



TRI-COUNTY TRAIL COMMISSION

Meeting minutes of Thursday, July 22, 2021 at 7 PM

Calamine Pavilion in Calamine WI (along the Cheese Country Trail)

Present: Committee members – Blumer, Withee and Torkelson of Green County along with Reichling, Stauffacher and Fisker from Lafayette County. Coordinators present were Tom Jean and Deb Krahenbuhl along with ATV Club members and snowmobile club members. Flannery and Rolfsmeyer had excused absences.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Russ Torkelson, at 7:00 PM. Tom Jean verified the meeting was posted at the Green, Lafayette and Iowa County Courthouses, Darlington Municipal Building, the Lafayette County Highway Dept. and on the website. Mr. Torkelson declared this to be a properly posted legal meeting with enough members present to constitute a quorum.

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. Reichling seconded by Mrs. Fisker and the motion carried.

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 24, 2021 meeting was made by Mrs. Fisker, seconded by Mr. Blumer and the motion carried.

Discussion and update on the status of the DNR grant funding for the projects along the Cheese Country Trail.

There was some discussion on whether or not we are receiving \$100/mile grant funds for the off-road motorcycle use of the trail. Tom believes that with the funds we are receiving (\$800 per mile) it must be included, however he has never applied for it. The grant does not specify off road motorcycle use. Following some discussion, it was agreed that we should continue to allow the off-road motorcycles to use the trail and like the ATV/UTV's, if they are registered in Wisconsin, a trail sticker is not required. No one has ever complained about having to purchase an annual \$15 trail sticker.

There was some discussion about the COVID relief funds that have been received by the County. Mrs. Fisker explained what this money could be used for and also felt that we should make a written request to the County to obtain some of these funds. Tom will draft an email and send it to the Economic Development director with that request.

Update on Rip Rap project between Ferndale & Tibbets Road:

Tom is in contact with Jewell & Associates and expects them to have the bid documents prepared soon so that this project can go to bid. They are working with the DNR to acquire the necessary permits for this project.

Tom is working with Kurt Byfield of the DNR to get the 2021-2022 Snowmobile and ATV grant funding secured along with requesting final reimbursement for the 2020-2021 funds.

Discussion and update on general maintenance/signage or encroachment issues along the Cheese Country Trail along with Trail Maintenance Update – Local ATV & Snowmobile Clubs and Trail Usage update. Local ATV and Snowmobile Clubs.

- a. **Update on informational signs along the trail:** Lee reported that he has received all of the materials for these signs and should have one completed within a week.
- b. **Trail Usage and access during the Main St. construction in Darlington:**
While it is definitely a challenge to navigate around the Main St. construction in Darlington, it hasn't seemed to decrease the trail use and there hasn't been any major problems.
- c. **Complaints on advertising trail placement along the CCT.**
We have received several complaints about advertising signs being placed along the Cheese Country Trail without permission. Tom has talked with Jerrod McGranahan from Booby's Bar & Grill and the sign that he had put at the intersection of Walnut road and the trail, has been removed. Fuzzy North has talked with Lori Garvey and the sign from Glennies that was put up adjacent to Red Rock Road, will be moved onto private land.

Lee McCarville and Craig Shager both gave maintenance reports.

Lee also stated that he has heard several complaints from trail users about the police and DNR warden presence in the City of Darlington. Several users have been stopped for no apparent reason and have stated that they will not continue to come back to use the Cheese Country Trail because of this. The committee will speak with Mayor McDermott and the DNR warden regarding these complaints.

The bridge adjacent to Red Rock Road and west of the intersection of Walnut road needs to be rehabilitated. It is too narrow for snow groomers to get through. Tom will look into funding for this project.

Legislative update: None

Public comment: None

Fencing Request: None

Status of Funds : Tom presented the updated 2020-2021 Status of Funds showing an up to date balance. All of the funds have been spent. A motion to approve the Status of Funds was made by Mr. Withee and seconded by Mr. Blumer and the motion carried.

