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M-119 TUNNEL OF TREES SCENIC HERITAGE ROUTE COMMITTEE

DRAFT Minutes

Tuesday, June 11th, 2024

Readmond Township Hall

6034 Wormwood Ln, Harbor Springs, MI 49740

Committee Members Present

Dale Scott, Friendship Township (Chair)
Sue Rentrop, Cross Village / Emmet County Lakeshore Association
Jim Anderson, Friendship Township
Jerry Root, Readmond Township
Don Schaplowsky, Readmond Township
Joey Arbaugh, West Traverse Township
Carolyn Sandford, West Traverse Township
Garon Gopigian, West Traverse Township
Franz Neubrecht, Emmet County Lakeshore Association
Laurelynn Harris, Cross Village Township

Partners Present

Hillary Taylor, Emmet County
Caitlin Donnelly, Little Traverse Conservancy
Tammy Doernenburg, Emmet County Planning and Zoning Director
Neil Ahrens, Emmet County Commissioner, District 2 Friendship Township & West Traverse Township)
Lisa Fineout, Readmond Township Supervisor
Ben Dubois, MDOT
Isha Pithwa, Networks Northwest

Regina Stocco, Zoo-de-Mack (Online attendance)
Sigmann, Clayton, MDOT (Online attendance)

Committee Members Absent

Naomi Singer, Cross Village Township
Larry Wallen, Readmond Township
Joe Tomlinson, Readmond Township
James Fisher, Friendship Township

I. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:33 by Chair Dale Scott. Chair led attendance by introduction/roll call to note members' presence at the meeting.

II. Review and Adoption of Minutes from May 14th, 2024

Motion by Jim Anderson, supported by Joey Arbaugh, to approve the meeting minutes for May 14th

with two suggested corrections. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Partner Reports

a. Emmet County Planning and Zoning (ECPZ) – Tammy Doernenburg

Tammy Doernenburg from Emmet County Planning and Zoning (ECPZ) updated the committee on their work on zoning ordinance and in particular to resiliency, as well as their EAGLE grant received which is coming to conclusion. The master plan is due in 2025, and input is welcome. Tammy also provided information on signage regulations: Signs that are 1 sq ft. or less or are not regulated in zoning ordinance. Larger signage are allowed on private property typical 4 sq ft. would be allowable signage. Max signage would be 18 sq ft. Signs that are required or are a part of road commission/agencies sign plans are not regulated by ECPZ. Different standards are applied for different townships.

b. LTBOI – James fisher has had a discussion with the Tribe (Eric) who was not aware of the meeting dates/locations and other information. There is limited additional information available. The committee encouraged anyone with contacts within the Tribe to share the meeting dates, locations, and other pertinent information to them. Additionally, if Tribe members are interested, their email or contact information can be added to the mailing list to keep them updated with committee activities.

c. LTC – No new updates on projects along the corridor.

d. MDOT – Update from Ben Dubois about the M-119 MDOT project to be completed this fall. Clayton Sigmann updated regarding signs that in the byway program – own signs can be developed but they will be replacing the Pure MI Byway signs and they must be funded by their own.

e. Networks Northwest (NN) – Isha updated the committee about the material edits made from last meeting as well as additional changes requested from Tammy Doernenburg earlier. An updated quote has also been requested to get an idea for planning for budget for FY25. Attached to the packet are both quotes from 2023 and 2024. Budget is due July 1st and discussions pertaining to planning and action on FY2025 budget planning is discussed in item IV e. so additional information/discussion on Budget, Material edits, etc. will be done on forthcoming items on the agenda.

f. Committee Members Comment – none.

IV. Ongoing and Unfinished Business

a. Adopt-A-Highway Program – Carolyn Sandford – none at the moment as the next adopt-a-highway cleanup will be July 13th 2024

b. Zoo-De-Mack Bike Event – Regina reported that this year's Zoo-De-Mack Bike Event went smoother than last year, despite some areas needing improvement. New signs were printed to guide cars, motorists, and riders about staying right and maintaining safety on hills. Feedback from riders suggested temporarily closing roads to thru traffic, allowing only local traffic, to enhance safety. The committee, however, noted that road closures wouldn't work for locals. The

signs, although larger, were not very visible due to their mesh type and orange color. The committee suggested using optic green for better readability. Regina agreed that the orange color was not ideal and is open to suggestions, including specific RGB color codes.

Regina also mentioned that over 2,000 riders registered for the event, which is about half of previous years' participation, typically around 3,000 or more.

- c. **Discuss plans to use the budget for FY 2024 by September 30th** - The committee discussed reports from each township regarding sign improvements. Jim reported that Friendship Township has one sign that only needs a cleanup. Joey Arbaugh noted that West Traverse Township has a sign beyond northwest on Pond Hill Drive, which is in excellent shape and the most recent sign installed. Don Schaplowsky from Readmond Township mentioned that only a cleanup is needed, with no budget required for sign improvements. Similarly, Cross Village Township requires no budget for improvements, as volunteer cleanups will suffice. Thus, there is no need for funds from this year's budget for new signs or improvements along the corridor.

