



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

**REGULAR MEETING of the PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION  
Via Teleconferencing – GoToMeeting**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Tuesday, April 21, 2020 Regular Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Blanchard at 7:09 p.m.

**Voting Members Present:** Rock Blanchard, Frank Ferriolo, Linda Gamage, Steve Sage, Dan Simon, Donni Steele, Jeff Stout, David Walker

**Voting Alternates Present:** None

**Non-Voting Alternates Present:** David Becker, Robin Buxar, Theresa Munglioli, Martha Olijnyk, Clara Pinkham

**Village of Lake Orion Non-Voting Member Present:** None

**Voting Members Absent:** None

**Alternates Absent:** Chris Barnett, Ben Giovanelli, Chris Hagen

**Village of Lake Orion Non-Voting Member Absent:** Brad Mathisen

**Village of Lake Orion Non-Voting Alternate Absent:** Vacant

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** All rose and recited the Pledge.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Chairperson Blanchard explained the purpose of the electronic meeting is to maintain social distancing and comply with the Michigan Governor's Executive Order 2020-21. The meeting will be held electronically by video conferencing through GoToMeeting.com. The video conference can be accessed by downloading the app GoToMeeting. The meeting number is 879020181. 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 (3) minute limit for public comments. You may also send correspondence regarding this meeting to the Paint Creek Trailways Commission, addressed to 4393 Collins Road, Rochester, Michigan 48306, to express your concerns and comments prior to the meeting. You may also email your comments or concerns to [manager@paintcreektrail.org](mailto:manager@paintcreektrail.org) prior to the meeting. A copy of the materials may be found on the Commission's website or may be reviewed at the Commission's office by appointment. Please also use the aforementioned contact for any questions on this process.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Ms. Steele would like to add discussion of Senior Signage along the Paint Creek Trail in the Orion portion. This will be discussed after the Eagle Scout project. **MOTION** by Becker, seconded by Simon, *Moved*, to approve the April 21, 2020 agenda as amended.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Ferriolo, Gamage, Sage, Simon, Steele, Stout, Walker

Nays: None

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mr. Hank Van Agen, 3320 Landview Dr., Oakland Township asked if Solaronics license fee was paid. Ms. Gray indicated this fee has been paid.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a. Minutes – February 18, 2020 Regular Meeting, approve and file
- b. Treasurers Report – February 2020, receive and file
- c. Treasurers Report – March 2020, receive and file

**MOTION** by Simon, seconded by Steele, *Moved*, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**APPROVAL OF MARCH INVOICES:** Ms. Ford presented the list of invoices totaling \$7,829.12. Because there was no meeting in March, these invoices have already been paid, but the Commission needs to approve them. In addition to the recorder's fee, this amount includes credit card charges for a name plate and the cost of Adobe Acrobat software for the Manager's computer, WCI's invoices for resurfacing construction for the trail and Bear Creek Park, and Mannik Smith Group's invoice for trail resurfacing construction administration. Estimated unrestricted fund balance is \$100,000.

**MOTION** by Becker, seconded by Simon, *Moved*, that the invoices presented for payment are approved in the amount of \$7,829.12 and orders be drawn for payment.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Ferriolo, Gamage, Sage, Simon, Steele, Stout, Walker

Nays: None

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**APPROVAL OF APRIL INVOICES:** Ms. Ford presented the list of invoices totaling \$16,330.11. This amount includes credit card charges for the GoToMeeting monthly fee, Mannik Smith Group's invoice for trail resurfacing construction administration, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter wages and FICA for the Manager and Assistant Manager, staff's shared copier costs, Vista Group International's invoice for the balance of the Soundpost at Bridge 33.7 cost, and payment to M&B Graphics for social distancing stake signs. Estimated unrestricted fund balance is \$96,000. Ms. Gamage asked about the social distancing signs. Ms. Ford displayed the double-sided signs and said they ordered 10 signs for the trail. They are not the same signs Rochester Hills is using as she is not familiar with them. Mr. Blanchard explained Ms. Ford contacted him for permission to purchase them, which he approved. Ms. Gamage said Rochester Hills has signs up, and asked if they were contacted to make the signs, as we have an in-kind agreement with them for signs. Ms. Ford she did not ask Rochester Hills as it wasn't a metal sign, and she wasn't sure they could do that type of sign as these are just yard signs. Ms. Gamage is inclined to approve the invoice, but was hoping that we could have checked with them first to see if they could provide them. Mr. Sage said the design is not the same as Rochester's signs, and he will provide a copy of the sign to the Commission. Mr. Becker likes the signs we ordered as they are generic and not condescending to users. Mr. Blanchard agreed with staff that the signs were important to get as soon as possible. Ms. Gamage asked if something could be put on the signs regarding etiquette; Ms. Ford will check with them, but they've already been given the go-ahead to make the signs. **MOTION** by Simon, seconded by Gamage, *Moved*, that the invoices presented for payment are approved in the amount of \$16,330.11 and orders be drawn for payment.

