

Friends of the Milford Upper Charles Trail
Minutes of the General Membership Meeting
March 6, 2007

Call to Order

Pat Rosenthal called the meeting to order at 7:14 PM. 13 members and 3 visitors were present.

Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made and unanimously carried to add the following to the clarify the 2/6/2007 meeting minutes:
 - There are Town By-Laws that apply throughout the town and Trail By-Laws that specifically apply to the trail.
 - The Town By-Laws prohibit dogs on town property, parks and school yards and allows dogs on public ways and sidewalks if they are on a 10-foot leash. The trail is considered a public way and therefore dogs are allowed on a leash.
 - The Trail By-Laws do not prohibit dogs.
 - The trail use guidelines (posted at the trail heads) specify a 6-foot leash
- A motion was made and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the 2/6/2007 meeting as amended.

Guest Speakers

- Susan Clark and Cheryl Shea
 - Susan runs the annual Milford downtown festival. Cheryl is her new assistant, and has run the annual Soccer Jamboree. Following are notes captured from their advice to the Friends on the Grand Opening Celebration.
 - Cheryl gave some background on the Soccer Jamboree.
 - The Soccer Jamboree has much smaller budget (\$6200) than the downtown festival; tries to break even. They get lots of donations.
 - Thought is that Trail Grand Opening event would be more equivalent in size to the Soccer Jamboree than to the downtown festival.
 - They charge vendors \$25-30; the vendors expect it.
 - They charges \$5 fee for admission. For this fee, kids get wrist bracelets that allow them admittance to all rides.
 - The hardest part is getting the volunteers. A good source is the high school and Dean College.
 - They pay \$600 for liability insurance for the day, which also covers all the vendors. They got the insurance from Bright Insurance.
 - Food vendors have to show permit prior to the event. Get all paperwork prior to the event. No other permits that they know of.
 - They get port-a-potties for the jamboree. Parks Dept said they will assist with these for the Grand Opening. Also, the bathrooms at Fino Field will be open.
 - Suggestions & recommendations
 - Gets sponsors: businesses, banks, etc. Names go on advertising. Banks have been generous.
 - Auxiliary police help – no charge for traffic control. Emergency vehicles.
 - Include quite a bit of entertainment. Live music is a big hit. Invites any outside vendors as long as appropriate. Does not charge, but accepts donations both before and after event.
 - Moonwalks or bouncy things are a good draw with vendor in Shrewsbury; Clown also recommended
 - Other source of volunteers: Milford cheerleaders. Call now to get volunteers committed. Call Hopedale and other surrounding towns, not just Milford people.
 - The Cultural Council might provide grant for the Grand Opening.
 - Suggest calling the Special Olympics – Jen Walsh. Alternatives Unlimited another good group to call.
 - Fingerprinting children is a good draw. The Masons do it for Milford, and Sheldon said that Milford has been pretty well covered, most recently on March 10th.
 - Both Milford downtown and soccer have rain dates. Rain will not allow for a successful event. Could have next day be the rain date with vendors on the pavement if the field is too wet. Strongly do not recommend no rain date.

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- Suggest a canopy with tables for people to dine.
- Would pay a lot more money for a band than a DJ. Cheryl can provide contact for good DJ for kids (Larry Faulk). Pat will follow up with last year's entertainment donor.
- Call local dance groups – parents come down to watch.
- Good place to rent a tent – Ace Hardware \$250 per day with volunteers setting up, 495 Rental insists on their people setting up which increases the cost.
- Great train ride vendor in Mendon. May come for free allowed to charge his fee. Susan will provide his name.
- Susan asked if we have a theme. Trail is the theme – running, biking, roller blading, etc.
- Professional teams often send a representative. Deb knows somebody who knows the VP of marketing for the Patriots.
- Call Revolution to get giveaways.
- Call the Milford Chamber of Commerce about Miss Massachusetts.
- Parks Dept drops trash barrels. Susan does trash duty – get volunteers.
- Do flyers 3 weeks ahead of time.
- John Smith bubble may provide giveaway donations, laser tag also suggested
- Q&A:
 - Question: How to get the Portuguese community involved? Answer: Advertise at the churches. Also can get approval for the schools to send letters to homes.
 - Question: How to get vendors to the events? Answer: Place notices in the Milford paper. Also, people look at a website that advertises – Cheryl will send address to Pat. Be careful not to duplicate vendors. Offer Milford businesses the first preference.
 - Question: What about enlisting the high school marching band? Answer: This has not worked out in the past. Also, the seniors will be out of school by the Grand Opening Celebration.
 - Question: What hours should the event be? We are doing 10-3. Answer: Those hours are fine. Establish time to set up. Do it in waves. Tell vendors that they have to set up themselves.
 - Question: Is there anything they suggest we not do? Answer: Pony rides very expensive. Susan sells tickets for \$1 – does not cover cost.

