

**Minutes of the
Nonmotorized Recreation and Transportation Trails Council (NRTTC)
January 11, 2017, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

1. Meeting was called to order by Dana Johnson. Members in attendance: Dana Johnson, David Phillips*, Anne Murphy, Bill Hauda, Geoff Snudden, Rod Bartlow, Blake Theisen*, Ben Popp, Debbie Peterson. Staff: Jill Mrotek-Glenzinski (Department of Transportation), Dan Buckler (Department of Natural Resources), Brigit Brown* (Department of Natural Resources). **Attendees who had to exit the meeting before the meeting's completion. Brown joined in-between previously scheduled meetings.*
2. Meeting minutes from September 14, 2016 were approved (Theisen moved, Murphy seconded, all approved).
3. **Recreational Opportunities Analysis.** Johnson received email from the DNR inviting Johnson or a Council representative to be a part of a recreational opportunities analysis. Johnson called upon anybody from the Council to serve as representative for the Council. Popp provided additional background, in addition to the DNR letter Johnson had forwarded to the Council. Theisen offered to be the Council representative for the project. There was consensus approval for Theisen's offer.
4. **Unicycle Discussion.** Brown asked for advice on how the DNR should treat unicycles. (Background information sent out before meeting.) Right now it's a use that doesn't meet the definition of bicycle. In some other states unicycles are treated the same way as bicycles. Indications are that their impact is the same as bikes. Theisen expressed support for allowing unicycles where bicycles are currently allowed and many Council members agreed. Phillips expressed reservations about unicycles in bike lanes on roads, but Brown clarified that she was only looking into the issue on DNR lands, on DNR trails already designated for bicycle use. There was a short discussion on the potential problem of unicycles in bike lanes. Theisen summed up that there was general consensus from the Council that treating unicycles like bicycles on bicycle trails on DNR lands was a logical idea.
5. **Electric Bikes Updates, Proposed Action.** Hauda discussed the draft memo regarding a rules proposal he wrote and recapped different elements from that memo. Hauda cited several issues that he has with the proposal, including enforceability of the proposed 15 mph speed limit and concerns with the ability of people to alter their electric bikes to allow them to go over the manufacturer's original settings. Hauda believes that there is a conflict between existing state law and what the rules proposal seeks to do. Hauda's last major point was about the potential confusion on an interconnected bicycle network for somebody crossing different jurisdictions with an electric bike. Hauda stated that if the Council was addressed earlier, they could have been a part of the development of a policy.

Johnson agreed that there should be a closer look at the issues Hauda identified. Multiple Council members were concerned about a slippery slope toward more motorization on the trails. But Johnson

said that electric bike policy could assist more people to get onto the trails. Popp noted that a lot of different communities (in USA and in Europe) realize that electric bikes benefit a large number of people who might otherwise not be active on the trails. Council members acknowledge that rule violators are the fringe and not the majority. Murphy and Hauda floated the idea of some kind of permit system for electric bikes that might also serve as a revenue source for the DNR. Phillips had to depart the meeting, but offered to be on a group that looks into the issue, if they choose to follow that course. There was a discussion on what the word “integral” referred to in the rule proposal, with some seeing the potential for that to mean gasoline engines on the bikes, as long as they were not “integral” to the bike.

Mrotek-Glenzinski suggested editing the draft memo to make it flow better and to remove references to S. 84.60 because that statute is for State Trunk Highways; Federal Aid. References to state trunk highways don’t seem appropriate since this is proposal on NR45 for DNR lands. References to sections within S. 340 Motor Vehicle and 346 Rules of the Road may be appropriate for the Council to consider. She also suggested reviewing the previous emails shared with relevant state statute references for electric bicycles. Bartlow offered to edit the document. He is to make the edits by the upcoming weekend and send it out the Council for review. Then they are to vote upon whether to send it to the Natural Resources Board to delay action on the proposed rule related to electric bikes. The NRB is to discuss the rules on January 25.

6. **Sauk Prairie Recreational Area Master Plan.** Murphy attended the NRB meeting when the SPRA master plan was approved, as a representative of the Wisconsin State Horse Council. Murphy was very concerned about the impact of motorcycles on the trails. They might be allowed to ride for six days, but how long do they take to fix any problems which develop on the trail? In Murphy’s estimation, the Board approved the plan with little discussion. She did note that the first speaker at the plan’s hearing was an attorney for the Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance who told the NRB that they had already filed suit against the Department. Murphy will stay on top of the issue and keep the Council abreast of any developments. She also might visit areas with motorcycle events and take photographs of the trails before and after the events.

Hauda and Bartlow noted that the NRB is again taking up the Blue Mound State Park master plan amendment on January 25. Written comments on the plan are due this week.

7. **Meeting dates.** Meeting dates are set for April 12, June 7 and September 6.
8. **New business.** Johnson wants to step down as Council chair after the June meeting and so there will be an election at that meeting. Johnson then recapped the meeting.
9. **Adjournment.** Meeting was adjourned (Murphy moved, Hauda seconded, all approved).