Mr. Ferriolo asked who represents Rochester Hills' second vote if Mr. Blanchard is not voting. Mr. Blanchard said he only votes in the event of a tie. Mr. Ferriolo disagreed and indicated Mr. Blanchard can and should be voting.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Blanchard, Ferriolo, Gamage, Sage, Simon, Steele, Stout, Walker

Nays: None

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**DISCUSSION/APPROVAL: Eagle Scout Project – Kiosk:** Chair Blanchard indicated the Eagle Scout is not present, but information about the project was in the packet. Ms. Gamage said the project costs less than \$250, and asked if the Scout would consider doing more than one kiosk. Ms. Ford did speak to him about this, because initially we thought maybe he would do all five, but he just wants to do one kiosk. Mr. Simon had made several comments to his design and had questions that he answered sufficiently. Mr. Blanchard asked if we need the Eagle Scout present, or if they want to vote on this item tonight to give approval to move forward. There is a restriction right now from doing any work on the trail. Mr. Becker has a concern about this as right now we are embarking on a large re-signage program and using a new design; do we want to put this up now when we will be re-doing all signage in the next year or so. Ms. Ford indicated the kiosk he is replacing is where we put up notices, and the new signage does not have anything to accommodate that, so the kiosks the Commission is doing are stand-alones with the map and the logos – each has a different theme, but no place for people to post notices, which is what this kiosk is for. Ms. Gamage asked if the proposed design is the design for the existing kiosks. Ms. Ford responded yes, she provided the Scout with the design. Ms. Gamage said he should incorporate Mr. Simon’s suggestions into his design. Mr. Ferriolo commented that unless the Scout is under a time pressure, he would like the Scout present only if to thank him for what he’s doing. He suggested we provide the image we have for the other signs to the Scout and ask him to modify his proposed signs to blend in; otherwise he’s OK with what is proposed. Mr. Simon supports this suggestion. Ms. Ford will provide this information to the Scout. Mr. Becker agrees with this suggestion, and feels the Scout should appear before the Commission if he can. Ms. Olijnyk asked which kiosk the Scout is planning to replace. Ms. Ford indicated he’s leaning toward the one at Clarkston/Kern. This item will be brought back to the next meeting.

**SENIOR SIGNS ON THE LAKE ORION PORTION OF THE TRAIL:** Ms. Steele apologized for adding this item late to the agenda, sent information to Ms. Ford for an idea of what is proposed, and introduced Ms. Amy Silvester. Ms. Silvester, who owns Love n’ Light Productions working from her home, is an author, artist and illustrator from Lake Orion introduced herself. She’s a mother of a senior and is on the Board of NOCC – North Oakland Community Coalition. She wants to do a happy trail that highlights high school seniors and has partnered with Lake Orion Printing and Design for signs that are \$10/each. People can pay for a sign for themselves and one for their yard honoring graduating seniors. She has permission from Mr. Young in downtown Lake Orion, and the signs showing pictures of the seniors would be placed six feet apart along the trail. She would like to start at Clarkston and lead into the downtown encouraging social distancing, but encouraging people to enjoy the trail and go back downtown again. The kids are sad they can’t celebrate graduation and she wants to encourage people to come out. People can take pictures with the signs – she just wants to help the kids celebrate their accomplishment. She would like the signs to be in place for two weeks maybe starting May 1<sup>st</sup>. She has over 100 orders in for the 500+ graduating students. She does not anticipate all students to participate; whether they do or do not, is fine. A letter will go out to everyone so no one is neglected. Ms. Pinkham asked if she will be able to monitor for any vandalism. Ms. Silvester said this was one of her concerns as she can’t control everyone, but has the ability to go out and walk to monitor the signs. She would remove the signs when required to do so. She’s putting her neck on the line, and if something is damaged, she will remove it. Mr. Becker said even though we have a historical opposition of signs and has some concerns, he thinks this is a great idea to honor the students and would love the trail to participate in honoring them, giving them something to remember from their senior year. He is in favor of the proposal. Mr. Simon agreed, but asked if there will be 500+ signs. Ms. Silvester proposed the signs would

