BTC Minutes

October 15, 2015

Attendees: Ed Mooney, Larry Skiles, Michael Mhoon, Eric Wendland, Jim Roscoe, Dan Downey, Craig Simonsen, Pete Wakeman, Ben Moore

Minutes of September meeting were approved.

Sign Committee Report and Related Issues:

 A sign is being made by Fred Bridger for the Pigtail Trail at start of the trail on Jefferson Street. Issues remaining are: to have survey done by Travis of Anderson Engineering to be sure the site for the sign is on city property – Ed Mooney to contact; discuss with local property owners for their input – Jim Roscoe to complete; have item placed on Dillon Zoning committee meeting for city approval – Ed will do; then to place posts three feet apart before ground freezes (?) and install sign. Related issue is that the Pigtail Bridge gravel approach ramps need retaining structure of rock on edges to allow long term use. Has been previously discussed at BTC member meetings. Dan Downey asked RE Miller if they would do this and Miller agreed at cost of $1000. Motion was made and vote carried for this to take place. Ben Moore suggested that better approach for group in future would be to put out similar projects out to bid. Dan Downey will talk to RE Miller to ask how wide retaining structure will be for purpose of deciding site for trail head sign. Montana FWP grant money remains to apply to these projects.

Professor Rob Thomas wishes to put up geology interpretive sign at Dillon Town Overlook trailhead. Sign committee approves. BTC members at meeting approve. We will ask Rob to join us at next meeting and show us sign design and desired site.

Sign committee discussed signage for High Trails Phase 1 trails. Five trails on Phase 1 have been previously mapped out and placed in digital file by Ed Mooney and Pete Wakeman. BTC members present wish to have High Trails Phase 1 trail maps added to our web site. Pete Wakeman, Ben Moore, and Jim Roscoe were to take field trip to area to finalize which trail maps to be posted with issues being to respect adjacent property owners’ lands and be respectful to county wishes in regards to county property in gravel field (this is not open to passage except by couny permission; such permission has been given for Dillon Town Overlook trail). Exact design for trail signs yet to be finalized; however, Pete Wakeman suggested post type signs used by BLM for trail markers and a system for marking different trails and hiking segment distances.

High Trails. As above. Purchase of Phase 1 took place on September 23. Improvements to be attended to are trail signage, fence repair/removal?/stile placement/decisions whether some trails should be improved or closed?. Pete Wakeman stated that improvement be planned for initial approach on Cliff Trail (aka Joyce’s Notch trail) up loose rock. Joyce Connor had sent an email “do we need to do some work on Cliff Trail . . . route to prevent people from going down the wrong gully and crossing the private land.” She suggested an arrow and some cairns might suffice. Signs needed? The Cliff Trail has a fork above the cliffs with the southern route passing partly into Greg and Brooke Lennardson’s land. Dan Downey has contacted Greg Lennardson and will contact Brooke Lennardson to see if BTC can get an easement for this trail, one of the most beautiful on Phase 1 land. In addition to these improvement matters, there is now need for focus on acquiring funds to complete Phase 2 purchase. The University of Montana Western wishes to change the W back to an M with reclamation of native prairie at the site. Dan Downey met with Chancellor Beth Wetherby, Roxanne Engellant, and other college committee members in September. UMW is requesting easement from BTC to approach site and perform construction, restoration, and maintenance of site. Susan Brigg at UMW called Dan Downey and will call Max Hansen who volunteered to draw up draft easement. Roxanne Engellant scheduled meeting at college Oct. 30 12:30-1:30 for planning committee meeting. Roxanne is head of committee. Alan Weltzien BTC to UMW liason, Ben Moore, Pete Wakeman, and Dan Downey plan to attend.

Eric Wendland presented housing development plan to group for land in north Dillon between N. Montana St. and Swenson Way. He plans to go ahead with housing development in this area. He requested assistance from BTC to develop trails adjacent to housing area along east side of Blacktail Creek. BTC members support increased connectivity of trails in Dillon and access to walking and biking trails for local citizens and advised Eric we would give letter to this effect. Eric talked about flood plain/river bank changes; also his plan to remove junk in Blacktail Creek in this area. Jim Roscoe talked about importance of riparian area to wildlife and importance of not destabilizing riverbanks. BTC asked Eric to show us an overall landscaping plan of area.