The committee had set aside \$1000 for sign improvements for the FY 2024 budget to be spent by September 30th. Given that these funds are not needed for sign improvements, the committee proposed reallocating the money towards printing and requests the same to MDOT. Hence, the committee has about \$2600 for printing other than ~ 360\$ that were used for website maintenance out of the total \$3000 budget for FY24. MDOT suggested that the committee resubmit the FY 2024 budget with these changes and obtain written permission from MDOT. NN will work with the budget and MDOT to implement these adjustments.

d. **Review and discuss edits suggested by committee on educational materials –**

i. **Guidebook**

▪ **Tammy's comments**

- Pages 8-9 be updated to reflect the 2022 tree assessment.
- Pages 8-9 should be just before page 14 so that the tree information is all together
- Tammy already shared a corrected copy to work on for 2024 updated document

▪ **Naomi's comments**

- Page 2 under "The Purpose of this Guidebook" remove management i.e., – "*...best management practices...*"
- Page 3 Write full title – "*Emmet County Planning and Zoning*" and add "*Networks Northwest*" to committee partners
- Page 4 edit table of contents as needed (if we move pages 8-9 as suggested by Tammy i.e., update page numbers etc.)
- Page 5 under Goals and Objectives – see goals in current management plan
- Page 6 - discussed name for County Road 77 and group suggested to keep it as follows "*County Road 77 (State Rd)*"
- Page 7 revisit the map if updated and add date/year
- Page 8 - line 1 replace "*2017*" to "*2022*"; line 3 replace "*ROW*" to "*Right of Way*"; under non-native tree species change "*Austrian Pine*" to "*Scotch Pine*"
- p. 8 – all agree to add Scotch pine to list of non-native trees
- p. 9 – indicate that the 2022 Tree Health Assessment report is provided in the Corridor Management Plan on the project website (provide link).
- Page 10 unknown comment
- Page 11 checked the MDOT and resource website and contact information –

they are correct

- Page 15 checked information to be correct – they are correct
- Page 23 – add the word “please” in front of “ride single file”
- Page 24 add tribe information; remove “~~Harbor Area Regional Board of Resources, Inc~~”; update year to 2024 (for all materials – Please put “Updated 2024” on the back side consistent on position) - p. 24 – LTBBOI Tribe info should replace “~~Harbor Inc.~~” under additional resources
- Whatever changes are made in the bike brochure should also be made to the guidebook and update accordingly.

ii. Share the road Bike Brochure

- Under Bicycle Tour Planning second line – add the M-119 website after “...website (www.m119tunneloftrees.org)...”; 7th line replace “... The following tips will help bikers enjoy ...” with “The following tips will help everyone enjoy the serenity”
- Under Tips for Bicyclists Please do: - first line replace “~~Enjoy the Tunnel of Trees! You have a right to use this road!~~” with “Enjoy the Tunnel of Trees.”
- Under Tips for Bicyclists Please don’t: - second point replace the “!” with “.” ; Fourth point replace “~~Litter—Leave only “treadmarks!”~~” with “Litter.”
- Under Tips for Motorists Please do: - first line replace “~~Bikers~~” with “Bicyclists”
- Under Tips for Motorists Please don’t: - remove the entire please don’t section

iii. Management Plan Trifold Brochure

- Under About the M-119 “ Tunnel of Trees” first line – replace “~~rambles~~” with “winds”
- Under About the M-119 “ Tunnel of Trees” second line – replace “~~13 miles~~” with “20 miles”
- On the center section under - What is Heritage Route? – last line of the paragraph “~~...preserve or market the corridor...~~” replace with “preserve and enjoy the corridor”
- Replace pictures with nicer ones.

Isha will send out a draft/final version with all the changes to the committee to take a final look for any corrections and then will be given for print.

e. FY 2025 Budget Planning discussion and finalize - submission due July 1st, 2024 –

- Number of Copies to spend printing Budget for FY2024 by September 20th, 2024.
 - Isha will request the new cost estimate/quote.
 - The committee decided 300 copies of each three materials i.e., Guidebook, M-119 Trifold brochure, and Bike Brochure share the road tri-fold.

Joey Arbaugh made a motion to accept printing 300 copies of each of the three materials (guidebook, m-119 tri-fold and Bike Brochure) as long as it’s under \$1500 supported by Garon Gopigian. All Ayes. No Nays. Motion passed.

- FY2025 Budget and planning activity for \$3000 (October 1st, 2024 – September 30th, 2025)
 - Website maintenance cost for LIAA ~\$500

- Printing educational materials ~\$1000
- Signage Improvements ~\$1000
- Tree Assessment ~\$250
- Public Meeting ~\$250
- Eliminate marketing from the Page 1 of the Budget
- The location of FY2025 meetings are rotated by each township alphabetically and dates are every second Tuesday starting April.

Motion by Laurelynn Harris to accept the proposed Budget for FY2025 supported by Sue Rentrop. All Ayes. No Nays. Motion passed.

V. New Business

- Question about Pure Michigan Byways logo. Discussion that it is not mandatory as suggested by MDOT and the committee will go with the scenic byways logo. Benjamin Dubois will be asking for more information/details regarding the topic.
- Discussion of the tunnel of Trees, M-119 Facebook Page – Don Schaplowsky discussed the social media having to collaborate and share educational information with the groups if any. Homework for the committee know if there is any option to administer the Facebook page. The committee will discuss this topic further in the next meeting with more information.

VI. Comments from the public and the board.

No public comment.

VII. Adjourn

Next meeting on July 9th, 2024 Cross Village – 5954 Wadsworth Rd., Harbor Springs, MI 49740 at 9:30 AM.

Motion by Garon Gopigian to adjourn the meeting at 11:08 AM. Supported by Sue Rentrop. Motion passes.