start at Clarkston Road, and lead into downtown through Meeks Park. She would provide a map to the Commission, and just wants to make sure she has permission to move forward. There will not be 500 signs as not everyone will participate. Ms. Gamage thanked Ms. Silvester for the idea as she has a graduating senior and everyone is looking for ways to celebrate the seniors – this is a great idea. She asked if Lake Orion is doing this, is the trail open to having all the communities do this along the trail – and if so, should it be coordinated so it was during the same time frame. She is also concerned if the signs are six feet apart during such a time when the trail is so well used, if people are passing they can still maintain social distancing. Ms. Silvester said she has no problem with spacing signs further apart. Ms. Gamage commented that some of the funds would go toward a charity, and asked Ms. Silvester which one. Ms. Silvester responded Love INC – Covid-19 Fund for Lake Orion, and if other communities wanted to participate, they can choose another charity or this fund as it's for north Oakland County. Ms. Gamage asked what will happen to the signs once removed. Ms. Silvester will offer them to the high school if graduation will be at DTE, or back to the families. Ms. Gamage asked if signs were available for purchase from the school district. Ms. Silvester explained this project is separate from the school – she thinks they did have signs, but was unable to get one. Her project is different and celebrates the kids along a happy trail. Ms. Olijnyk thinks this is a cool idea and loves the concept, but is concerned with vandalism and signs being thrown into the creek or brush, and said there was something in the material sent to the Commission about leading walks, asked if she's planning on groups to go on walks, or just something on the trail for people to enjoy while on the trail. Ms. Silvester is not planning on leading organized walks, she's just encouraging people to walk and use the trail so they can look for their senior's sign. Mr. Ferriolo feels this is a wonderful, unique idea but is concerned this will be a vandalism magnet, however there will be constant policing of it, which is good, but he feels kids will jump all over this, which is unfortunate. He added sticking the signs in might be difficult because it's not like a lawn, and the ground may still be hard. As long as the monitoring/policing of the project is done, he's in agreement. Mr. Blanchard thinks it's a great idea, but is concerned about the vandalism and signs ending up in the creek and bushes. He would be more inclined not only that it will be watched, but promised that Ms. Silvester will be policing the trail and picking up any signs that are tossed, as the Commission does not have the staff to do that. Mr. Simon asked if there any costs the Commission would have to incur. Ms. Silvester replied no, and is hopeful that vandalism doesn't have negative feedback. She will monitor it, but is not capable of controlling people. She will keep her word about patrolling it and is prepared to clean up. It might not be as heavily signed as what it sounds like it might be. Ms. Buxar thinks this is an excellent idea and likes the concept, and agrees that it would great to look into incorporating the other schools. Ms. Silvester feels there is plenty of room to do this, but permission is needed for everything. Lake Orion was her priority, but it would be easy to reach out to other schools. She doesn't want to speak for Lake Orion Printing and Design, but thinks it could be something spectacular for the trail and the graduates. Ms. Olijnyk doesn't see anything about a license, like we do for group events. She feels a license and proof of insurance is necessary. Ms. Silvester indicated she did fill out a permit with Jen, who asked that she speak with Ms. Steele, and then the Commission. She is familiar with doing a license, and asked what she has to do to make it happen. Ms. Ford indicated that Chris Barnett is calling in and would like to make public comment. Mr. Barnett appreciates that this is a unique request, it's happening all around the country to support the graduating class of 2020, and thinks this a great idea. The community and high school support it. He supports the idea, does not feel it is precedent setting, and could be an awesome draw to the trail. He agrees with extending the idea to Rochester Community Schools. He has asked for increased patrols on the Orion section of the trail. He thanked the Commission for considering the idea. In summary, Mr. Blanchard suggested that if all the signs are not sold, that they be placed further apart and more off the trail so people aren't crowded. He asked how long the signs should be up, as it's up to the Commission. Mr. Simon asked about grass cutting on the sides of the trail. Mr. Stout

indicated this will not be an issue in Orion. Ms. Silvester was thinking of starting May 1<sup>st</sup> for two weeks. Ms. Ford was asked to notify the Parks Departments of member communities about the project. It should be publicized that the need for social distancing and not blocking the trail is important. Ms. Silvester was asked to get with Ms. Ford to develop a press release and website notice.

