

Osawatometrie Trails Task Force -- January 8, 2020

Osawatometrie Trails Task Force met at 5:00 pm on January 8, 2020, in the conference room at Osawatometrie City Hall. Members present were Jeff Dorsett, Gary French, Mark Fuchs, George Pretz, Doug Walker, and Jeff Walmann. Also present was scribe Karen LaDuex.

The minutes of the December meeting were distributed and approved.

In regard to **Acquisitions/Property**, the focus was a discussion pursuant to the next major step. The next step must be either installing the bridge or building the trailhead. Currently, funding does not exist to do both projects.

An advantage mentioned in support of installing the bridge as the next step is that its cost is a fixed amount. Additionally, it will complete the trail. Also it will be an attraction, an amenity to be enjoyed by local citizens and visitors alike. Lastly, if the bridge is installed first, the trailhead can be constructed in stages as funding becomes available.

An advantage of constructing the trailhead first is that a kiosk is important because it provides information on the trail and the community. It will eliminate doubt as to the starting point of the trail. Also, a trailhead will provide adequate parking for all vehicles, including horse trailers, and will improve the appearance of the trailhead. It was pointed out that the trail, without the bridge is completely usable. The disadvantage is that the exact cost of the trailhead has not been determined. And, of course, constructing the trailhead means that bridge installation must be delayed until the entire cost is in hand.

The Task Force reached consensus with the decision that the trailhead should be constructed first. Installation of the bridge will follow when the group has in hand the total cost for the bridge itself and for its installation. It was emphasized that construction of the bridge abutments can proceed as soon as possible so that the site is ready for bridge installation when funding is available.

Walker reported on the status of trail construction which is currently continuing in the section south of Trojan Elementary. He noted that this section is three work days from completion. Connection of the new trail to the existing Flint Hills Trail has been completed. Screenings from the supply on the Flint Hills Trail near the Henson property will be spread from the Henson property east to the turnaround, just west of the bridge location.

Design for the parking area was discussed. Halls are ready to begin excavation design. The cost of a needed 3D scan is estimated to be \$1100. The State Master Plan will be utilized and will include mile markers. The location of the 0-mile marker has been determined.

Ideas included a kiosk which will mimic a railroad depot design and include four to eight panels. Pat's Signs will help with the design which may take some ideas from the KATY trailhead kiosks. The kiosk will display maps, mileage, trail information, local attractions and local history as well as sponsors/donors who contributed to the effort to build the trailhead and final trail segment. A group will be designated to determine content and layout. It was suggested that Sarah and Jeff Dorsett might write sign information.

Next **Finance/Fundraising** was considered. Osawatometrie Trails Task has an unencumbered balance of \$69,433.27. To date the project has raised \$251,666 and has paid expenses totaling \$182,232.73. Walker has submitted the Sunflower Grant application which could provide \$55,000 in funding for construction. Results will be announced in February. A second round, a \$5000 promotion grant, application is due in July. The group can apply for another Hawkins grant. Fuchs said the application for a \$2500 WalMart grant is in progress. It is estimated that an additional \$70,000 must be raised.

With regard to **Promotion/Communications**, it was noted that Sunflower State Trail Appreciation Day begins at 8:00 am on Thursday, January 30, 2020, at the state capitol. Local fundraising ideas were suggested; they included forming a committee to determine names of likely donors, having a "first official trail walk," and attending the Miami County Tourism meeting on March 10. Walmann and Lamirande will coordinate local activities for Rhythm & Ride to be held April 25-26.

Next meeting:

5:00 pm, Wednesday, February 5, 2020 -- Osawatometrie City Hall Conference Room