homeowners were given notice of their encroachment. They subsequently submitted an application for a limited use permit, which the Commission considered but denied at the August 2024 meeting. The homeowners have been sent all documentation required under our encroachment policy and told to remove the encroachment. As of this time, the homeowners have not removed the encroachment.

As this encroachment is on Trailways property within the City of Rochester Hills, Commissioner Elwert contacted the City of Rochester Hills' enforcement officer. Rochester Hills has an ordinance that addresses encroachments and enforcement.

MOVED BY ELWERT, SECONDED BY WALKER, that the Paint Creek Trailways Commission supports the efforts of the City of Rochester Hills to enforce their ordinance as it pertains to the encroachment on the Paint Creek Trailways property at 1850 N. Livernois.

MOTION CARRIED.

The Commissioners discussed that they would like to obtain a copy of the City of Rochester Hills's ordinance. If they do not already have one, the Commissioners felt it would be helpful for all of the Paint Creek Trailways Commission member municipalities to have an ordinance in place to allow for the removal of encroachments.

The Commissioners again discussed that private accesses along the Trail not only negatively impact the natural setting of the Trail, but that they also pose potential safety concerns to both Trail users and to homeowners who access the Trail in this manner.

4763 Forest Ridge Court

The Commissioners also reviewed the history of this matter to present. The homeowner was given notice of the encroachment. She submitted an application for limited use permit, which the Commission considered but denied at the April 2024 meeting. The homeowner was given the opportunity to appeal this decision within a 30 days period if she had new or additional information for the Commission's consideration. The homeowner did not contact the Trailways Commission.

PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION

APPROVED

December 17, 2024

The homeowner was subsequently sent all documentation required under our encroachment policy and told to remove the encroachment. As of this time, the homeowner has not removed the encroachment.

Commissioner Mabry reported that he called the homeowner on December 5th to follow up, and left a message when there was no response. She later contacted him on December 9th and said that she feels she is being singled out as there are other encroachments, and she wants time to seek legal advice. She also said that she had not received any correspondence from the Trailways Commission.

After discussion, it was agreed that Commissioner Mabry will contact Oakland Township's code enforcement officer regarding this matter. He will report back to the Commission at the January meeting.

The Commissioners agreed to include an item on the January agenda to consider encroachments. Commissioner Elwert said he would like the Commission to develop a policy regarding private accesses to the Trail, and work with the municipalities to enforce this uniformly.

(Chairman Sage called for a brief recess at this time, 7:58 p.m. The regular meeting resumed at 8:15 p.m.)

PER DIEM REPORT, 2024

The Commissioners reviewed the attendance record. The Commission budgeted \$5,500 for per diems, and Trail Manager Correll said the actual amount is \$3,850 including per diem payments for this evening's meeting. He thanked the Commissioners and Alternates for attending these meetings.

Administrative Assistant Sands presented Commissioner Reiter with a certificate acknowledging his perfect attendance at all regular and special meetings this past year.

The Commissioners accepted the 2024 Paint Creek Trailways Commission per diem attendance record and approved payment of the per diems for 2024 in the amount of \$3,850, which includes per diem payments for this evening's meeting. The 2024 budget will be amended to reflect this.

PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET

The Commissioners reviewed the draft budget for the 2025 fiscal year with changes made after last month's meeting.

The Commissioners first considered Revenues. The "Member Unit Contribution for Patrol Program Based on Community's Mileage" (line items P1140, P1150, P1160, P1170) reflect a 15 percent increase. Manager Correll said he has not yet received the contract from the

PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION

APPROVED

December 17, 2024

Oakland County Sheriff's Department for the mounted patrol services, so he does not know how much the cost of this service will increase. Vice-Chairperson Walker stated that the City of Rochester Hills saw a 17 percent increase for the first year of their new contract for OCSD services, and a 9 percent increase in the second and again in the third year of the new contract. After discussion, the Commissioners agreed to leave the budget as is with the idea that we can amend the budget later if necessary, or that any additional amount can be absorbed within the "Expenses – Patrol Program" cost center (P3720).

The Commissioners next considered Expenses. Manager Correll revised the "Office – Office Materials & Supplies" line item (P3111) to \$100 per month, which he feels is adequate.

Under "Staff Travel/Training – Per Diems" (P3230), the amount for the 2024 amended final budget should be \$3,850 as determined earlier this evening.

We purchased additional Paint Creek Trail brochures during the 2024 fiscal year, and this is reflected under "Publicity/Marketing/Education – Brochures" (P3410): \$1,767.80 should be included under the 2024 amended final budget, and the monies originally budgeted for the 2025 fiscal year should be adjusted to \$0.

The "Administrative Personnel" cost center reflects a five percent increase in wages for the Manager and the Administrative Assistant. Vice-Chairperson Walker commented that the City of Rochester Hills recently approved a 4.5 or 4.75 percent increase in wages for their union personnel.

The Commissioners briefly discussed the mounted patrol. It is expensive and this year we anticipate a significant increase in the cost of the program. While we asked that they provide a brief report at the end of the season, we have not received one as of yet. Manager Correll observed that people do like to see the mounted patrol horses on the Trail. The Commission may discuss this further at a future meeting.

MOVED BY MABRY, SECONDED BY OLIJNYK, to approve the budget (version 3.0) for the Paint Creek Trailways for fiscal year 2025 as presented and amended this evening.

MOTION CARRIED.

