Heart of the Highlands Trail System Board Meeting Minutes

January 5, 2021 at 10AM via Zoom

Members present: Cory Chase\*, Dan Lehmann\*, Jaineay Brasselle\*, Roger Lilly\*, Brian Sarfino\*, Brook Andrew, Matt Boarman, Andrea Dalton\* (joined at 10:20)\* (\*voting members)

A quorum is present. Meeting called to order at 10:00.

**Secretary’s Report: *Brian made the motion to approve the December minutes and Summary as written. Roger seconded the motion. All in favor, December minutes and Summary are approved as written.***

**Safety Committee Report:** Tabled

**Treasurer’s Report**

Jaineay reported: Total Balance: $68,034.71, Headwaters Trail: $1,979.26, Project Coordinator: $10,200, TCT: $4,935.65, Total Unrestricted: $50,919.80.

Jaineay accidently wrote a check from our account paying Elaine George. This was incorrect. Jaineay reversed the transaction, so no net change to the account. Two donations were received from PayPal. ***Brian made the motion to accept the Treasurer’s report as presented. Dan seconded the motion. All in favor. Treasurer’s report accepted.***

**Invoices:** #020 Cory Chase, Project Coordinator. ***Brian made the motion to pay the invoice for the Project Coordinator; Roger seconded the motion. All in favor. Jaineay will pay Cory.***

**Project Coordinator Report #15**

* We received an award letter from TCF for our Core Loop Trail Wayfinding grant for $1,360 (full amount) to buy materials to put up more signage and posts on the Headwaters Trail.
* Cory submitted a Performance Report to Brooke at USFS detailing the trail work completed and included a draft invoice for $2,729.90 for the Challenge Cost Share Agreement. The paperwork is due Jan 31.
* FLAP Grant - Cory began to investigate what might be required for the NEPA on the Headwaters Trail if the FLAP Grant is approved. Barb Douglas with the WV Field Office (Office of Environmental Services) of USFWS said we would likely be required to fulfill Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. We would also need to get in touch with Army Corps of Engineers. If we receive the grant, she expects we will be required to get a Categorical Exclusion (CATEX), which would be the best-case scenario. We may need to do and Environmental Assessment (EA) instead of a CATEX for NEPA which involves gathering information from several sources and submitting it. We should know if the grant is awarded to us within the next month or two. We need to start looking at what equipment and materials will be used for building this trail.
* NEEF (National Environmental Education Foundation) Grant – The NEEF grant is available to support public lands that have been impacted by increased use during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is due by February 1st and will be awarded in March.
* USFS MAPS (Matching Awards Program) Grant – Cory attended an instructional webinar for those considering applying for the grant which could be from $5,000 to $65,000. A 1:1 cash match would be required and a NEPA document would have to be in-hand before the application deadline.
* County Commission Appointment: Lowell Moore is no longer President of the Commission. Mike Rosenau will be our representative.
* 990 N Form: Cory will file the 990 N and our sales tax form. ***Andy*** will send the tax form to Cory.
* Security Screws - Cory is investigating security screws to use as “you are here” indicators.
* Gate access behind Canaan Fire Hall - Stan will have the deed interpreted by DNR lawyers as to who can and cannot use the road up to the gate.