Officer Reports

- President – Pat Rosenthal
 - Reno, Pat, Tony and Nancy Mullins attended the selectman's meeting and presented recommendations which the selectman approved, including adding a reminder message concerning dog control on the upcoming property tax bills.
 - The Friends Board of Directors will meet monthly to prepare recommendations for this meeting. Liability insurance was one of the items discussed at the last meeting. We should have some recommendations for the April meeting of the Friends.
 - Website sponsorship recognition page recommended
 - Website domain – we have decided to keep the only the .org name and to give up the .com. name. Reno asked about \$150 fee paid a year ago.
 - Hopkinton Trails Club – link on the Milford website. Link to the general Upper Charles Trail contains information on the Earth Day cleanup by the Upper Charles River Cleanup Organization but is not working at the moment.
- Vice President – Tony Niro
 - Grand Opening Celebration:
 - Tony spoke with Lt. Nelson who said that the Fire Dept will set up first aid station.
 - Tony said the town attorney Gerry Moody is ok with the Grand Opening Celebration if Mike Bresciani of the Parks Dept is ok with it.

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- Police Chief O'Loughlin told Tony that he will assign extra officers for the event, including some on motorcycles. They will set up bike helmet booth. There will be no charge. He asked for a letter with details. Tony read a draft that asked for assistance with the Grand Opening and also spoke about overall safety on the trail. Members suggested that Tony draft separate two letters, one on each subject. Members also noted that the Police Auxiliary previously committed to assisting at the Grand Opening and should be contacted again.
- Secretary – Tom Myatt
 - The membership count is 80: 40 Bronze, 18 Silver, 11 Gold, 10 Pathfinder, and 1 Trailblazer.
 - There have been 6 membership renewals and 6 new members to date this year: 4 Bronze, 3 Silver, 2 Gold, and 3 Pathfinder. This sums to \$515.00 in dues to date.
 - Ten membership renewal notices were emailed on 2/20/07, but only 3 people have responded to date by renewing. The other 3 renewals to date were done in advance of any renewal notice. Several of the people sent renewal notices are very active members who regularly attend the monthly meeting, and Tom encourages them to renew their membership soon.
 - About 25 first renewal notices will be sent in March.
 - After 30 days, Tom will send a second renewal notice. Thirty days after the second notice, the person will be dropped from the membership if he or she does not renew. It was recommend that the second notice inform them that they would be dropped.
- Treasurer – Dave Cassinelli
 - Dave reported that the treasurer's report has not changed since the previous meeting.
 - Dave said that we should both keep the current checking account and move some funds into the ING account.
 - Dave communicated for Sheldon Moniz that the Masons are having a comedy night at 7:00, March 24th. Flyers with additional information were made available.

