

LOWELL AREA RECREATION AUTHORITY

December 16, 2020

6pm Zoom

Board Members present: Perry Beachum, Janine Mork, Betsy Davidson, Amanda Rogers

Not present: Cliff Yankovich, Lowell City Council Member, Mark Anderson, Lowell Township Trustee

Also present: Laura Garrison, At Large rep., Dave Austin, Williams & Works, Mark Fritzma, Buddy Bennett & Mike Minier, Lowell Little League

Betsy Davidson will be running meeting per Perry since she knows the Zoom platform better.

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm.

A motion to approve the Agenda as presented was made by Beachum, seconded by Mork. Motion carried.

A motion to approve the minutes from the November meeting was made by Beachum, seconded by Garrison. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – There are no checks to be approved tonight.

BHT&D audit was done this week. One item of note was that our budget was not approved timely last year. Betsy would like to look at it tonight and get it approved for 2021. Everyone was sent a copy in email. After some review, Beachum motioned to approve the 2021 Budget as presented, Garrison seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comment – none

The Lowell Cable Fund grant requests have a deadline of February 5, 2021. Have we asked them for any funds toward trail? Dave Austin will discuss with Mark Anderson and work out grant request and amount.

New Business

Bob Rogers, Lowell Community Center – Per Amanda, maybe January or February.

Lowell Little League -Mike Minier & Buddy Bennett

They are in the early planning stages with the Architect. They questioned how wide easement was along Alden Nash that went behind the houses. Dave Austin will confirm and get back with them. They want to leave the tree line between the Little League property and the trail as a buffer. The Cooper Woodland trail may need to relocate.

How many fields are they planning? Eight. The terrain is a challenge and they want to do as little excavating as possible.

LARA has options as to where the trail can go. Around the pond on the south side of the property is the best route. Beachum indicated LARA will work with Little League and the architect for best solution. Having some trail on the property will help the Little League, field to field, etc.... We will endorse whatever the architect thinks.

Little League fields will be accessed off Foreman where Cooper Trail is currently.

Beachum asked about Harvest Meadows. Are they planning to have any trails through their development? Bennett said they discussed this with Eastbrook Homes at the beginning of their project and they are interested in having it tie in with the trails. He will reach out to them again.

Little League owns 20 acres. They are in process of getting deed changed to Lowell Youth Sports Foundation.

Old Business

Bench and platform on Alden Nash – next month

Rail Trail Connection Progress and Updates

MDNR, MDOT Status – Mark/Dave Austin

Fundraising – Mark Anderson

Dave Austin gave overview of project: Connect Foreman Street trail to Jackson Street. Numbers on map correspond to sections to make it easy to know areas they are talking about.

Jackson-Montcalm section – MDOT agreed to pay for the completion of this trail.

Dave reviewed trail map, schedule and funding summary. He drafted a one-page letter to Meijer. We have gone to all funding sources again. Meijer is only one that hasn't increased pledge.

Grant applications are due April 1, 2021.

Surveys and soil borings need to be completed on the entire trail. It is two dimensional so far. This needs to be done in order to move forward with construction.

See if City of Lowell will write a letter to cover \$522,000 that we are short. It doesn't mean they will pay; we are good for it. It is just to get us through the grant process. We can raise the \$500,000 before it is needed.

Work with Kent County Road Commission on bridge over Hudson. This is the only time to get grant to go over river.

MDNR grant applications are due in April. This needs to be started on right away after first of year.

Right of Way – Grand Rapids Gravel – they are working with the LARA easement. It is on their site plans.

Reagan - #5 on map

Railway and 2 property owners - #7 The railway says no to anything.

Project does not go out to bid until Fall 2022. Numbers right now are a guess. If bids come in 10% or under, it has to be done.

Apply through Look Foundation? Betsy will look at. Cliff Yankovich is on Board of Directors of Foundation.

We need Meijer to come up with more funding. Everything else is in place. We have decreased costs and increased the scope of the project. It also ties into the Fred Meijer Trail system.

Mark Fritzma – Update from Roger Storm of MDNR indicates they are nearing completion of the acquisition (from the railroad) of the Elmdale Corridor and the section from S. Jackson to Montcalm Ave. New owners took over right before the Pandemic hit. A new appraisal was ordered and it should be done in January 2021. They hope to have acquisition complete early to mid 2021.

Beachum motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 pm. Rogers seconded. Motion carried.

Scheduled Events Next LARA meeting January 13, 2021, place TBD