

# Lowell Area Recreational Authority (LARA)

## Meeting Minutes

February 10, 2021 6pm

Zoom

Members Present: Perry Beachum, Chair; Janine Mork, Secretary, Betsy Davidson, Treasurer, Amanda Rogers, Cliff Yankovich, Laura Garrison.

Member Absent: Mark Anderson Vice Chair

Also Present: Thomas Gossiaux, Alternate; Dave Austin, Williams & Works; Mark Fritsma, Fred Meijer Trail; Janalee Grishcke, Equestrian Trail

### **Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Yankovich motioned to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Beachum. Motion carried.

### **Meeting Minutes**

Yankovich motioned to approve the minutes from the January 13, 2021 meeting as presented, Beachum seconded. Motion carried.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Davidson had one check to write, for Zach Beachum Plowing, \$975.00. It includes six plow dates and some trail cleanup. A motion was made by Beachum to pay the bills, seconded by Yankovich. Motion carried.

### **Public Comment**

**Janalee Grischke- Equestrian/Pedestrian Trail:** She talked with Jim Fero at Ada Township about the Ada connection to the North Country Trailway through Vergennes Township. It is in the Ada Master Plan on page 77 to run along McCabe Ave to 2 Mile Road, to Downes. The best grant opportunity for this trail is the Iron Belle Grant.

Yankovich asked how wide an equestrian trail needed to be. According to the Kent County Road Commission, it needs to be 10 feet wide, if approved.

**Dave Austin:** He wondered about schedule to plow trails. He had concerns because some areas have snow piled up and you have to walk into street to get around snow pile. He referenced an email he sent earlier in day showing areas of concern. Perry Beachum will talk to snow plow contractor and see if it can be done differently in those areas.

Alden Nash/Gee Drive, Alden Nash behind houses, North of bridge/boardwalk, city limits to top of hill. Some of the trail is in Safe Routes to School. When snow is 4" or more, the trails will be plowed. Betsy will get an updated map from Mark and send it to all.

### **New Business**

None

### **Old Business**

Mercantile Bank – Combine Savings into checking. Janine will handle. Need to get information from Betsy. Will take care of before March meeting.

### **Lowell Little League – Mike Minier**

Mike talked about the possible trail path through the Little League property by showing a map on the screen. His vision is that Little League would use it Monday- Thursday along with Creekside Park fields. Travel Ball and tournaments would use fields on weekends. They would like to put a playground in somewhere for siblings. Beachum mentioned people may park in Little League lots to use trails. Mike said it would probably be gated and not open to the public. They don't own the entrance to the property, just have an easement. They would like to buy the small square piece of property on the right shown on the map to hold 7-8 cars. He went over the layout of where the trail would run through the property around the ball fields. They are still doing some tweaks to plan and should have a final plan in a week or two. It is going to be a \$3 million project. They are hiring a company to raise the funds for them. Austin mentioned drainage problems in area. Mike indicated it is being investigated. Prior to nursing home going in, the property was dry in summer. Davidson mentioned the property is very hilly. The 3 fields on left near woods will be lower per Mike. They are going talk with Eastbrook to see if they can develop a trail between fields and home development. Project is still a couple years out. They are looking for grant money to help fund project as well. One of their board members is pursuing that avenue.

### **Rail Trail Connection Progress and Updates**

**Dave Austin** – Next thing coming up at March LARA meeting and at Lowell City Council Meeting is to pass resolutions to submit applications for grants. Dave will get resolutions to the LARA board and city council prior to those meetings. It is also when we will encourage the public to come to the meetings and give input about the applications. Since we are meeting virtually, we will put out link so they can comment online or attend meeting virtually via zoom to comment.

The other big thing is that MDOT is involved with railroad permitting since it crosses the road south of the river at Hudson Street near Grand River Avenue. Paperwork was sent to the city

for signature. It has been signed and sent on back to MDOT. It is good to see permitting being done and is an ongoing process. This was approved last year.

Fundraising – While it would be nice to have money in hand by April 1, it is not needed until October 1. Dave drafted letter to Meijer asking for increased funding. He hasn't heard back yet.

Beachum – easements? We have three main easements not related to railroad. Ball is in Dave's court to write language and then get to us to get to property owners for signatures. There is a very formal way to request easements per MDOT. Thanks for gentle reminder. There were no further questions for Dave.

A motion was made by Beachum, seconded by Yankovich, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Next Meeting – March 10, 2021, 6pm Location TBD