

**Minutes of the
Nonmotorized Recreation and Transportation Trails Council (NRTTC)
January 13, 2016, 11:30am – 1:30pm
By teleconference**

1. Meeting was called to order by Dana Johnson. Members in attendance: Dana Johnson, Debbie Peterson, Geoff Snudden, Bill Hauda, Rod Bartlow, Joel Patenaude, Ben Popp, Anne Murphy. Staff: Jill Mrotek-Glenzinski (Department of Transportation), Brigit Brown and Dan Buckler (Department of Natural Resources).
2. Meeting minutes from the September 16, 2015 meeting were approved.
3. Committee Chair Reports.

- a. **Funding.** Bill Hauda said that the funding issue is currently in limbo for political reasons.
- b. **Outreach.** Joel Patenaude and Dana Johnson reiterated that they would send out information via MailChimp when they have something important to report, but that the email list is organized and up-to-date. Patenaude and Johnson will continue working on the QR code for the NRTTC.

Patenaude noted that the DNR changed their Master Plan Amendment proposal for Blue Mound State Park, no longer closing down the Overlode Trail, nor building the previously proposed multi-use trail. However, the plan still includes a snowmobile route through the park which the cross-country skiers will oppose. The Natural Resources Board will take up the draft plan on January 27. Patenaude then discussed some of the specifics of the Blue Mound plan, and further led the Council in a discussion on appropriate measures the Council could take. Johnson moved to ask Patenaude to write a call-to-action with information that would be sent out to NRTTC supporters via MailChimp. Snudden seconded the motion. Patenaude asked for clarification whether Council desires comments submitted to the NRB against snowmobiles in Blue Mound. Johnson amended her motion to say that Patenaude would draft a message for an email blast as well as draft a comment to be submitted to the NRB. Patenaude seconded the motion. All approved.

- c. **Education.** There was no education report.

4. John Siegert, the mountain-bike representative on the State Trails Council and a member of the Bike Fed's Board of Directors, introduced himself and his project to the NRTTC. He was recently hired by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy as a Project Manager for their "Route of the Badger" project. This RTC

project “of national significance” would identify and map bicycle routes in a seven-county region of southeast Wisconsin, with the goal of strengthening the trail network in this part of the state. The project will involve GIS data collection and evaluation, engagement of multiple stakeholder groups and the formation of a partner network for fundraising, event organization and promotion. Siegert then recapped some of the additional benefits of the project, as well as discussed case studies of similar projects in other communities, such as in Seattle. Siegert’s work could help communities prioritize projects based on connectivity. He also noted that the City of Racine is developing their master plan, and the timing and location of the RTC project is perfect for informing Racine’s plans.

5. Hauda stated that he sent a memo out to Council members documenting the history of the NRTTC and the statutory language which governs the body. He said that the lack of advance notice from the DNR regarding things such as proposals for motorized uses in Blue Mound and Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area is a violation of the statutory language for the NRTTC. The memo documents a number of different pathways for the Council to take in order to be involved in issues in advance. Johnson and Patenaude echoed Hauda’s concerns about the Council seeming reactionary to many topics.

Brown said that the State Trails Council has a standing agenda item for a DNR Report, when the DNR updates the STC on important issues and their timelines. That could easily be incorporated into NRTTC meetings. Brown noted that the DNR has governing laws and might not have the ability to involve some members of the public, but not others. Multiple members of the Council said that advance notice is exactly what they should receive. Brown said that there might be differences of opinion as to what the statutory language implies. Dan Schmidt at the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau was involved in the Legislative Study Committee from which the NRTTC governing legislation was proposed and might be able to provide more information on the intent of the language.

Hauda made a motion for him [Hauda] to contact the Legislative Reference Bureau for a perspective on Statute 23.177(2)(a), specifically the implications of the word “shall”. Debbie Peterson seconded the motion. Patenaude suggested that the Council touch base with Dave Phillips since he was involved with the formation of the Council. Bartlow said he was interested in getting the opinion of DNR’s legal representation first. Hauda amended his motion to say that all correspondence will be copied to the DNR and DOT, as well as to the Council members. Johnson also suggested to take Brigit’s advice of having a DNR Report in NRTTC meetings, and later to approach DNR managers about access to information, depending on the results of the legal interpretation. Johnson further suggested that when Hauda approaches the legal counsel, to cut off the memo after reference to statute 23.177(2)(a) and simply ask them to interpret it with regard to how the NRTTC should be involved with plans and other issues moving forward. Patenaude said it’s also the responsibility of Council members to remain on top of pertinent issues in their user groups. Brown asked the Council to think about, in an ideal world, how and where they would fit into the DNR planning process.

Hauda withdrew his original motion. He then moved that the NRTTC ask DNR and DOT legal representatives for their perspectives on Statute 23.177(2)(a), specifically the implications of the word “shall”. Patenaude seconded the motion. All were in favor. Hauda will report back to Council members.

6. Brown noted that the state is kicking off their Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) project for 2017-2022. The plan will look at what kind of recreation Wisconsinites are participating in, where this recreation is occurring and what are possible funding mechanisms. There is a stakeholder group being put together to advise DNR planners on the SCORP. Brown inquired about NRTTC interest in potentially being included in that group (final selection is made by DNR Administration). Patenaude expressed interest, and Brown said she would move Patenaude’s name forward to the SCORP stakeholder group. Brown also said that some changes to the administrative code are being proposed, a few of which could affect Council interests, such as those regarding special events on public lands and electric bicycle use on public lands. The proposed changes should come out in the next few weeks (and will be sent to the Council at that time) and a public hearing is scheduled to be held on February 1 in Fitchburg.
7. Future agenda items/tasks:
 - a. Patenaude to work on Blue Mound email blast and comments to the NRB
 - b. Hauda to communicate with agency legal staff regarding NRTTC scope
 - c. DNR Report to be future standing agenda item
8. Jill Mrotek-Glenzinski said that she would send a [link to FAQs for the Complete Streets](#). Lastly, she noted that applications for the [2016-2020 Program Cycle for the Transportation Alternatives Program](#) are due on or before January 29, 2016.
9. Meeting adjourned 1:10 p.m.