

ICORE Regular board meeting

January 26, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. on GoToMeeting

In attendance: Karen Hagemann, Diane O’Krongly, Bob Traczyk, John Bates, Ian Shackleford, Mike Ondresky, Teresa Schmidt. **Guests:** Amy Nosal, Jim Bokern. Guest Martha Pierpont arrived at 6:15pm.

1. Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. by president Ondresky.
2. Motion by Schmidt to revise the agenda to include minutes from 12/29/2020 and review and approval of brush removal estimates; second by Hagemann. Approved unanimously.
3. Approval of minutes from 9/22/2020 and 12/29/2020 board meetings. Motion to approve with minor corrections by Hagemann, second by Bates. Approved unanimously.
4. Treasurer’s report and membership status: Traczyk presented a report showing the fund balances as of 12/31/2020: Edward Jones Money Market account balance of \$32,080.98 and checking account balance of \$19,263.06. He also reported on memberships, with 65 current members (81 including all in the household). There are about 20 members from previous years who have not renewed their membership. This may be due to COVID, and may also be influenced by the fact that we did not have our in-person annual meeting and program.
5. Trail committee report to include Hurley to Montreal Bike Trail update:
 - a. The DNR has withdrawn our grant application because Canadian National will not sell the property at this time, but ICORE also received a letter from the DNR that if we were to apply again we would be likely to receive the grant. Canadian National said they may be able to move forward later this year, so ICORE will reach out to them again.
 - b. Traczyk suggested contacting the Northern Wisconsin Railroad Commission to clarify their interest in area properties, since ICORE understands that they are not interested in the same property that we are looking at.
 - c. The group will work on trailhead improvements this spring.
 - d. The trail committee plans to meet again in April.
6. CCC Trail progress to include discussion of approval of Land Use Agreement with the Wisconsin and review and approval of brush removal estimates:
 - a. Bokern and various state representatives are working on interpretive signs, and Shackleford has been helpful with map-making.
 - b. MWAHS has pledged up to \$5000 for brush removal. Bokern presented three estimates received for brush removal at the site: Ecker Excavating for \$5000; Kelk for \$6000; and Bucklin for \$9600. Bokern recommends using Ecker for the services; he also spoke to Craig Daulton who agreed. Ecker also offered additional help with cleaning up piles in the spring if necessary. Motion from Bates, second from Schmidt to accept the quote from Ecker. Passed unanimously.
 - c. Craig Daulton and the NHAL budget will cover the cost of most of the signs for the site. The state historic preservation officer has been reviewing sign content and they are ¾ of the way through that process. They are finalizing the maps and

how to label them to illustrate the many features on the site. Bokern has received permissions for all the pictures from the WI Historical Society. He will be looking for logos from project partners including MWAHS, MPL, ICORE, and the WI Forest History society, MECCA.

- d. There will be additional information that we can share on the planned website, campmercerccc.org, and potential for additional signage at various recognized historical sites.
 - e. Discussion of the proposed Land Use Agreement from the DNR: The board discussed areas of concern including the liability provision. Craig Daulton from the DNR provided more information about that provision and relevant state statutes, which alleviated a lot of the ICORE board's concerns. Motion from Schmidt to approve LUA as presented, second by Bates. Approved unanimously.
7. Lake of the Falls and Deadhorse Grouse Trails update
- a. O'Krongly reported that she has been marking a trail at Lake of the Falls every winter, and it would be great to make it a recognized trail. Most of it is on Turtle Flambeau Scenic Waters Area (TFSWA) property and would require a management plan to be official, and that may be a significant hurdle.
 - b. O'Krongly has also broken more snowshoe trails in the Deadhorse Grouse habitat area. She will get in touch with the manager of the TFSWA to see if there's anything that we can do to look into adding these areas as designated trails.
 - c. Bates made a motion to ask O'Krongly to pursue these potential trail locations with the TFSWA; second by Hagemann. Approved unanimously.
8. Event committee report
- a. Everything has been "in limbo" due to the pandemic. There is concern about whether having ICORE sponsor events could expose us to liability related to the pandemic.
 - b. Pierpont offered the use of her Zoom account if ICORE is interested.
 - c. Some outdoor groups like the Monday Mixed Paddle do plan to resume in the summer with the same safety protocols.
 - d. Any other decisions for events will be postponed at least until April's ICORE meeting.
9. Discussion of proposal to divide up responsibilities to plan events
- a. Discussion deferred until the April meeting.
10. Addition to agenda: Railbed trail proposal between Mercer Bike trail
- a. Bates reported news on the request he sent to the Wisconsin DNR to investigate the probability of a nonmotorized trail on the railroad grade from Highway 51 and 47 to Sandy Beach. He received a letter from the DNR earlier today to ask more questions about the property in question. That letter asks the following questions:
 - i. Is the desire to use the railroad bed from 51 and 47 to Powell Rd? I've already mentioned some of the concerns with the private land or potential use of Hwy 47 on the north end. You are probably aware that there is also private land on the south end. Is the hope to go all the way through

- to Powell Rd? If not, where would the use of the railroad bed end/connection to Sandy Beach Rd be made?
- ii. What are the desired trail specifications – trail width, trail surface, etc. Is ICORE willing to take on any needed trail development and ongoing trail maintenance or is ICORE asking the DNR to take on the development or ongoing maintenance or both?
 - iii. I've mentioned that designation as a bike trail wouldn't necessarily preclude future consideration of the railroad bed as an ATV trail. Is ICORE ok with that or would the group not be interested if that is the case?
- b. According to the DNR, there is private land on both the north end and the south end of the proposed trail route. Traczyk suggests that there may be a route around the south end private property through the parking lot. Traczyk and Shackleford offered to look into the property records. The DNR also asks what trail specifications we would be looking for, so this group could discuss that. Shackleford noted that the existing trail conditions are already great for bike use. The main question is the third point in the DNR email: the ICORE board has concerns about safety and environmental concerns if there was discussion about combining ATV and bike use. However, we would still like to pursue determining whether it is feasible to establish a bike trail on that route. Bates will draft a letter of response and share the draft with the ICORE board before sending it.
11. Discussion of new board members for October annual meeting
- a. As of October, all board members are up for re-election. This year we will plan to elect officers on different term lengths so that all board members are not up for election at the same time. All current board members should think about whether they are interested in running again and let Mike Ondresky know.
 - b. We should identify some names of additional people who might be interested in serving on the ICORE board.
12. Other business
- a. Penokee Ranges update: They work on both the Montreal Ski Trails and the Uller Trails in northern Iron County. They have a new website at www.penokeerangers.com.
 - b. Montreal is also actively planning a community garden.
13. Next regular meeting: April 20th at 6:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Teresa Schmidt, secretary