Vouchers: Vouchers presented for payment were: Green County ATV Club - \$1,917.28 for grading, Green County ATV Club - \$672.50 for mowing, and Tri County ATV Club - \$3,361.50 for mowing. A total voucher of \$5,951.28. A motion to approve the vouchers was made by Mr. Reichling and seconded by Mrs. Fisker and the motion carried.

Date of next meeting: August 19th in Green County at the Courthouse in Monroe at 7 PM if necessary.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Blumer and seconded by Mrs. Fisker and the motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:50.

Following the meeting, supper and refreshments were provided by Lee McCarville and the Tri County ATV Club. Thanks to them for their tremendous support of the Cheese Country Trail and the Tri County Trail Commission.

submitted 9/14/21 TRJ

July 20, 2021

Mike McDermott, Mayor
PO Box 207
Darlington, WI 53530

Dear Mayor McDermott,

This letter is in response to an incident that happened in your village on Saturday July 17th. I am a semi-retired business professional from the Northern Illinois area and I was traveling with a group of 9 other people on a UTV trip the S. Western, WI area. All but Two in our group are senior citizens in their 60's & 70's. The group ride was from the Monroe area to New Diggings where we stopped to eat. Upon leaving one couple started back to Darlington to return the rental they were driving. After another brief stop the group decided to ride to Darlington and rejoin the 1st couple.

I believe we entered town from Hill St, turned N on Galena and then proceeded across the bridge before turning left to Annie's bar & grill to meet the couple that returned the rental. That's where your local "Barney Fife" approached them for committing a serious violation of riding the shoulder of the road in rather than the middle with the car traffic. Mind you no one in our group was made aware of any special road rules nor did any of us ever see any sign postings. Despite a generous section in the ATV/UTV map no mention there either. The youngest female driver in the group was using an empty beer can to put cigarette butts in. She was the only smoker in the group. Your "Barney" charged her with driving with an open seal but he didn't just stop there! He apparently called in the posse as four more squad cars show up along with a CPO from the DNR. The group was asked if they had been drinking. Of course he had. Why would we be on a 100 mile ATV ride and not stop for a beer along the way. I would say we all had two or Three beers over a 6-7 hour period prior to reaching Darlington. Most of the group were rounded up and given a breathalyzer test with results in .04 to .05 range except the young female who was a little higher. She was eventually given a Ticket for the open seal. The CPO was actually worse than Barney. He ordered one of the Older members out of his Razer. He is a 70 old retired farmer. The CPO accused him of being Impaired because he had a limp when he got out of the vehicle. I suppose, he is a cancer Survivor and also has a impairment from a farming incident to his back and leg. Never the less Your local CPO told him he had to walk a straight line and stand on one leg! Excuse me, but What an idiot! Of course he had a limp and it had nothing to do with alcohol.

There was no valid reason for either of those demands and was nothing more than Over the top harassment. The group was finally released and Barney and his posse finally left Without giving one rider her wallet back which should never have been taken. The owner at Annie's had to call your local police dept. to have him bring it back. Totally amazing! It is our firm belief that the actions of your Barney Fife & the Local CPO were a total disgrace and dis-service to the town of Darlington. We were not a bunch of 20-30 year olds running Around getting high or causing any trouble but merely road in to enjoy your city and its

offerings. Nothing we did justified being chastised and harassed by 5 squad cars for what Appears to be an incident of riding on the road shoulder. If you think the collateral damage Will only be limited to our group of nine it's already beyond that. Senior citizens who are Abused can be very vindictive. Between local club memberships and social media the mis-treatment we were subjected too will likely reach a few hundred people before its done.

I have nothing more to comment on except it's unlikely anyone from our group will ever visit The town of Darlington again. One couple already cancelled their hotel reservations for a trip there this fall. All this because a group of officers misused the authority they were given and treated a group of 60-70 olds like we were doing bad things and needed to be disciplined. So be it!

Sincerely,

Ken Conti

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ken Conti", is written over the printed name.