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2023 Summary of Events and Accomplishments

The Commission approved Temporary Use Permits for the following events:

- Orion Veteran's Memorial Day Race, May 30, 2023
- Eastside Racing Company—Train to Trails Half Marathon, September 10, 2023
- Rochester Community Schools Foundation Hometown Hustle—September 16, 2023
- The Grace Centers of Hope 5K, October 7, 2023
- Frank Race Management/Lake Orion-Run Michigan Cheap, October 8, 2023
- Frank Race Management/Lake Orion-Run Michigan Cheap, Jun 4, 2023

January

Trail Manager Ford submitted the Spark Grant application

The Commission approved Resolution #2023-001 –Resolution in Support of the city of Rochester's TAP Grant Application for PCT Bridge 31.7 Renovation.

Trail Manager Ford sent a form to Commissioners to review, rank and revise goals of the Paint Creek Trailways Commission for 2023.

February

Trail Manager Ford provided details on the Southeast Rochester Property regarding updated cost estimates and a potential donor willing to finance the project.

The commission discussed plans to approve the limited use permit request, Bald Mountain Recreation Area Bridge to PC, Oakland Township

The Commission Discussed Goals for 2023.

March

The Commission held an Accessibility Workshop to discuss the Paint Creek Trail Bridge 31.7 Renovation Project.

The Commission approved Resolution #2023-002—Resolution of Authorization—Paint Creek Trailways Commission Application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund.

The Commission discussed cost estimates for the project occurring at the Southeast Rochester Property.

The Commission discussed Ad Hoc Committee assignments.

Trail Manager Ford announced her resignation and discussed plans for hiring a replacement.

The Commission held a special meeting to provide regarding the work on Bridge 31.7.

April

The Commission received a request for consideration from the Oakland Township Historical Society regarding the placement of railroad signal booth adjacent to the Paint Creek Trail.

Mr. Louis Carrio presented the Friends of the Paint Creek Trail Memorandum of Understanding and reviewed the relationship, responsibility and role that the Commission has in relation to the group with the intention of easing the transition of future trail management.

Manager Ford provided updates regarding the \$50,000 in grant funds received from the Community Foundation for Bridge 31.7. She includes that the applications for the TAP grant and MNRTF grant were submitted.

The Commission approved the placement of two trail counters to measure the amount of users of the trail.

The Commission approved sending 1,400 brochures to MDOT for distribution to spread information about the trail.

The Personnel Committee discussed the committee's recommendation of Mr. Correll for the new Trail Manager. The commission acknowledged Ms. Ford for her excellent work as The Paint Creek Trail Manager and wished their best for continued success in her future endeavors.

The Paint Creek Trail was recognized as a Pure Michigan Trail at the annual Pure Michigan Governor's Conference on Tourism.

May

The Commission welcomed Mr. Tom Correll as the new trail manager.

Trail Manager Correll provided an update on the status of current grants and potential grant opportunities for the bridge 31.7 replacement project.

The Commission discussed plans for a 40th Anniversary Celebration for the Paint Creek Trails.

The Commission decided to visit the Paint Creek Junction during the National Trails Day event for their June Field Trip location.

June

Trail Manager Correll provided an update on the Spark Grant and noted that things were moving along nicely regarding the MNRTF Grant.

The Commission discusses plans for sponsorship of the Labor Day Bridge Walk and the 40th Anniversary event.

The Commission discussed updates regarding the permission of E-bikes and related electronic mobility devices on the trail.

Trail Manager Correll provided an update on the project happening on the South Eastern Rochester Property. He also noted that he worked with AEW to construct a tentative timeline with project completion around October 2024 pending all funding is received as expected.

The Commission collaborated with Vangaurd Trout Unlimited in carrying out a conservancy project extending through July.

July

Trail Manager Correll stated the MI Department of Natural Resources Grant Coordinator reached out regarding a potential new grant opportunity through the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. The Commission agreed on submitting an application for the grant.

The Commission further discussed sponsorships for the Labor Day Bridge Walk.

The Trail Improvement Subcommittee discussed potential new trail amenities and commemorative offerings for trail users that make a donation. Suggested alternatives to benches included brick pavers for the Moutrie Pollinator Garden as well as trees with memorial plaques.

Commissioners discussed a potential land donation from an individual with property adjacent to the trail. The donor indicated that he would prepare a proposal for the Commission's consideration in the future.

Trail Manager Correll announces that tentatively work on the Bald Mountain Connector Project is set to begin in spring of 2024.

Vanguard Trout Unlimited continued conducting research on trout habitat in the Paint Creek. The Commission expressed their gratitude Trout Unlimited for their hard work and discussed their progress. They cleared major log jams between Tienken Rd. and Dutton Rd and have been working to reshape this section of the Paint Creek to provide improved habitat for the trout.

