

OAKLAND COUNTY
TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
February 11, 2004

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Christopher Doozan at 1:05 p.m. in the commission room of the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission's administration building.

PRESENT:

Chairman Christopher Doozan, Trails Network Coordinator Marge Gatliff, Joe Figa, Kristen Wiltfang, Larry Falardeau, Dan Stencil, Ed Coe, Mike Hartner, Sargent Mike Searing, Kristen Bennett, Larry Lockwood, Todd Scott, Dan Lord, Merle Richmond, Sharon Greene, Linda Bloch, Dan Duncan, Sue Julian, Dan Navarre, Greg Givens

MINUTES:

Moved by Mr. Hartner, supported by Mr. Falardeau to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2004, as submitted. Moved by Mr. Hartner, supported by Mr. Coe to accept the minutes of December 10, 2004, as submitted.

TRAILS NETWORK UPDATE

Chris Doozan reported that the Huron Valley has received a RTP grant to improve the Lyon Community Park and trail road crossings.

Clinton River Trail representative Mike Hartner reported that they had their second meeting with Brian Blaesing and other members of the Road Commission of Oakland County (RCOC), safety and permitting. RCOC is going to adopt a new plan mandating mid-block trail island crossings in their new policies.

Kristen Meyer of the Paint Creek Trail and Nancy Krupiarz of Rails to Trails sent a message via Marge Gatliff that they were unable to attend, however, wanted to report that they prefer the OTAC meeting in the a.m.

The Polly Ann Trail is having an informational Press Conference on February 12 at 2:00 p.m. to address the options available for connector trails and to receive community in-put.

The Oxford Trail Group is having a meeting on April 15 at 7: 00 p.m. in the Veterans Memorial Building in Oxford. Larry Falardeau will be giving a presentation on Oakland County Planning's role in trails. The topic shall include strategies, maintenance, funding, and standards for trails.

PEDOMETERS

Fifty pedometers will be purchased as promotional items to promote trails for the June 5, 2004, National Trails Event. Marge Gatliff is currently checking costs for this purchase and will report back. This is in conjunction with the Oakland County "Count Your Steps" program.

Shiawassee River Task Force's Sue Julian felt the schools were not giving the program enthusiastic support.

It was moved by Mike Hartner and seconded by Joe Figa that a letter be distributed to the school districts asking them to promote and encourage the "Count Your Steps" program.

Each 3rd and 4th grade student will receive a pedometer and each class will have three representatives/winners eligible for "Family Fun Day." Marge Gatliff will draft the letter.

GREG GIVENS, GRANT BASICS & TRENDS PRESENTATION

Greg Givens, Oakland County Grant Coordinator, emphasized the need to address grant applications as a means to acquire funds to use to create a "change" and that it should be stressed that without the grant funds no change can be initiated. However, this is only part of a grant application strategy.

First, he creates a binder to collect "brain storming" ideas and information in preparation for a grant application in advance. It is best to not "piece" out the project. One person can compile the information and others help to up-grade the project. He also recommends that the problem statement be contained in one sentence. The most common error in most applications is that they are not clear, usually due to hurriedly compiling the information.

There are four new basic trends. 1) The use of logic models as compiled by the "Kellogg Foundation." 2) The collaboration of communities/corporations clarified in a memo of understanding. 3) The use of an outside annual audit, included with the application for non-profit organizations. 4) The submission of how an organization does its work to offer measurable goals and objectives – an outline or flowchart to allow the tracking of the project and organizational programs. (Further information is available at the Kellogg Foundation web site.)

Mr. Givens noted that good options for grant opportunities are T-21 monies, private resources such as Wilkes, Meijers, Stelman, banks, etc. (Banks offer reinvestment programs that provide monies for projects in their community.)

Michigan State University offers a seminar on grant writing. Ms Harris of MSU provides an on-line tutorial on grant writing. www.lib.msu.edu/harris23/grants/grants.htm - 10 A handout pertinent to their programs was provided to OTAC members.

INDEPENDENCE OAKS TRAIL

Joe Figa requested from OTAC a letter of support for Independence Oaks County Parks Organizational Youth Campground Connector Trail grant application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. This grant would allow for the development of a 4,890 linear foot of 8-foot wide asphalt trail; 1,060 linear feet of 8-foot boardwalk and 50-linear foot bridge that will cross the Clinton River; and associated headwater areas offering accessible opportunities for individuals who would not otherwise have the ability to experience these areas. This trail would link to community trails via the Independence Oaks entry trail.

The group agreed to support the project. Marge Gatliff will draft the letter of support.

CORPORATE SUPPORT

Marge Gatliff ask OTAC members to seek corporate support/sponsorship for the June 5 event for National Trails Day in Wixom.

Ed Coe indicated that the Oakland County Business Roundtable is unable to assist financially but will seek other options. He suggested that OTAC needs to develop something to market to the companies. Trail-head hand postings that would recognize supporting entities (i.e. signage, benches, trash containers, handouts, etc.)

Mike Hartner added that it is important to assign a market value to items before they are offered.

It was requested of OTAC membership to return with a "wish list" of marketable items to the next meeting.

MASTER PLAN

The master plan subcommittee will meet after this February 11, 2004, OTAC meeting.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Marge Gatliff distributed a legislative update from Nancy Krupiarz to OTAC members.

TRAILS NETWORK COORDINATOR UPDATE

---A list of the current trail coordinator update topics was distributed by Marge Gatliff.

---Marge noted that information on members' trails will not be included in the new OTAC brochure if the information is not received by March 17, 2004.

---Oakland County Parks will sponsor the MRPA "Walk Michigan" program.

---The County Summit is planned for Thursday, September 9, 2004 at Independence Oaks County Park.

BROWNFIELD GRANT MONEY AVAILABLE

Grant money is available through the Oakland County for purchase of parcels that are sites formerly contaminated or perceived to have been contaminated. They are usually small plots. These areas around train tracks are easy to utilize for trails. These grants usually require a 50/50 match. There is usually an environmental assessment done prior to purchase to clarify what liability remains or is being created.

OTHER BUSINESS; COMMENTS

---Brian Blaesing notified Marge Gatliff and proposed asking a person representing Edison Easements available for trails to give a presentation at a future OTAC meeting.

---A request was made for information on how trails affect property values of parcels they border.

---The new Michigan Mountain Bike Association handbook was provided to OTAC for informational purposes.

---The time and date of future OTAC meetings was discussed. It was determined that the fourth Wednesday of each month at 9:00 a.m. would best suit members.

The motion to move the regular OTAC meeting to 9:00 a.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month was approved and carried on voice vote.

---Dan Navarre was appointed as the new chair person for the Oakland Trail Association Counsel.

Nominated by Mike Hartner, seconded by the Dan Duncan, carried on voice vote, that Dan Navarre will serve as the new chairperson for OTAC for the next six months.

---The alternate for the OTAC chairman will be determined at the March 24 OTAC meeting.

---Dan Stencil requested that each voting member of OTAC have an alternate to attend the regular meetings when they are unable to attend.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be **9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 24, 2004** in the commission room of the Oakland County Parks and Recreation administration building.

SJB, Oakland County Parks and Recreation