**MOTION** by Steele, seconded by Stout, *Moved*, to approve the ability of Lake Orion High School to place senior graduation signs along the trail for 14 days in May (dates coordinated with the Commission), under the supervision of the Trail Manager and contingent upon an application being filed and proof of insurance is provided.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Blanchard, Ferriolo, Gamage, Sage, Simon, Steele, Stout, Walker

Nays: None

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**UPDATE: Louis Carrio, President – Friends of the Paint Creek Trail:** Mr. Carrio indicated he has nothing to report. The project looks ready to go, but nothing is happening. The only problem might be getting the stone cut, and the planting won't start for at least another month. Mr. Blanchard indicated it might be a fall planting, instead of in the spring.

**UPDATE/DISCUSSION: Paint Creek Trail Signage Project – DNR Spending Freeze:** Ms. Ford explained there is a memo in the packet explaining she received an email from the DNR for the Iron Belle signage grant letting us know that there is a spending freeze and that we needed to stop work immediately. If we proceeded and paid out anything on the project, there might be a chance we would not be reimbursed. So, the project has been stopped at this point. She has been in communication with the Rochester Sign Shop, and they stopped work. They were waiting for the materials to arrive. On her end, the map is done as well as the content that would be going on about the different topics. As soon as she gets the approval to start up again, we should be good to go at that point. She received an email today from the grant coordinator saying that the DNR has extended the grant timeline to September 30<sup>th</sup>, because it was only to April 30<sup>th</sup>. Hopefully we will start up soon and get this project moving again. Ms. Olijnyk said the committee approved the text, but it should be brought back to the Commission next month. Ms. Ford will put it on the next agenda for review. Ms. Gamage asked if there was any concern that they might revoke the remainder of the grant with the message to stop work and future budgetary items. Ms. Ford does not know, we'll have to see how it plays out – there could be a chance they wouldn't be able to fund the rest of it. We've paid for half of the project with the sign shop at this point, so we would have to either reduce the number of signs we're going to get done or find another source of funding if that happens. Ms. Gamage commented it seems like it's a mixed message that they are increasing the length of time we have for the grant, but they are saying stop spending because we won't get more money. Ms. Ford agreed it is a mixed message. Mr. Blanchard agreed as the State is not doing any extra spending on non-essential things. All non-essential things have been halted in the State. Mr. Stout indicated he was in a meeting last week, and the DNR has no answers at this time. It's just a freeze at this point. He doesn't look at this as a negative thing, it's just a time out to figure out where they go from this point.

**DISCUSSION/APPROVAL: Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation Funds:** Ms. Ford said back in February she met with JJ Tighe from the Foundation to talk about where we were on the resurfacing and bridge projects and he was happy with the progress made. They discussed the extra funds we have and she brought to his attention the five different projects we had talked about in February. He was very interested in the projects that were generally related to the work that was being completed – that would be resurfacing the parking lots, putting in the stairs at Bridge 33.7 and doing some of the signage project that needs to be done. He also was interested