Committee Reports

- Trail Committee Report – Reno DeLuzio
 - There is Capital Improvement Committee meeting tonight. Additional land rights are needed for drainage. There will be no cost for these acquisitions but they will have to be approved by the Town Meeting in May.
 - The Phase 2 design is 25% done and submitted for approval to a battery of agencies. There may be a public hearing in April.
 - National Grid remains the major issue (99-year license by National Grid versus lease by federal officials). National Grid and local authorities are trying to get the Feds to change the regulation before Mass Highway goes out to bid. The issue has been escalated to the local federal delegation. Reno has spoken with Congressman Neal's office and Representative Fernandez.
 - Reno wants to have the contractor complete all work by May 1st when the contract is currently scheduled to finish.
- Special Events Committee – Pat Rosenthal
 - The Grand Opening Celebration was discussed earlier with the guest speakers.
- Fund Raising Committee – Barbara Bradbury and Tony Niro
 - Barbara drafted two fundraising letters – one with items from the wish list with prices and one without.
 - Concern raised re: Water Fountain item
 - No decision was made regarding which to use – Barbara had to leave due to illness.
 - Tony suggested that we review and update the Trail wish list.
- Dog Education Committee – Nancy Mullins

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- Nancy has a list of actions to promote control of dogs on the trail: installation of dog waste stations; distribution of a trail etiquette flyer; additional signage; monthly dog training workshops run by volunteers; and other volunteer activities. She suggested establishing a baseline of complaints as a means of measuring success.
- It was agreed that the first priority are dog clean up workstations. She will coordinate with the Parks Dept to get them installed and regularly emptied. Christina will fund the first dog station. Tony has agreed to fund the second dog station. We need decide upon a model. The committee will put together a recommendation. We also need to make a decision on locations. There were suggestions for one by Dunkin Donuts at Fino Field and one by Louisa Lake. Someone recommended against one at Dunkin Donuts because people do not start their walks there. The committee liked it because of its visibility. The cost is about \$335 per station. There is a price break for a quantity of 3, so it would be advantageous to have a third station. Dave needs to provide donors a receipt for tax deduction purposes.
- Safety Committee – chair vacant
 - See Vice President report.
- Publicity Committee – Nancy Wojick
 - Nancy mailed a Trail newsletter to the paid membership.
 - She proposed that we adopt a standardized letterhead for letters, thank you notes, etc.
 - She confirmed with Mike B that it is ok to use the Parks Dept as a return address.
 - She will gear up publicity on the Grand Opening Celebration once a few more specifics are in place.
- Maintenance Committee – Jennene Pasquarosa: absent
- Environmental Education Committee – Linda Konvalinka
 - The 8th Annual Earth Day Charles River Cleanup is April 21st, 9am to 12pm. Linda is organizing a group to clean up from Sacred Heart to Louisa Lake. People can get a shirt if they sign up 3 weeks before. She contacted the Girl Scouts and will contact other groups.
 - Linda suggested that the Friends could sponsor an Environmental Day event next year – not this year due the Grand Opening Celebration.

Old Business

- Tom will follow up on some research that Tony did with Russo Insurance. He will also contact the person at Bright Insurance who provided coverage for the Soccer Jamboree.
- Dave revised and enhanced the vendor form for the Grand Opening Celebration. Motion was made and unanimously carried to accept revised Grand Opening vendor form as is, but with the new letterhead added, and get it in the mail. Dave will work with Nancy on it.

New Business

- Recognition of Member Volunteer Contributions – this is on hold.
- Membership Drive Challenge
 - Pat asked that each person should come back to the next meeting with three new Friends.
 - Nancy recommended reviving the practice of setting up the information and membership solicitation table at Louisa Lake.
 - It was suggested that if the Friends sponsor free dog training sessions that participants be asked to contribute by joining the Friends.
- Motion was made and unanimously defeated to have a rain date for the Grand Opening Celebration.
 - Reno said there would be a significant issue with getting dignitaries to attend on a rain date.
 - If it rained enough to cancel the event, the field would be in poor condition the next day.
 - The next day, the best candidate for a rain date, is Fathers Day, which would lower attendance.
 - Volunteers may not be able to make the same commitment for a rain date as for the original date.

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- The Grand Opening event is larger than the Soccer Jamboree for which Cheryl schedules a rain date.
- Motion was made and unanimously carried to authorize spending up to \$5,000 on the Grand Opening Celebration.

Next Meeting

Motion was made and unanimously carried to have the next meeting at 7:00 PM, Tuesday, April 3rd at the Senior Center.

Adjournment

Motion was made and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 PM.