

PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION

DRAFT

January 21, 2025



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Paintcreektrail.org

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

The January 21, 2025, 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
Jim Fostey (Oakland)
Ken Elwert (RH)
Linda Gamage (R)
Conner Reiter (Orion)

Voting Alternates:

Robin Buxar (Oakland)

A QUORUM WAS PRESENT.

Non-Voting Alternates:

David Becker (Rochester)
Carol Morlan (RH)

Village Non-Voting Alternate: Stanley Ford

Staff: Tom Correll, Trail Manager

Friends of the Paint Creek Trail: Louis Carrio

ABSENT

Voting Members: Dave Mabry (Oakland), Julia Dalrymple (Orion)

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

Village Non-Voting Member: Jason Peltier (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 GAMAGE, SECONDED BY BUXAR, to approve this evening's agenda as presented with the addition of an item to consider election of officers for the positions of Treasurer and Secretary.

MOTION CARRIED.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one present who wished to comment on an item not already on this evening's agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

This evening's Consent Agenda consists of the following: (a) minutes of the December 17, 2024, regular meeting and (b) Treasurer's Report for December 2024.

MOVED BY BUXAR, SECONDED BY WALKER, to approve and file the minutes of the December 17, 2024, meeting as presented, and to receive and file the Treasurer's Report for December 2024.

MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF INVOICES

Trail Manager Correll and the Commissioners reviewed the list of invoices.

MOVED BY ELWERT, SECONDED BY BUXAR, to approve payment of the invoices as presented in the amount of \$560.09.

MOTION CARRIED.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2025

The positions of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson were filled at the December meeting, but the positions of Treasurer and Secretary were not filled. At that meeting, Commissioner Olijnyk offered to serve as Treasurer if needed. Commissioner Gamage was in contact with Commissioner Dalrymple, who indicated her willingness to continue to serve as Secretary.

Treasurer, Secretary

MOVED BY GAMAGE, SECONDED BY BUXAR, to appoint Commissioner Olijnyk to serve as Treasurer for 2025, and to appoint Commissioner Dalrymple to serve as Secretary for 2025.

MOTION CARRIED.

LICENSE AGREEMENTS

Chairperson Sage reminded the Commission that it has been over a year since we began discussions about updating the license agreements.

Manager Correll provided a status report on this matter. Over the past several months, he has been working with our attorney to update the agreements, make sure dates are correct, include the new prices, and include a physical description of the covered property. Last week, he mailed out the new license agreements and invoices, along with a cover letter that directs any questions to our attorney. The payments will be due on July 1, 2025, which he hopes will eliminate the confusion when payments were due at the beginning of the year.

Chairperson Sage asked Manager Correll to provide the Commissioners with copies of all of the revised license agreements.

BALD MOUNTAIN RECREATION AREA – BRIDGE TO PAINT CREEK TRAIL

Manager Correll explained that the document before the Commission this evening is a first draft of an easement agreement received from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources regarding the MDNR's project to construct a bridge that will connect Bald Mountain Recreation Area to the Paint Creek Trail.

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On first review, the Commissioners had a number of concerns including the following. The document refers to the Paint Creek Trailways Commission as a “Council,” which is incorrect. This seeks a *nonexclusive* and *permanent* easement, which the Commission had not contemplated. The proposed agreement references “Exhibit A,” but Exhibit A is not attached to the document. The “Grantee’s Acceptance” references a water main easement, which this is not.

Commissioner Elwert recalled that the Commission wants the MDNR to restore the site, including vegetation, once the construction work is complete. The agreement needs to include this.

Commissioner Gamage recalled that we have had problems with easements in the past, and she would like to obtain guidance from the Commission’s attorney. Manager Correll said our attorney has not yet reviewed this document.

Commissioner Gamage continued that the Trailways Commission sent the MDNR a list of our safety concerns, given that the new bridge will “T” into the Paint Creek Trail. While traffic entering the trail from the bridge will need to slow down, Commissioner Becker thought bollards on the Paint Creek Trail would not be a good solution. He recalled that a number of years ago, cyclists using the Paint Creek Trail complained of hitting their handlebars on the bollards; the bollards were subsequently removed.

Manager Correll will share the document and the Commission’s concerns with our attorney.

AD HOC COMMITTEES, 2025

The Commissioners reviewed the list of committees for 2025.

Commissioner Reiter expressed an interest in serving on the Friends of the Paint Creek Trail Committee as he is interested in the pollinator garden.