in the project that Oakland Township is working on at the Paint Creek Junction for another trail head. He was hopeful that the Commission could work with the Township to allocate some of those funds we wouldn't be using on our three projects toward that project. He spoke with Ms. Milos-Dale about this and also gave her some ideas of where she could maybe seek out some of the remaining funds that is needed for this project. Ms. Milos-Dale is present to speak. Mr. Ferriolo believes we were in agreement at the last meeting, and Ms. Ford went over this, we were at \$89,000 and is now shown at \$91,000 for these projects. He mentioned one of the things that Ms. Ford mentioned last time is the \$10,000 cushion – is this something we should add to the \$91,000? Ms. Ford said we do need to think about this, it's not included in the \$91,000. The reason the price went up a little is because we decided to add on an extra kiosk sign because we're putting one in downtown Lake Orion, so that added one more sign. Mr. Ferriolo asked what staff anticipates in terms of another cushion for the costs of these projects, understanding the rates we have were back then, and should we be adding a percentage in anticipation of increased costs. We also said at the time that the differential between that and \$130,000 would be something we would consider offering to Oakland Township. We're here to talk about the differential that the Commission might offer to Oakland Township for the junction project. Ms. Ford indicated Mr. Ferriolo is right about the \$10,000, she forgot to include that in her memo. She has gotten confirmation from the signage shop that they will honor their pricing, so that will remain the same. For the stairs and parking lots, she has not been able to get information back from Mannik Smith yet; they are working on it and the costs are estimates at this point. Mr. Simon asked the voting members how much they know about the junction project and what the park has to add to the trail. It adds amenities that are not available at that end of the trail. Mr. Blanchard explained that Ms. Milos-Dale is here to do a presentation, and doesn't see a need for a vote. Mr. Simon is not asking for a vote, just trying to know how many people know about the project. Mr. Blanchard wants to hear more about it tonight. Ms. Steele asked if the \$10,000 was for the overage on the signs. She commented about the bridge where the fence was missing – she knows there was a cost involved in that and we are asking for the contractor and engineer to repair that – in the event they don't pay for that, she thinks the portion that needed to be repaired needs to be included utilizing the grant. Ms. Ford said the \$12,000 for the extra railing is already accounted for in her calculations, so we don't need to factor that in. The \$10,000 is for overages on the bridge project. Regarding the signage, Mr. Blanchard asked if the State doesn't fund it, how much money is needed to finish the project. Ms. Ford will do some calculations and provide this to the members.

Ms. Milos-Dale's Presentation on the Paint Creek Junction Project: Ms. Milos-Dale explained this is not only an Oakland Township project, this has been something the Commission has requested for many years. This project will service the trail and users more than anyone else, she loves the trail as one of their premier facilities in Oakland Township and wants to do this. But as you can see in her explanation, costs keep going up. Around 2002, they purchased the property in order to provide a trail connection and support facilities for users. This has been a long time coming. At that time, they spent a good amount of money purchasing the property for this purpose, and had divided the property into two pieces because it was so costly and thought they would sell off one piece and keep the other. Now that they are ready to develop it, they need to use both pieces to make it work as seen in the plan, so they are not selling the property. It's the right thing to do, and they're happy to do that. They did apply for a Trust Fund grant in 2018 and talked with the grant coordinator today. These monies are the only ones allowed by the Constitution. That grant will be coming to them, it's just a matter of when because of the delay in what's going on with COVID-19. She has been working with the Township's consulting engineer, and it's basically ready to go to construction. It's already been out for review and they have received some permits. The facility will have numerous spaces for cars as well as for horse trailers, universally accessible restrooms, a pathway that connects to the trail, a well for potable

water, a picnic area, a native landscaping project which will capture the rainwater drained from the parking lot, and interpretative signage. These are the basic components of a trailhead. There are no extraneous things to strip off the project to make it less expensive. The engineer recently did an updated cost estimate included in the packet. They do have a grant that is supposed to pay for about \$228,000 of the cost, but the way bids are coming in, they will probably be high. In the packet, she listed \$130,000 as unfunded, but the Park Commission had a discussion and put \$35,000 more into this project. So now we are potentially \$95,000 over budget. She is going to apply for a grant to the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan. They've indicated that they would expect a \$50,000 grant might be possible, but that's average for them. So potentially they have about \$45,000 that remains unfunded for this project, so she's coming to the Commission to ask them to consider sharing some of the Wilson Foundation funding for this project, which was not an idea on her radar. When she talked to JJ Tighe about this project, she was talking about applying for a new grant – it was his idea to ask the Commission if there were funds left over that might be put towards this project. So, the Parks put in an extra \$35,000, they have \$95,000 more to look for – she's applying for a \$50,000 grant, so potentially \$45,000 remains unfunded. She is happy to answer any questions.