MANAGER'S REPORTS

Snow Removal Along Paint Creek Trail in Village of Lake Orion

Manager Correll said he continues to receive complaints from a resident regarding snow removal along the northern part of the Paint Creek Trail. The complainant is concerned about access to nearby stores. As snow is removed by others to provide an alternate way to reach the stores, the Commission is not removing snow from the Trail.

Complaint of Human Waste Along Trail

There has been yet another complaint of what appears to be human waste along the Trail. Previously, there had been sightings along the stretch between the Gunn Road and Adams Road crossings. This time, the waste was discovered just north of the Dutton Road crossing.

Forestry Mowing Along Shoulders of Trail in Oakland Township

Oakland Township Parks and Recreation had a contractor cut back vegetation along the shoulders of the Trail in Oakland Township.

Website Redesign

The website design consultant provided two proposed designs for the Commission's review. In the samples provided for consideration this evening, "Design 1" has a yellow banner across an autumn scene of a Trail bridge with leaves, announces "Live Out Your Adventure in Paint Creek Trail" just under this banner, and has diamond-shaped buttons of activities that can take place along the Trail. "Design 2" has turquoise/blue text on a forest green background, turquoise/blue "Donate" and "Newsletter Signup" buttons at the top, and announces "Paint Creek Trail – Michigan's 1st Non-Motorized Rail-to-Trail." The Commissioners shared their impressions of and thoughts on the two designs.

Manager Correll noted that the consultant will also provide a version of the website that will work on mobile devices. Social media rollout will be added to the final page design.

The Commissioners asked that the final version include a "Friends of the Paint Creek Trail" tab that is very visible.

Design 1: The Commissioners liked the diamond-shaped navigation options (hiker, bicycle, horse, skier, fish), but thought it might be better to redesign the horse and fish in some way (to put a rider on the horse, and to have a person fishing, perhaps). They also suggested reordering the symbols, noting that one's eye immediately goes to the center (where the horse is). They didn't decide on an order, but discussed having the hiker in the middle, the bicycle/cyclist to the left of middle, fisher to the right of middle, and then equestrian and skier to the outsides.

The yellow accent color with the fall image provides a nice accent color. However, the Commissioners thought it would be nice if this could be changed seasonally. Manager Correll said the design contract includes training for the Trailways staff to learn how to update the website.

The title on Design 1 states, "Live Out Your Adventure In/Paint Creek Trail"; the Commissioners preferred the title on Design 2, which reads, "Paint Creek Trail/Michigan's First Non-Motorized Rail-to-Trail".

PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION

APPROVED

December 17, 2024

Design 1 includes a heading, “Get Ready to Explore”; the Commissioners preferred the heading on Design 2, which reads, “Connect with Nature”.

Commissioner Gamage also suggested that we include the words, “Connecting Our Communities” in the final design. She would also like to see the communities incorporated in some way, possibly in a visual manner.

Both designs include a “Newsletter Signup” button. The Commissioners concurred that we should not have this button visible/active at this time as we do not have a newsletter.

Commissioner Mabry said we also need to make sure to have a pull-down button for the Paint Creek Trailways Commission.

Design 2: The Commissioners liked that the “Donate” button in blue at the top of the page is highly visible and this concept should be included in the final page design. They agreed that the final design should have colors (especially buttons and backgrounds) that have a higher contrast to make it easier to see.

Next Steps: After discussion, the Commissioners concurred that they prefer Design 1 with the modifications discussed this evening. Manager Correll hopes that the design consultant will be able to incorporate these changes before the January meeting. If Commissioners have any additional suggestions, Manager Correll invited them to email those ideas to him.

License Agreements

Chairman Sage asked that Manager Correll obtain a report from our attorney regarding each of the license agreements. This matter should be placed on the January agenda.

Master Plan Update

Master Plan consultants Giffels Webster will hold a public forum combined date for January 30th, January 31st or February 3rd at the Paint Creek Cider Mill.

The consultant has been updating the action plan, and Manager Correll will bring that to the Commissioners at the January meeting.

PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION MEETING DATES, 2025

The Paint Creek Trailways Commission meets on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. The meetings in the months of October through March (fall/winter) are held in the main conference room of the Paint Creek Cider Mill in Oakland Township. The meetings in the months of April through September (spring/summer) are held in the City of Rochester Municipal Offices main meeting room.

The following are the regularly scheduled meeting dates:

PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION

APPROVED

December 17, 2024

January 21, 2025 (Paint Creek Cider Mill)
February 18, 2025 (Paint Creek Cider Mill)
March 18, 2025 (Paint Creek Cider Mill)
April 15, 2025 (City of Rochester Municipal Offices)
May 20, 2025 (City of Rochester Municipal Offices)
June 17, 2025 (City of Rochester Municipal Offices)
July 15, 2025 (City of Rochester Municipal Offices)
August 19, 2025 (City of Rochester Municipal Offices)
September 16, 2025 (City of Rochester Municipal Offices)
October 21, 2025 (Paint Creek Cider Mill)
November 18, 2025 (Paint Creek Cider Mill)
December 16, 2025 (Paint Creek Cider Mill)

COMMISSIONER GAMAGE’S REPORT

Timing of Delivery of Meeting Packet

Commissioner Gamage recalled that, previously, the Commissioners received the meeting agenda and packet approximately one week prior to the meeting date. She asked if staff could return to this schedule so that the Commissioners have an adequate opportunity to review and be prepared for the meeting. Manager Correl said that he will work on this.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY MABRY, SECONDED BY ELWERT, there being no further business before the Commission, to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Ingrid R. Kliffel
Recording Secretary

Approved,

Julia Dalrymple
Secretary

Approved,

Tom Correll
Trail Manager