MOVED BY BUXAR, SECONDED BY FOSTEY, to set the following committees and membership for 2025:

Recognition Committee – Robin Buxar, Linda Gamage, David Mabry, Conner Reiter

Personnel Committee – Julia Dalrymple, Martha Olijnyk, Steve Sage, David Walker

Development of Property in Southeast Rochester Committee – David Becker, Ken Elwert, Linda Gamage, Steve Sage

Labor Day Bridge Walk Committee – Robin Buxar, Julia Dalrymple, Ken Elwert, Martha Olijnyk, David Walker

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Trail Branding and Signage Committee – Jim Fostey, Linda Gamage, Martha Olijnyk, Steve Sage

Trail Improvements/Resurfacing Committee – David Becker, Stanley Ford, Jim Fostey, Steve Sage, David Walker

Licensing Committee – Julia Dalrymple, Linda Gamage, Martha Olijnyk, David Walker

Friends of the Paint Creek Trail Committee – Jim Fostey, Linda Gamage, Dave Mabry, Connor Reiter

Bridge 31.7 Renovation Committee – Ken Elwert, Stanley Ford, Steve Sage

MOTION CARRIED.

PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION: 2025 GOALS

The Commissioners briefly reviewed the list of goals that they adopted for 2024. Commissioner Elwert acknowledged that this Commission has historically listed and prioritized goals. However, with one part-time Trail Manager and one part-time Assistant, he felt there might be a better approach.

Several Commissioners proposed that Manager Correll share his suggestions as to what he feels are the highest priorities and what can realistically be accomplished.

Commissioner Gamage pointed out that the Bridge 31.7 replacement project will likely take up a considerable amount of staff time. She suggested that we could create a list of other projects to work on but only if there is time. Two items that she feels are priorities are (1) creation of an encroachment policy, and (2) creation of an inventory of encroachments.

She noted that a number of the items included in this list are tasks that are in the Trail Manager’s job description. As such, she felt that they could be removed from this document. Manager Correll observed that, once the ongoing tasks that are included in his job description are removed from this list of goals, it is easier to identify the top priorities. He added that he appreciates that there is a subcommittee associated with most of these goals/projects.

After further discussion, Manager Correll will strike out all of the tasks already included in the Trail Manager’s job description from the goals list. He will then send out a list of priorities as an editable document, and will also send the Trail Manager’s job description for reference. Commissioners should indicate their top three priorities and respond to him by February 2nd.

The Commissioners also briefly discussed that we need to coordinate the list of goals/priorities with our Master Plan. Commissioner Elwert commented that we should

nonetheless maintain a list of items that we would like to accomplish or at least consider at some time in the future.

The Commissioner will review this matter further at the February meeting.

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.

Website Redesign

Manager Correll shared the Commission's comments regarding the website design with the contractor. He hopes the new website will be up and running in February.

Friends of the Paint Creek Trail President Louis Carrio offered that he and his wife would be pleased to test the new design before it goes live and offer their user feedback.

Complaint of Waste Along Trail

The Commissioners had a lengthy discussion regarding this matter. Commissioner Becker suggested that we could have the waste tested to determine if it is human or other, and wondered if the Oakland County Sheriff's Department would be able to assist with this. As the waste is sighted in Oakland Township, Commissioner Buxar will look into this.

COMMISSIONER ELWERT'S REPORTS

Encroachment: 1850 N. Livernois

Commissioner Elwert updated the Commission on this matter. The attorney for the City of Rochester Hills would like the Trailways Commission to send a letter offering the homeowners one last opportunity to remove the encroachment before the City begins legal action to address this matter.

Bridge 31.7 Replacement Project

Commissioner Elwert wondered if this project would interfere with the annual Labor Day Walk.

Property for Sale

As a matter of interest, Commissioner Elwert shared that the approximately 128 acre parcel owned by Barry Gobel, is for sale. This parcel is located south of the Clinton River Trail, east of the Paint Creek Trail, near Bloomer Park. As this land encompasses a large wetland area, the ideal purchaser would have an interest in conservation and recreation.

COMMISSIONER BUXAR'S REPORTS

Oakland Township Voting/Alternate Members

Commissioner Buxar said Dave Mabry will now be the Oakland Township Board's voting member, and she will be the alternate.

Oakland Township recently approved Martha Olijnyk to continue as an alternate member.

Encroachment: 4763 Forest Ridge Court

Commissioner Buxar did not have an update to share. However, she will make sure that Commissioner Mabry receives a copy of the City of Rochester Hills ordinance.

COMMISSIONER FORD'S REPORTS

Trail Surfacing in Oakland Township Following Forestry Mowing

In December, Oakland Township had forestry mowing done along the shoulders of the Paint Creek Trail. It was a wet day, and the equipment made the surfacing uneven. We then experienced cold weather before the surfacing could be repaired. As a result, the Trail surfacing is challenging in this stretch.

Potential Encroachment

Commissioner Ford said the property that was occupied by Jacobsen's Flowers, near Newton Road in Lake Orion, has been sold and there is development proposed for this property. Some of the trees that he believes are located on Paint Creek Trailways property have been tagged, possibly for removal. He suggested that we look into this before the trees are removed/an encroachment occurs.

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ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY BUXAR, SECONDED BY GAMAGE, there being no further business before the Commission, to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Ingrid R. Kliffel
Recording Secretary

Approved,

Julia Dalrymple
Secretary

Approved,

Tom Correll
Trail Manager