The Commission thanked Ms. Milos-Dale. Mr. Becker said this project has been going on for a long time and it's been in the last two Master Plans. The Commission really wants this project as it's a serious need for trailway, and we are the primary beneficiary of it. If the Wilson Foundation thinks it's a good idea for the Commission to use some of the funds, it's great. With the generosity they have shown, as well as the generosity of Oakland Township Parks, he has no problem with allocating some funds to this project. Mr. Stout thanked Ms. Milos-Dale for the presentation. He doesn't want her to think what's he's going to say is negative as the project will be a good asset, but commented the Commission took things out of the overall project plans such as parking lots, and would like consideration if there is any extra money that we look at those projects first that we've talked about for the last couple of years, and take care of those with any additional funds that we have. Mr. Ferriolo loves the project, that horses can go there and there will be a place for picnics. We've already said yes to Ms. Milos-Dale at our last meeting, so she doesn't have to sell us on anything. The only thing we need to deal with is what the differential is between covering those things that the Wilson Foundation said that we could cover, including the \$10,000 for the bridge project, and if these cost needs to be increased a little, then the difference between that and \$130,000 has the Oakland Township Parks Commission name on it. We just need to say that, so the Commission doesn't get caught making a commitment of a set amount, and then finding out we're overbudget on what needs to be completed. We need to be fair to the Commission, the Wilson Foundation and to Oakland Township Parks – we already said yes and will do what we can for the project, we just need to know the differential. We might not know how much we can give to Parks until Ms. Ford gets the figures – it might not be until the next meeting. Mr. Blanchard asked Ms. Milos-Dale when she needs an answer – she indicated she is going to apply for the Community Foundation grant in May regardless. It would be good to know, but it's not an emergency. She supplied a time schedule in her information, and the Township will be going through a rezoning for a few months before they go out to bid, probably in the late fall, so there is time. Ms. Ford was asked to get the cost figures on the other projects for the next meeting, and then we can determine what's left for the junction project. Mr. Simon said he's new to the Commission, but understands that 62% of the trail is supported by Oakland Township. He wanted to throw this out when thinking about supporting the junction park, as the Township puts a lot of money in to support the trail - let's support the park. Mr. Ferriolo said that is not the opinion of the representative from the Board at Oakland Township. We understand how everything works and the interlocal. It doesn't mean anything, it's nice chatter but as far as the operation of this Commission, there are eight votes with respect to every other municipality. Ms. Buxar asked Ms. Milos-Dale about the SPTC possibly contributing something towards the

project, as this is somewhat of a connector. Ms. Milos-Dale said this project has gone on for so long. She does think she talked to them a while ago, and if they would have contributed anything, she would have included it in the project funding, but will be happy to go back and talk with them. Mr. Blanchard asked if there is a date we need to get back to the Foundation on. Ms. Ford indicated she has to submit a new budget and letter because it's more than 10% of the cost of the grant and it needs to go through an approval process, but right now it's a little fluid with everything that's going, so it's OK right now.

**DISCUSSION: Trail Surface Condition & Maintenance:** Ms. Ford indicated staff has received some complaints from users about the surface. An email is included in the packet, and the writer is on the phone to make comment. She has reached out to Mannik Smith and WCI about this issue. They were both in agreement that it had to do with the weather this year and grading should take care of it. Tom from WCI stated that sometimes the first year of a new surface can be a little worse than it will be in years to come because there's more water in it than there normally would be, especially since it was surfaced in late fall. The water got trapped in it and will take a while for it to fully drain out. The hope is when we get back to normal operations, as parks staff are working at reduced levels, remotely or just restricting work to sanitary items, it will eventually get graded. Oakland Township may have gone out this week to do some work on it. The hope is once that work is done it should be back to its normal state. Mr. Samuel Nouhan, 5563 Kirkridge Trail, Oakland Township, is calling in with public comment. He commended Ms. Ford for a great job in being responsive to the emails he has sent – he's impressed with her thoroughness. The Commission looks like a fun, collaborative group, which is refreshing, as he has a lot of experience with local government and it's not always like this. He is a long-time user of the trail, riding about 1,000 miles every summer between April and October. He has noticed the trail condition deteriorate over the last several years, and was glad to see the resurfacing occur. There has been a persistent problem with ruts in the trail over the last 4-5 years. It has to do with the popularity of the fat tire bikes, although he's not blaming them exclusively for the ruts, he's just noticing more fat tire bikes and more ruts. He rode the trail after it firmed up from the thaw, and he was shocked at how many ruts were in the trail after it had been resurfaced last fall. He walked the trail in March and noticed a lot of bikes on the trail. It's his opinion the bikes are causing the ruts, which can be addressed by regular grading and surface treatment, but he thinks the Commission should give consideration to not allowing bikes or anything with tires on the trail during the spring thaw. It adds to the maintenance costs. The fat tire bikes are designed to be used in the winter, on sand and in the mud, and has encouraged people to ride the trail during that sensitive period when the trail is vulnerable to being marked with ruts. He feels it would be wise to consider that. The ruts will be taken care of with regular maintenance, but he suggests that the Commission not allow any kind of wheeled objects on the trail during the spring thaw. He developed tendonitis in his wrist after riding the trail related to the rough surface. This is a real issue and is affecting the usefulness of the trail for bike riders. Ms. Steele thought that there might be a possibility to use some of the grant funding to go over the trail very finely to make sure it's a better surface – maybe we should look at doing this collectively while there is funding that was used for resurfacing to grade it to make it smoother. Mr. Becker confirmed the caller's observations – the parts of the trail he has been on are in terrible shape. He recalls other resurfacings have not been this bad; maybe the fines used this time are not as suitable for letting drainage as the old surface. He is strongly opposed to prohibiting bicyclists on the trail at any time as they are the highest percentage of usage on the trail. We're here to have people use the trail, not to chase them away. We have tried educational campaigns to ask people not to use the trail with bicycles when it's wet and ruts can form, but a solution is not to eliminate riders from the trail. We certainly need some regrading. Mr. Blanchard agrees with the contractor as this year we didn't get a hard frost and that kept the ground soft. There are some trails that restrict their use, but that would be a tough call. He is in favor of putting this topic on a future agenda for

