



**Board Meeting, January 14, 2009 @ 6:00 pm
Lowell Township Hall**

Present:

LARA Board Members, Mari Stone, Perry Beachum, Jim Pfaller, Dan Edwards, Betsy Davidson and Linda Regan.

Guests; Dave Austin, Williams & Works

Meeting Minutes

Minutes of December meeting approved.

LARA Treasurers Report

Betsy noted that the invoice from LAP is more than we have left in that grant. It is assumed that the work they did to develop Phase I pre-fundraising is complete. She will send a cover letter with the check to verify that this covers all work to date, and include a summary of our current relationship.

We are still under budget on the Fundraising Grant - will need two public meetings in the next few months. It was suggested that one of them be with the Senior Neighbors. The disabled community needs outreach to get their input as well.

Old Business

Campaign Cabinet Report – There has been \$330,702 received and/or pledged to date, which is 40% of the goal. We need to be at 50% by the end of March. Jodie Seese is talking to the school district regarding a payroll deduction option. Other payrolls in the community should be considered as well.

Expo Planning – Date is Saturday, March 28th. The Rails to Trails group is planning to be there, and would like to coordinate space with us and NCTA. SRTS may also participate. Williams & Works has a booth set up that we can use, and Dave is doing a map that depicts all of the trails and planned connections. The February meeting will be used to further brainstorm and assign duties.

Design Services Update – Dave Austin is working on the DNR Grant application, due April 1. He has discussed our project with staff at the DNR, and they are very interested in the trail connections we will be making. A public meeting is required, and it was decided to have one at our March meeting, to be held at Lowell Township. At this meeting, we will describe the grant application, go over the information contained, and ask for public comment. Prior to submission, any opposition needs to be addressed. We will also need letters of support, and the Board was asked to begin compiling a list of businesses and individuals to invite. The campaign committee has also collected letters of support, and it will be determined if these can be used as well.

Dave outlined several key items to work on:

- 1.) a DNR approved Rec Plan. LARA will be the applicant, and the Community Rec Plan developed in 2008 will be used as a base. Ability to approve at the March 11 meeting will be determined.
- 2.) The nature of the connection between Gee Drive and the Rail to Trails crossing on Foreman. The existing sidewalk on the south side COULD serve as a temporary measure, but a 10 foot trail on the north would be preferable.
- 3.) Gratz property issue – The grant application will show progress on obtaining the easement. The engineering work on this stretch will show how much we will spend utilizing the Right of Way on Foreman over and above the course north of the trees. This could be useful in negotiations with the Gratz family.

New Business - Nominations and Appointment of Officers

Beachum nominated Al Halbeisen as Chair, Pfaller supported, and the motion carried.
Beachum nominated Mari Stone as Secretary, Regan supported, and the motion carried.
Beachum nominated Betsy Davidson Treasurer, Regan supported, and the motion carried.
Pfaller nominated Perry Beachum Vice Chair, Edwards supported, the motion carried.

Other - Betsy reported that Carolyn Kane, who heads the Rail to Trail effort, believes that Fred Meijer would support a much larger donation than corporate has committed to. She suggested offering a naming opportunity for a substantial amount. Discussion was unfruitful regarding what a substantial amount would be, but there was no objection to a naming opportunity.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

The foregoing constitutes my understanding of matters discussed and conclusions reached. Please review and share your additions or corrections at our next board meeting on **Wednesday February 11, 2009 at 6 pm, Lowell City Hall.**

Respectfully submitted,
Mari Stone
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For more information refer to the website
www.lowellareatrailway.org

Commonly used acronyms;

Landscape Architects & Planners (LAP)
Lowell Area Recreation Authority (LARA)
Lowell Area Schools (LAS)
Lowell Community Fund (LCF)
Lowell Education Foundation (LEF)
Lowell Institute for Volunteer Excellence (LIVE 5)
Lowell Light & Power (LLP)
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)
Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)
Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Michigan Trails & Greenways Alliance (MTGA)
North Country Trail Association (NCTA)
Trail Resources Enrichment and Development (TREAD)
West Michigan Trails & Greenways Coalition (WMTGC)
Wittenbach – Wege Center (WWC)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)