

# **Heartland Bike & Nordic Ski Club**

## **STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting Date/Time: September 26, 2007 7:30 PM

Place: Bistro, 212 Sports Complex

Present: Wally Schmitt, President; Kim O'Flaherty, Treasurer; Mark Koepke; Barb Garthus; Jack Friess.

Guests: Ken Erler, Trish Baker, Will Stits, Jeanette Friess.

I) Treasurer's Report- Balance-- 1/1/2007	\$2,117.14
Income	\$869.00
Expenses	\$823.59
Balance 9/26/2007	\$2,162.55

### II) Heartland Rides

The issue was brought up to whether or not to make all Heartland events self-sustaining; meaning riders/participants are required to cover their own costs at every ride. Two viewpoints were expressed: 1) to continue limited subsidies of Club events, if they are local and the expenses are reasonable; and 2) to have all events pay for themselves, or no subsidies. There was no clear consensus, so it was agreed the President should send a detailed description of each in a future email, and that the Steering Committee would vote via email responses determining which option is best for the Club.

### III) Fundraiser

It was suggested that at the next annual members meeting we would do a "white elephant" auction as a fundraiser. If anyone has any old or slightly used biking gear, parts, bikes, equipment, etc. and would be willing to donate to the club, it would be auctioned off at the members meeting. Local bike shops could also be encouraged to donate gift certificates of whatever amount that could be auctioned off. For example, if the Hostel Shoppe gives a \$25 gift certificate that is purchased for \$12.50, the winning bidder gets a certificate worth \$25.00, Heartland Club gets \$12.50, and the Hostel Shoppe will have someone come to their store that will most likely buy more than \$25 worth of biking equipment. The Steering Committee voted "Yes" to this proposal and will proceed with further action as we approach the Annual Members Meeting in the spring. Our goal would be to raise a few hundred dollars and to attract more people to the members meeting.

### IV) OH 18 Closing

We discussed many issues around this topic. And just so everyone is on the same page, here is what is being proposed by the Wisconsin Central Ltd. Railroad. They want to close the crossing at Old Highway 18 (OH18) and Burbank Road based on public safety. A second part of the petition is the proposal to close the Smokey Road underpass at Hwy 10. The hearing will be December 4<sup>th</sup> and, if needed, will continue on December 5<sup>th</sup>. Since the RR made the proposal, the burden of proof is on them.

Trish Baker and Ken Erler (two attorneys who have been active in the Wednesday night ride) were present at the meeting and gave very valuable insight to the issue. We all agreed the closing of the Smokey Road underpass would not have any impact on bicycling, since Smokey Road terminates there at Hwy 10 with no exit for bikes. Our stance on the OH18 crossing closing, as both a bike club and a community, is that closing the crossing could actually be more detrimental to public safety based on a few factors. First, closing the crossing makes it more difficult for fire dept, police, ambulance, etc. to get to the houses located east of the crossing. Second, the farmers/landowners who have land located opposite the crossing would be forced to take their large equipment down major highways. And last, cyclists wanting to use the roads southeast of town would also be forced to use very dangerous highways, since Hwy 10, HH, and Porter are the only other options. We agreed that the best way to approach this is with a 4-step plan.

- 1)** Contact government officials--Find out what their stance is on this issue and what they can do to help. Also let them know what our concerns are (as stated above)
- 2)** Contact Landowners/Farmers in that area--Get their responses to the closing.
- 3)** Get the media involved—Based on the feedback of the first two steps we would contact the Gazette/Journal to do a story on the closing. The paper has been covering this already and if we are prepared, this could be a good story for them. The purpose would be to put pressure on the RR with negative publicity. Both Trish and Ken believe that this proposal might not even make it to the meeting if we prepare properly.
- 4)** Prepare all documents and information for the hearing (should it get there). Trish volunteered to represent us at the hearing since she has a lot of experience in this type of setting.

As a plan of action we assigned certain people to contact the government officials and to get a list of the local land owners. We scheduled a meeting on Wednesday, October 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at Adventure 212 to report in and move forward based on what we've found out.

We also discussed a few alternative options to the closing. As some of you have heard, they are putting in an overpass at Co Hwy J. To accomplish this they need to build an access road to connect Hwy J with Stockton Road. One alternative access proposal is to extend OH18 along the north side of the railroad from the Burbank Road to Stockton Road. And the other obvious, perhaps less appealing options are to put gates with lights at the crossing, or to build a pedestrian/bike underpass at the OH18 crossing.

The last area of concern is the closing of Foley Road. If you log onto the Heartland website's home page, you can click "Foley Dr. RR Crossing Closing?" to find out more about this topic. Rolf Garthus and Mike McGibbon attended the hearing for this and have an overview of what occurred posted on the website. Since the public hearing has already been conducted and the decision now rests with the State Railroad Commissioner, there didn't seem much we, as a Club, could do about this closing, even though some expressed concern that Foley Road would be severed by the crossing closing and roads terminating on either side of Hwy 10.