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M-119 TUNNEL OF TREES SCENIC HERITAGE ROUTE COMMITTEE

DRAFT Minutes
Tuesday, July 9th, 2024

Cross Village Township Hall
5954 Wadsworth Road, Cross Village, MI

Committee Members Present

Naomi Singer, Cross Village Township
Dale Scott, Friendship Township (Chair)
Sue Rentrop, Cross Village / Emmet County Lakeshore Association
James Fisher, Friendship Township
Jerry Root, Readmond Township
Jim Anderson, Friendship Township
Carolyn Sandford, West Traverse Township
Garon Gopigian, West Traverse Township
Franz Neubrecht, Emmet County Lakeshore Association

Partners Present

Hillary Taylor, Emmet County
Neil Ahrens, Emmet County Commissioner, District 2 Friendship Township & West Traverse Township)
Isha Pithwa, Networks Northwest
Sigmann, Clayton, MDOT

Others Present

Dell Weitzel, (visitor) Readmond Township
Annette Moriarty, Good Hart A Studio
Phillip Allore, Trillium Woods
Ami Woods, Trillium Woods

Absent

Larry Wallen, Readmond Township
Joe Tomlinson, Readmond Township
Lisa Fineout, Readmond Township Supervisor
Tammy Doernenburg, Emmet County Planning and Zoning Director
Don Schaplowsky, Readmond Township
Joey Arbaugh, West Traverse Township
Laurelynn Harris, Cross Village Township
Caitlin Donnelly, Little Traverse Conservancy

I. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:31 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 June 11th, 2024

Motion by Jim Anderson, supported by Joey Arbaugh, to approve the meeting minutes for June 11th with suggested corrections. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Partner Reports

- a. **Emmet County Planning and Zoning (ECPZ)** – No report or updates.
- b. **LTBBOI** – No report or updates.
- c. **LTC** – No new updates.
- d. **MDOT** – Update from Ben Dubois - The Pure Michigan byway logo is not required on printouts but is recommended for brand recognition. Clayton Sigmann – MDOT will be doing a Byways workshop on Nov 4th in Gaylord, MI at the University Center. The morning session will be regional planning agencies focused while the afternoon session will be leaned more towards marketing the byway and aimed towards byways committee. This will be a hybrid meeting. The invite and meeting information will be passed soon.
- e. **Networks Northwest (NN)** – Isha updated the committee about the material changes made to the documents that are to be printed. Requested the committee to look over the documents shared via email and look for any final changes and if not then they would be sent out for printing. Discussed the funds for the FY 2024 – after printing and websites there are about ~\$1000 left to be spent by September 30th, 2024. Asked the committee if they have any other items for printing or ideas to spend the budget. The FY2024 budget revised and sent to Clayton and has been approved for the printing so the rest of the amount should be spent on printing materials.
- f. **Committee Members Comment** – none.

IV. Ongoing and Unfinished Business

- a. **Adopt-A-Highway Program** – Carolyn Sandford – the adopt-a-highway cleanup will be starting July 13th 2024 to July 24th. Sue Rentrop updated the group about the Emmet County Lake Shore Association Annual meeting on July 19th, 2024 - the main items discussion will be Hemlock Parasite disease and other tree concerns etc.
- b. **Zoo-De-Mack Bike Event** - None
- c. **Discuss plans to use the budget for FY 2024 by September 30th** – The group discussed printing

some additional Management Plan reports along with the guidebook and the tri-folds. The reports and additional materials will be useful for sharing the materials with the new people or getting them to the public meetings/conferences etc. See final number of copies print requested below:

- M-119 Management Plan Brochure (Tri-fold) = 300 Copied
- Share the Road Bike Brochure (Tri-fold) = 300 Copies
- Management Plan Guidebook (Booklet type) = 300 Copies
- Management Plan Report (Report with spiral binding) = 50 Copies

Motion to approve printing 50 copies of Management Plan along with the previously discussed 300 copies of trifold and guidebook to use the FY2024 budget amount made by Naomi and supported by Franz.

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

Naomi suggested a small edits for the Tunnel of Trees brochure and guidebook - Page 2 last 5 lines of the Management plan Brochure please replace the sentence from “~~the management plan~~ Heritage route” to same as guidebook to be “*The M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route was officially designated by the State of Michigan in 2003.*”

Motion to approve the printing with above suggested correction to the materials made by James Fisher and supported by Franz Neubrecht

Isha will send all the material to The Copy Shop and they will issue an invoice to NN and that will be shared with the M-119 committee as well as submitted to MDOT. The printed copies will be given to Dale whenever ready (tentatively in August meeting).

- e. Continue discussion on M-119/Tunnel of Trees presence on Facebook –** Dale asked the group if anyone had suggestions regarding the Tunnel of Trees on Facebook. The group discussed various existing Facebook accounts related to the Tunnel of Trees, noting that these pages generally contain non-harmful posts and updates. There was a suggestion to create an official Tunnel of Trees Facebook account managed by the committee. Another suggestion was to share M-119 materials with the existing Facebook pages to enhance educational content and marketing efforts.

V. New Business

- a. Discuss possible presentation to Emmet County Commission- per request -** The group agreed to check available dates and select an appropriate Emmet County Planning Commission meeting to attend. They plan to present on M-119 and distribute materials such as the management plan, guidebook, and trifolds. This presentation will serve as a valuable opportunity for marketing and educating about the byway. The group tentatively decided to aim for the August/September meeting.

VI. Comments from the public and the board.

- Clayton Sigmann – The National Scenic Byway Grant opportunities should become active in about next 2-5 months. It is a larger grant opportunity – any byway can apply through FHWA. These are applications for bigger projects on potential road side updates, sidewalks, etc. The

NOFO will be available soon and will be shared through Isha as becomes available.

- Discussion about the Scenic Heritage Route and Byways signs/logos both – Question on plans to replace the signage along M119 to reflect the actual program as it exists. Heritage route signs get replaced every North region MDOT cycle – they replace the signs and update them – the ones that are heritage route signs should be replaced suggested. Discussion on MDOT signs and tunnel of trees signs (brown) on updating or replacing. Committee interest on not to replace the name/logo to replicate more Pure Michigan Byways also none towards updating or replacing the existing old signs.

VII. Adjourn

Next meeting on August 13th, 2024 Friendship Township Village – 3018 Beacon Hill Lane Harbor Springs, MI 49740 at 9:30 AM.

*Motion by Naomi singer to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 AM. Supported by Sue Rentrop.
Motion passes.*