

LARA Minutes

February 12, 2025

Board Members Present (P=Present, EA=Excused Absent, A=Absent)

P-Perry Beachum (Chair) City of Lowell Resident
A-Mark Anderson (Vice Chair), Lowell Twp. Board Representative
P-Amanda Rogers (Treasurer) Lowell Twp. Resident
P-Mark Weaver, (Secretary)Vergennes Twp Resident
P-Sherry Richmond, Vergennes Township Board Representative
P-Eric Bartkus, Lowell City Council Representative
P-Tom Gossaiux, At Large Member
P-Jennette Stevenson, Alternate, Lowell Township
A-Janalee Grischke, Alternate, Vergennes Township
Unassigned, Alternate, City of Lowell

Guests

P-Dave Austin

Motions

- Approval of January 2025 Minutes: Eric moves to approve. Amanda supports. Motion carried.
- Approval of February 2025 Agenda: Eric moves to approve. Tom supports. Motion carried.
- Motion to excuse tonight's absences. Mark W moves to approve. Tom supports. Motion carried.

Treasurer Report

- Bill payments
 - Williams and Works (City of Lowell) \$2508.88. Permitting and easements.
 - Lowell Chamber invoice for Trails magazine of \$500
 - Tom moves for both. Eric supports. Motion carries.
- Other:
 - All municipalities have paid their annual amounts

Public Comment

- None

New Business

- Digital agendas and minutes only. No hardcopy? Mark W Consensus is 6 cc agenda of current meeting only. Everything else digital.
- Identify Standing Committee Leads/POC's for such things as Events, IT/Web, Planning, etc. Mark W. Discussion on where to promote events: Lowell Ledger (inexpensive advertise/announcements boxes), First Look. City of Lowell calendar, Township calendars if they exist, Facebook, Chamber of Commerce, a sign posted at the Pavillion

on Foreman. Scouts. Lowell HS radio 92.3 and internet. Service organizations- Lions, Rotary, Moose, Veterans. Discussion of Standing Committee leads informally tabled.

- Accept tree saplings from the Garden Club? Janalee. For now, better utilized via other organizations (i.e. Arbor Board), but LARA can certainly provide written support.

Old Business

- Spring clean-up status. Janalee. Absent. Girl Scouts will attend. Boy and cub scouts notified. Bring your own tools (pruners, rakes, etc) and gloves, (we will have a few to share). The week before, mark out tasks to perform in the field. Then prepare a list of projects and tools needed. as well. We need to verify who will haul away waste, etc. Perry will provide lunch. Dress for the weather. Rain or shine. Start time- arrive at 9. Not 9-2 - too scattershot for arrivals.
- Status WW update. Dave. Update construction engineering contract is with the city (they're the grant holder). WW will prepare the revised contract. Dave'll present to LARA for review and LARA makes a motion to recommend WW to do the work.
- Website updates/edits in process. Mark W
- Maintenance and Repair Planning status. Tom. No updates for this meeting.
- RR ROW along Grand River status. Mark A. Absent.
- Kent Co future trails planning (Oct 25) status. Mark A Absent.
- Vergennes Twp update to Park and Rec Plan status. Mark W/Sherry. No news.
- Bench turnaround on Alden Nash status. Perry. Not yet.

Williams and Works Trail Update. Dave A

Governmental Real Estate Permit with Lowell Township - As mentioned earlier, the new trail will need to connect to the existing path located on the Lowell Township North Grand River Park. Approximately 30 feet of new trail will be placed between the Grand Rapids Gravel property and the existing Township path. In January, The City Council and Lowell Township Boards mutually agreed to a Governmental Real Estate Permit, an MDOT authorized document that allows the City to construct the connection and then transfer ownership and maintenance of that section (the 30 ft.) to the Township. This eliminated the need (and cost) for a permanent easement. A big Thank You to Lowell Township for agreeing to be great partners in this project!

MDNR Trust Fund Grant - At their February 3, 2025, meeting, the City Council approved a revised resolution accepting the terms of the MDNR Trust Fund grant. (An earlier version was previously approved in October but needed to be updated to show the original and current project scope and cost). With the completion of the Governmental Real Estate Permit, the City was able to execute the required MDNR Project Agreement package which has now been submitted to MDNR.

MDOT Right-of Way Package - Again, with the completion of the Governmental Real Estate Permit, all required Right-of Way (documents (easements and grading permits) are in hand and were submitted to MDOT for review. This is one of the last items required before they will set a bid letting date.

EGLE Permit - As mentioned earlier, the original EGLE permit submittal time frame had expired and it was necessary to re-submit the package in December. Additional data was requested for the hydraulic analysis. EGLE received one letter during the public

comment period, and we provided them with responses to some of the questions. EGLE's approval of this permit is the last item required for MDOT to approve the project for bid letting.

MDOT Bid Letting - We do not have a firm bid letting date yet, pending approval of the Right of Way package and EGLE permit. We are assuming a Spring bid with construction of the trail and bridge foundations proceeding until November, then completion of the trail and bridge in the Spring of 2026. Once a firm date is given, we will work with the City to establish a schedule that can be shared with the public.

Project and Funding Budget - Since a few of LARA Board members are relatively new, it may be a good idea for us to provide a quick review of the project budget and funding sources. I'm happy to do that during your meeting this month (or next) at your request.

Adjourn

- Adjourned at 8:05 pm via motion by Tom and supported by Amanda. Motion carried.
- Next scheduled meeting is March 12, 2025, at 6:30 pm