**Partner Updates**

* USFS: Brooke Andrew – Brooke thanked Cory for submitted the Performance Report and the draft invoice. They looked good and will need a few edits – ***Brooke*** will send Cory an Email to discuss adding the indirect costs to the invoice which will bring the actual amount of money we will receive to $2,999.90. Invoice can be submitted anytime, but Performance Report is due at the end of this month. ***Brooke*** will send us a new Volunteer Service agreement – the old one expired at the end of last year. ***Brooke*** will attend the Tucker Roundtable meeting today which Cory will also attend to discuss trail maintenance needs. The Dolly Sods gate closed yesterday. USFS had a virtual open house for the Upper Cheat Project area near Parsons. USFS will put in a new overlook on the Shingletree Trail and make other improvements to that area. USFS got funding to repair the Thomas Rail Trail which was badly damaged when Snyder Run flooded approximately 2 years ago. It should also fund the repair of the Davis Trail bridge which is pushed over. Big Stone Coal and Otter Creek will also receive treadwork repair to correct damage caused by flooding.
* USFWS: Matt Boarman - Staff is meeting next week to start their annual work planning for 2021 to decide which trails they will work on this year. The bidding on the completion of the Brown Mountain parking lot/ADA trail to the kayak launch is now closed. Work should begin this spring.
* WV Land Trust: Cory reported for Amy Cimarolli. The WV Land Trust has begun work on their Appalachian Stewardship Foundation grant. The Land Trust has met with a contractor to show them severely eroding and boggy sites along trails to Moon Rocks Trail from Camp 70. The contractor will develop a plan of work to decrease sediment input into Yellow Creek and its tributaries.

**Organizational Actions & Discussion**

* Should we accept the TCF Grant? We received $1360 for signage. ***Andy made the motion to accept the grant money. Brian seconded the motion. All in favor; motion passes.*** ***Cory*** will fill out and submit the paperwork to accept the grant. Materials will be purchased and signage will be installed on either end of the Headwaters Trail as required in the DNR agreement.
* Should we apply for next round of NEEF? The NEEF grant can provide up to $2500 to improve public lands impacted by increased use during the COVID-19 pandemic. ***Brian made the motion to apply for the grant*** ***for $2500 to correct the damage to the Lindy Point Trail received because of increased use due to COVID-19. Roger seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passes.*** ***Cory*** will apply for the grant by February 1 to improve the Lindy Point Trail which has been severely impacted by increased use during the COVID-19 pandemic. ***Cory*** will talk to Matt Baker for his assistance in gathering information needed for the application.
* Should we work toward round 2 of MAP? The board feels that the time is not right to apply for MAP grants. We will reconsider doing this when some of our other projects are underway since it comes around every 6 months.
* Comprehensive Trail Plan for the county: Brian attended a Roundtable Meeting where Owen Milkin from the Friends of the Cheat talked about working with Preston County in writing their Comprehensive Trail plan. ***Brian*** will meet with Mr. Milkin to see what this would entail and mean for HoH. If ***anyone*** has questions for Brian to ask Mr. Milkin, please let him know ASAP. FOB is very interested in working on this. We may want to establish a sub-committee to join in this effort in the future. Brian would like to know cost and what involvement this would require from the County Commission.
* IMBA Ride Center – Pocahontas County has received IMBA Ride Center certification. Blackwater Bicycle Association is exploring also going after the certification. Brian asks if this is something we want to work on with BBA. Pocahontas County has received a good deal of money because of this certification. ***Brian*** will get more information and bring it to us.
* Security Screws for outdoor maps - ***Cory*** will investigate and decide if screws or dots or both would be the best to use as “You are here” markers. ***Cory*** will look for security screws in our materials if he feels they will be good to use. If he can’t find them in our materials, he will buy them.
* Conflict of Interest Forms: Andy emailed the forms. ***Board members*** are asked to fill them out and send them back to Andy via email or US mail to 333 Buck Run Davis, WV 26260.
* Officers’/Board members’ term limits: Andy Dalton, Jon Martin and Jess Tucker’s terms are up this month. Andy Dalton would like to continue being a board member. ***Dan*** will email Jess and Jon to ask them to continue serving on the board for another term. Discussion about adding board members. ***Brian*** will ask 2 people if they would be interested in serving on the board. ***Dan*** will ask 1 person. If they are interested, they will be asked to send us a letter of interest. We will vote on officers next month.

Adjourn: Roger made the motion to adjourn. Brian seconded the motion. All in favor. Meeting adjourned 11:50.

Next meeting: Feb 2, 2021