discussion and to do a little research on what other trails are doing, but he thinks this winter was unusual as the ground never really froze and people were using the trail when it was soft and creating ruts. COVID-19 had a lot to do with the use as the trail is very busy. Ms. Gamage has noticed all the same things and concurs with the comments. The Friends of the Clinton River Trail did an educational campaign during the first few years of surfacing the trail asking bikers to refrain from riding the trail when it was wet because they had issues with rutting. She's not sure how effective that campaign was, but would hesitate to try banning certain users from using the trail because of the enforcement. She doesn't think it would be that effective. She would rather see an educational program done. Ms. Pinkham agrees with the condition of the trail as the ruts are huge. She can't go along with banning bicycles as she rides year-round, and does not see it as enforceable. It's a new surface and will take a while for it to settle, the weather impacted it as well as the increased usage. She wonders if it could be rolled as well as graded. Keeping bicycles off, one of the biggest users, is not viable. Mr. Ferriolo thanked Mr. Nouhan, the caller, for his report as a resident who cares. We need to handle this problem if the trail can't handle the types of bikes on the trail – we should have developed something to make it suitable for bikes. He doesn't think we can tell people to stay off the trail when it's wet. It comes back to the Commission to fix this. Mr. Nouhan said he acknowledges enforcement would be an issue. When retired, he wants to stay in the area because of the trail, but wants to say the ruts are occurring in a very narrow window of time during the spring thaw. He doesn't want to ban anyone from the trail, but it's a problem that occurs at a very specific time. In addition to the ruts, the surface is very wavy because of the resurfacing. This has to do with the way it was tamped down during the resurfacing process. Mr. Blanchard indicated this needs to be brought to a future meeting, and asked Ms. Ford to do some research and talk to the Park Managers to see who might have grading equipment for the future, and talk to the contractor about rolling or grading costs. We need to get the trail in a condition where it's smooth and not rutted. Ms. Ford indicated she sent an email to all communities and both Oakland Township and the City of Rochester have the equipment to do the grading. Rochester indicated they will do it when time allows once they are back to normal operations. Oakland Township said they would try and do it within the next few weeks. She has not heard back from Rochester Hills or Orion Township at this point. Mr. Blanchard indicated these communities may not have the equipment, and maybe the other two communities might share equipment. Mr. Stout hopes we all can utilize each other's equipment, that's not a big deal – but it's a shame that we spent all this money on resurfacing and the following season we're talking about how bad the trail surface is after paying for a new surface. He's irritated that the contractor and engineer can just walk away and say it's the Commission's problem and they have to do something about the surface problem. He asked if we specked a different mix than in previous years for the base. Ms. Buxar agreed with Mr. Stout that something went so bad so quick, but we've had an unusual year weather-wise this year. Mr. Becker remembers the engineer told the Commission he could not get the mix that we had used in the past as it was very expensive; the mix was different sizes and very hard to make. Instead he gave us a finer mix than what was used in the past. He feels the mix used is part of the problem and the engineer didn't warn us of possible liabilities with the mix decided on. Ms. Ford confirmed the mix was different than what was used previously. Mr. Blanchard suggested that rolling the surface may be better than grading it. Mr. Sage is not sure the City of Rochester will be able to comply with the grading by next meeting because of the Governor's orders. Ms. Buxar said that maybe the Commission could spend some of the money in the grant to make sure the trail is fixed properly and maybe have another engineer look at it to see if there is something we can do to rectify it. Mr. Blanchard asked if any member communities have an engineer on staff to look at this issue. Mr. Stout can have a discussion with OHM, Orion Township's consulting engineer to see where it goes – he will ask what the standard is for a pathway mix. Mr. Walker indicated Rochester Hills has an engineer on staff, but is not sure of their expertise for this application. This item will be brought back to the next meeting for discussion.

