

Meeting Minutes – July 10, 2023

Houghton County Recreation Authority

WUPPDR, 400 Quincy St 8th Floor, Hancock, MI

I. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 pm.

II. Roll call

Jerald Wuorenmaa, Secretary, performed roll call:

- **Members present:**

- Tim Gasperich, Calumet Charter Township
- Jerald Wuorenmaa, WUPPDR
- Brad Barnett, Visit Keweenaw
- Jeff Ratcliffe, KEDA (part)
- Craig Hughes, Nonmotorized (Michigan Tech Trails)
- Mark Halkola, Osceola Twp
- Glenn Anderson, Houghton County
- Andrew Ranville, Village of Calumet

- **Members absent:**

- Mary Sears, Franklin Township
- Mandy Lounibos, City of Hancock
- Eric Waara, City of Houghton (via video)
- Bruce Peterson, Portage Charter Twp

- **Others present:**

- Jeff Kakuk, DNR
- Lee Maynard, DNR

III. Approval of agenda

Jerald Wuorenmaa and Tim Gasperich noted the agenda item IV needed to be corrected to refer to April 10, 2023 minutes. Glenn Anderson moved to approve the agenda as amended, supported by Brad Barnett. All in favor; motion carried.

IV. Approval of minutes (April 10, 2023)

Mark Halkola moved to approve the agenda, supported by Andrew Ranville. All in favor; motion carried.

Jeff Ratcliffe arrived.

V. DNR/trails update

Lee Maynard provided an overview of DNR programs that could fund design of the proposed Hancock – Lake Linden nonmotorized corridor: Recreation Trails Program, Recreation Improvement Fund, and Nonmotorized General Fund. These are all reimbursement grants, and the Recreation Authority would be the grantee. Kakuk recommended contacting a local design firm to get a price estimate for “scoping” to define the corridor route. Funding determination would be made within DNR. Scoping would include scenarios and alternatives for the route. “Design” phase would occur after the exact corridor route is identified. Kakuk would look for examples of contractor solicitation documents used by other communities.

Kakuk provided updates on Houghton Douglass Falls and trail projects in Houghton and Keweenaw counties. The Falls site survey is complete; possible layouts are under consideration. Sections of the Sidnaw-Bergland and Bill Nichols trails are closed due to culvert failures; six culvert replacements are to be done on the latter. UPEA is nearly finished with design of a two-mile rebuild in Adams Township; first round review of FEMA grant application is due to be completed in August. Chassell-Houghton route should have a water flow concern addressed with replacement of a culvert under Lindala Road. Snowmobile Trail 15 should be reopened this year w/replacement of a bridge in Sturgeon River Sloughs, allowing passage from Baraga to Chassell. Lake Linden multi-use trail projects are about 40% complete. There’s been no further progress on motorized trail easements in Keweenaw County.

VI. Grant opportunities for nonmotorized trail

Discussed during DNR/trails update above.

VII. Snowmobile Club update

Barnett explained that the Snowmobile Club had indicated it was having financial troubles. Barnett, Gasperich, Ratcliffe, and Wuorenmaa, had met with the club’s leadership and then had a second meeting of the group with State Rep. Markkanen. Barnette said the Recreation Authority might have a role in advocating for solutions, including at the state level. Further discussion ensued about the club’s financial situation and potential revenue sources.

VIII. Member updates

Craig Hughes provided an update on Maasto-Hiito, Tech, and Swedetown trails; there was additional discussion about funding for the Hancock – Lake Linden route.

IX. Other business

None

X. Public comment (three-minute limit)

None

XI. Adjourn

Ratcliffe moved to adjourn, supported by Barnett. All in favor; motion carried.