Beaverhead Trails Coalition

Regular Monthly Meeting

February 19, 2015

Those present: Dan Downey, Dan Pence, Greg Simonsen, Rick Hartz, Cory Birkenbuel, Kendra Bull, Nathan Wilson, Jamie Cottom, Ed Mooney, Ben Moore, Ashley Bachelor, Cheyenne Sparks, Larry Skiles, Pete Wakeman, Joyce Connors

**Old Business**

Minutes for the January meeting were approved.

Larry Skiles talked about his visit to the Rotary Club, where he thanked them for their trail work and talked about possible future collaborations with them. He also did a presentation about the Dillon Town Overlook and the High Trails projects.

The remainder of the 2014 United Way Grant for the DTO trail signage will be used for a register at the trailhead and a bench at the top. Nathan will work with Pete on ideas and ordering a bench and register.

Nathan will work on the 2015 United Way Grant, in which we will be asking for funds for the Pigtail Connector trail work, possible for signage and gravel. On March 3rd at 5:30 at the BLM there will be presentations by those applying for United Way grants. Nathan Wilson and others will make the presentation.

Nathan is project coordinator on the Pigtail project. We’ve ordered the bridge, which will cost about $17,000 and should be here in the next few weeks. We plan to have a work day in early March to install the bridge and work on the trail. Watch your email for notifications about the work day.

**New Business**

Dan, Pete, Larry and Joyce met and hammered out things regarding hiring an employee. We then hired Nathan Wilson to work 5-10 hours per week. Nathan will work on the United Way grant, meet with public officials and others as needed, and work on our membership efforts.

Several boy scouts have offered their assistance in some way for their Eagle Scout project. Possible thoughts are landscaping for the Pigtail project.

Dan, Larry, Ed and Joyce attended the Building Capacity Workshop held at UM Western. It was a very beneficial seminar with lots of topics and ideas regarding fundraising and building community support.

We decided to have a Fun Day Event on the first Saturday of May. Our plan is to educate the public on our work and increase the community involvement, rather than being a fundraising event. Kendra, Nathan, Craig and Cory are on the subcommittee.

We talked about various grant applications and deadlines. Those mentioned were Cinnabar, Kendeda, Patagonia, Wells Fargo, Montana F&W Conservation Trust, and a 2015 Fish, Wildlife & Parks Recreational Trails grant. We decided not to pursue the FWP Recreational Trails grant in 2015, hoping that we will have a bigger need for it in 2016 as our DTO/High Trails project progresses. Nathan will contact Jen Boyer re the F&W Conservation Trust grant and approaching deadlines. Dan and Rick will try to go to Helena for the presentation day for these grants.

Cheyenne Sparks and Ashley Bachelor talked about the Walking School Bus. It will start March 16th and will feature “Celebrity Fridays”. They also talked about the success of the program so far and the future of the program including future funding and the possibility of another entity taking it over.

Ben talked about the web site visits (Jan = 70 hits, ½ Feb = 40 hits) and needing more pictures and content. We also talked about featuring different members or projects every couple of weeks to keep content fresh and interesting.

We talked about Earth Day on April 25th and the possibility of having a table at the Depot.

We talked about a couple of other projects. The chip sealing on the Overland Road walking/biking lane should be done this summer, pending funding. And Rick will draft a letter in support of the homeowners and the county regarding the negotiations with the Union Pacific Railroad on renewing the lease for the land the Clark’s Lookout State Park road sits on. Our interest is to have enough easement to have a walking path.

We’ve started a membership drive and Nathan has designed envelopes and posters. We put an ad in the paper regarding joining our group and hope to get the posters hung up, along with envelopes, to make it easy for people to join. We will also have “Membership Cards” to send out to people when they join.

Joyce will write up a resolution to update the “membership” language in our Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

It was brought up that the Planning Board will be updating their Growth Policy, the master plan for Dillon, and that it would be good for us to attend the public hearings. The more they hear from us, the more they can take our ideas into account in the plan.

The next meeting will be held on March 12 at the Barrett Hospital Foundation Meeting Room. We have invited people from the Gallatin Valley Land Trust to come to the meeting to give us ideas regarding scenarios of what to do with the land, once we’ve acquired it.