Grant Activity.

United Way. Grant is active for improvements on Dillon Town Overlook trail. A bench on the powerline knoll and a register at the trailhead were installed in Summer 2015 using United Way funds. Larry Skiles will report to United Way. Further signage (possibly at Cliff Trail) and a bike rack at the Town Overlook trailhead could be done with United Way funds.

Kendeda Fund. Grant is active for paid BTC staff position and Phase 1 land improvement.

Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust. Grant of $100,000 applied in September to Phase 1 High Trails land purchase. The BTC will send a letter to the MFWCT by the end of November advising of intention for grant application in Spring 2016 for funds to purchase Phase 2. Ben Moore and Dan Downey will start working on letter.

Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks. Pigtail Trail grant active. Most of work completed.

Dillon Patagonia Employees. The employees chose BTC as grant recipient for Bike to Work funds they raised. Check given to Ben Moore for $585 for BTC. The group favored applying these funds to our Bike Recycling program.

Conservation Alliance. BTC will ask Patagonia to nominate us for invitation to apply for grant for land purchase of Phase 2. Grant could be as much as $50,000. Jim Roscoe will talk to Beth Sullivan; nomination deadline is Oct. 31.

Bike Recycling Program. Rick Hartz wants to turn over management of program. Eric Wendland expressed interest in taking over. Dan Downey and Eric Wendland will meet with Rick to discuss details. Grant funding is needed for this program.

Relations: 1. BLM as partner in High Trails project. BLM has bench to install on Dillon Town Overlook knoll and wants to have trail coordination plan with BTC. Dan Downey and Jim Roscoe plan to meet with BLM. 2. Beaverhead County as partner in High Trails project. Dan Downey will discuss with Rick Hartz. Plan for fences common to BTC Phase 1 land and BLM and County should be coordinated.

Next meeting planned for November 19. We would like to invite new USFS Recreation planner and USFS Trails manager.

Update to minutes on subsequent activity:

Ben Moore drafted an updated trails map for High Trails area with elimination of duplicate routes and trails projected for Phase 2 and 3 with his notes. Very nice work. Pete, Jim, Ben, Eric and Eric’s son Landon took field trip to area Oct 16 to study routes. Consensus is pending. Pete and Ed contributed emails with suggestion of possible signs to mark route. Wooden posts attached to platforms with rock cairns to anchor seems to be one good option.

Jim Roscoe visited Pigtail Trailhead area on Jefferson Street and visited with one of the residents in that area Bill Solada who advised there is increased trash burden since trail built and unleashed dogs in area are a problem. Jim suggested these are important issues for us to address.

Jim Roscoe attended Building Capacities workshop. Take home points per Jim are: Establish roles of Board and Staff to do business of BTC. Develop annual work plans. Develop a budget. Who will do fund raising? Maintaining communication between BTC members critical. Also set up more BTC Board meetings and distinguish goals of Board meetings versus General Member meetings. Fiscal decisions and organization structure should be decided at Board meetings.

Jim Roscoe sent excellent letter to Hans Cole of Patagonia in Ventura asking that we be nominated for invitation to apply for grant through Conservation Alliance for funds to apply to Phase 2 purchase.

Ben Moore wants to move forward with putting Board member photos and profiles on website. Ben would like to have this ground work done by next meeting.

Ben Moore advised that an important action item for BTC is to have online document storage. Pete and Craig responded with advice that we use Box for doing so.

Pete met BVHD County Commissioner Mike McGinley at Dillon Town Overlook trailhead and discussed a hiking route across County gravel yard to allow loop routes on High Trails land. Mike graciously said county would prepare trail surface and put a gate (boulders) through the jack leg fence at Town Overlook trailhead. Mike asked that BTC mark ends of trail across gravel yard asking hikers to stay on trail and that sign(s)/barricades be put up above shooting range on county ground to keep people off this area.

That’s it hopefully. Respectfully submitted, Dan Downey