Commissioner Ross announced his resignation from his position on the Trailways Commission, as he is moving out of state. The Commission thanked him and wished him well.

August

The Commission welcomed new members of the Paint Creek Trailways Commission; Conner Reiter and Stanley Ford.

SEMCOG's Regional Review Committee selected the Paint Creek Trail Bridge 31.7 Renovation Project for Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding for fiscal year 2025.

Ms. Grupido announced that she has submitted her letter of resignation and acceptance into a degree program. The commission and Trail Manager Correll thanked her for her time with the Trailways Commission and wished her much success for her future.

The Commission discussed and finalized plans for the 16th Annual Labor Day Bridge Walk.

The Commission received three FOIA requests relating to motorized vehicles on the trail and temporary use permits allowing Trout Unlimited to carry out their project along the trail. Manager Correll worked with the Commission's attorneys to provide the correct documents within a timely matter.

September

The Friends of the Paint Creek President and Vice President made a public statement updating the Commission on the Moutrie Pollinator Garden. They also thanked the City of Rochester Hills for their support in watering the garden. The Commission thanked the volunteers from the Friends group for their continuous support in establishing and maintaining the garden.

The Commission was approached by attorney, Christopher Kroll, with a proposal to construct a side path and observation deck on the trail spur near Bloomer Park to commemorate a longtime client who had recently passed. The Commission agreed to authorize Trail Manager Correll to negotiate an agreement with MTGA for this project.

Monday September 4th, the Commission hosted the 16th Annual Labor Day Bridge Walk along the Paint Creek Trail where they hosted approximately 150 event participants. Trail manager Correll thanked the Commissioners and everyone who contributed to the success of the event.

The Commission elected Commissioner Dalrymple to serve as Treasurer of the Paint Creek Trailways Commission for the remainder of 2023.

Trail Manager Correll reported that the initial scoring of our grant application was received for the MNRTF Grant for Bridge 31.7. He proceeded to discuss ways in which the commission can improve our scores with the submission of additional information by October 1st.

Adopt-A-Trail conducted its trail cleanup on September 30th.

October

Joe Bruce was present at the October meeting on behalf of Trout Unlimited and discussed the progress made regarding the conservation project taking place in the Paint Creek to improve trout

habitat. The group hopes to make additional improvements in the future and further monitor the trout population to assess the benefits of the project.

The Commissioners discussed updating the licensing agreements for 2024.

The Commission announced that Administrative Assistant Eryn Grupido will be leaving at the end of this month and Manager Correll recommended that the Commission hire Nicole Sands to fill this vacancy.

The Commission discussed the Paint Creek Trailways Fiscal Year 2024 Budget.

The Commission discussed plans for the 40th Anniversary Celebration.

Trail manager Correll shared that he will be meeting with the Bald Mountain project manager soon, they are hoping for a spring start date for the Connector Project.

The Commission thanked Administrative Assistant Grupido for her time at the Paint Creek Trailways Commission and wished her luck in her future endeavors.

November

The Trailways Commission welcomed Nicole Sands as the new Administrative Assistant.

The Commission discussed Officers for 2024.

Manager Correll reported that the MNRTF grant resubmission allowed us to increase our score from 345 to 395.

Manager Correll presented the updated Paint Creek Trailways 2024 Fiscal Budget and the Commission discussed and reviewed it.

The Commission discussed details for planning the 40th Anniversary Celebration on April 21, 2024. The Commission discussed how they plan to present historical information about the trails at this event and provided feedback on the drafted sponsorship form for the event.

Manager Correll asked that the Commission review the “Request for Proposal—Website Upgrade” and discussed potential bidders for the re-design. The Commission noted they aim to solicit bids in early 2024.

December

The Commission discussed 2024 Officers.

Commissioner Olijnyk nominated the following Commissioners to serve as Officers in 2024:

Commissioner Sage as Chairperson, Commissioner Walker as Vice Chairperson, Commissioner Blust as Treasurer, and Commissioner Dalrymple as Secretary.

The nominees accepted their nominations and the Commission was in favor of the appointments.

Terms of office for new officers will become effective January 1, 2024.

The Commission reviewed and approved the most recent version of the proposed 2024 Budget. Manager Correll provided notes relating to both the 2024 and 2025 fiscal years.

Commissioner Elwert shared that he attended the Board meeting of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund on December 13th. He reported that the 37.1 Bridge Project was recommended for a \$300,000 grant. Manager Correll also added that the project was also recommended for an approximate \$700,000 TAP grant.

The Paint Creek Trail's social media presence has grown over the past year. Ms. Sands shared that the Trail currently has 9,326 Facebook followers and 2,123 Instagram followers. Facebook post reach increased by 3.6% in the last 90 days compared to the previous 90-day period. She also noted that the trail staff aims to implement strategies to increase social media reach and user awareness of happenings on the Paint Creek Trail.