**DISCUSSION: 2020 Trail Events:** Ms. Ford said there was a change to what was included in the packet. The Orion Veterans Memorial 5k – they have decided to make it a virtual race, so that is not an issue any longer. Not included in the information for May events is an Adopt a Trail event, and a Garlic Mustard workday scheduled for May 21<sup>st</sup> which is in conjunction with Six Rivers, Oakland Township Parks & Rec and CISMA. National Trails Day is scheduled June 6<sup>th</sup> with the ribbon cutting for the bridge. She received an email today from the American Hiking Society who plans all the Trails Day events, and they are encouraging everyone to not have an in-person event, to do it as more of a virtual event to show a message of supporting the trails and not do something in person. She spoke to her contact at the DNR and they are fine if the ribbon cutting is pushed back, it doesn't need to happen in the spring. The Motor City Brew Tour/Cruisin' for the Trails is still on as of right now for the 14<sup>th</sup>, but she was contacted by the person who runs the event proposing an August 30<sup>th</sup> date if need be if the stay at home order is extended. The RARA Earth Day 5k is still being planned for June 27<sup>th</sup>. A lot of the events scheduled for April and May have been pushed back into the fall at this point. The Brooksie Way race is usually in September. Mr. Becker said what he sees from the CDC guidelines, they are basically asking for a 30 day forward look for some of these events, so everything Ms. Ford reported on, we are OK for now and don't have to make any decisions about canceling anything now, but conditions can change. We don't need to act on anything in her written or oral reports now. Mr. Blanchard is glad that these organizations made a decision to cancel their events. Ms. Olijnyk asked which events are still on for May. Ms. Ford said the May events still scheduled are the Garlic Mustard workday on May 21<sup>st</sup> and the Adopt A Trail event that does not have a scheduled date, which we can forego if necessary. Ms. Olijnyk commented the Garlic Mustard event is within the 30 day limitation. Ms. Ford indicated this event draws a pretty good amount of people which are broken up into smaller groups. Ms. Gamage said her book group discussed the Adopt a Trail event last night, and will continue to do their event, but differently. No date has been scheduled, but will be in the next couple of weeks as trail usage is high and there is a lot of trash on the trail, including dog feces. Each family will be assigned a particular section of the trail, it will not be done in one group. Mr. Blanchard's subdivision is scheduling a clean up event, with each family being assigned an individual time to go out and clean up a certain section. Perhaps this could be done for the Garlic Mustard workday. Ms. Ford explained this is a Six Rivers' event, but she will speak with them as they are having discussions about whether to hold the event. Mr. Ferriolo said we should consider June and July events that demand a lot of planning, as well as the Labor Day Bridge Walk. Mr. Blanchard asked that future trail events be put on next month's agenda for discussion as staff has to do a lot of planning for them. Ms. Ford asked for clarification on National Trails Day – are not going to do an in-person event in June and push it back as recommended, or will we still hold the event? The consensus is to push this event back.

**MANAGER'S REPORT:** In addition to the written report, Ms. Ford indicated there is some graffiti on the trail, but Orion Township has taken care of this and the bathroom has been locked to prevent future incidences. There is a logjam at the Dinosaur Hill bridge and the City of Rochester was aware of this issue and it is at the top of their priority list once they go back to normal operations. She has been pushing social distancing content on the website and social media, and issued a press release to the papers. Mr. Becker indicated in the Paint Creek Junction plans they have a remote locking mechanism for the bathroom, perhaps we could do the same for the Kern/Clarkston location. Ms. Ford will talk to Ms. Milos-Dale about this. Mr. Simon is doing research on the locks and timing and will get this information to staff. He also suggested that Trout Unlimited be contacted regarding the logjam in Rochester as they have a powerful outreach; he will send contact information to staff.

