



Minutes

Date: February 17, 2009

RE: Grand River Expedition 2010 Upper Grand Regional Planning – Meeting Notes

Attendees Present: Bill Kantor, Jack Ripstra, Kenny Price, Charlie Parmelee, Kevin Williamson, Kathy Kulchinski, Lori Fitzgibbons, Cecilia Govrik, Jim Seitz, Paul Rentschler

1. Introductions

The meeting was held at the Blackman Charter Township Hall and was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes/Agenda

The minutes from the January 2010 meeting were corrected to read that Kathy's flatbed trailer is 16-feet long (#8 - Other). The minutes of the January 20, 2010 meeting, and the February 17, 2010 Agenda were approved as amended (Price/Ripstra).

3. Itinerary Planning

Opening Ceremony

Paul Rentschler distributed a draft agenda for the opening ceremonies for discussion. Kenny Price clarified that he was not planning to have an historic re-enactment as part of the opening ceremony, but that this would be part of the mid-day events in Jackson on Day 2. Rentschler stated that someone had suggested an actor, in historic costume, might serve as the master of ceremonies. Kenny suggested that someone dressed as Horace Blackman could perhaps do the introductions.

It was suggested that Jim Spink, Liberty Township Supervisor, might both serve as the Master of Ceremonies and introduce elected officials and others present. Jack Ripstra agreed to ask Jim. Kenny stated that he thought the cannon could be used to start the ceremony.

Jim Seitz note that he had spoken with the Liberty store owners, getting their okay for the event, and that he had spoken with Tom Carpenter, Liberty Township Fire Chief. Mr. Carpenter had indicated that restrooms are available at the Fire Hall (across the street from the ceremony) and that some parking would be available at the Fire Hall, as long as no one blocks the exit for the fire trucks. Jim stated that he would also look at some other locations for parking, including the Masonic Hall (if demolition is finished by the time of the expedition), the Mennonite Church, and the Township Hall.

Charlie Parmelee stated that he was having old film of previous opening ceremonies put on disk. Jack checked on equipment at the Township Hall and noted that we could watch some of the footage at our next meeting.

Rentschler stated that he would speak with Project Lakewell staff at the Quiet Water Symposium (QWS) to see if they would be at Liberty. Whether to have anyone paddle across the mill pond as



part of the ceremony was left undecided pending that conversation. Jack asked whether we would need to coordinate with the Township on water levels and hydro-power operations.

Rentschler suggested including a wine tasting stop, at one of the local vineyards, as part of the Headwaters Tour. Kenny Price pointed out that the closest vineyard was actually Cherry Creek – in the River Raisin watershed near Cement City. Kenny noted that they had expressed interest in bottling a Grand River wine as well.

A number of problems regarding logistics and putting people back in their cars after a wine tasting were discussed. It was decided, instead, to work with the Jackson Chamber to develop promotional materials describing alternative activities for those not wishing to go on the headwaters tour. Birding, hiking, local parks, and art displays were noted. Kathy Kulchinski agreed to take the lead developing materials describing a self-guided headwaters wine tour to include in the packet.

Evening – Day 1 – Michigan Center

A number of questions/issues were noted to discuss with the Leoni Township Board, including:

- Would alcohol be allowed? It was noted that alcohol is served at the Carp Carnival,
- What is the earliest time people may set up camp at the park?
- Would long-term parking be allowed? If so, how many could be accommodated?
- Confirm starting and end times for the band
- Camping – how many “sites” are available, and are RVs allowed?

Rentschler asked if the group intended to have displays about the river/local issues/organizations, etc. at Michigan Center. He noted that local groups would need to be invited to register/set up displays – similar to how Earth Day was organized at Cascades Park. Charlie Parmelee stated that a display about the GRE itself would be at all stops. It was agreed that we would not try to organize a number of organizations’ display for Michigan Center, but would instead focus that effort on the Day 2 midday stop in Jackson.

Kevin Williamson asked if the Steering Committee had determined how gear and displays would be transported and how much this might cost. Rentschler noted that the Steering Committee was discussing having a vendor provide that service, but that cost had not been determined yet.

4. Fundraising

Rentschler stated that, at the last Steering Committee meeting, it had been suggested that the Upper, Middle, and Lower groups could all organize wine & cheese parties as fundraisers. It was suggested that a local wine tasting party might be organized in the headwaters – showcasing local wineries, serving as a fundraiser, and providing pre-expedition publicity. The Bella Notte (downtown Jackson) was suggested as a possible location, and Jack, Kathy, and Kenny agreed to speak with the owner and look into the possibility.

5. Publicity/Media

Cecila Govrik and Rick Berry volunteered to develop press packets. Jim Seitz suggested that Louise Hefka, who does press releases for GREAT, may also be willing to help. It was suggested that we also ask Pegg Clevenger to see if she would help.



6. Art Contest Planning

Kenny Price stated that he and Maggie (Art 634) would develop rules and contact local artists for a juried art contest around the theme of rivers. The contest would be for all media. There would not be prizes, but those whose works were selected would be on display for the month of July, with an opening July 11 (the weekend prior to the expedition). Artist would have their work shown and could sell their works at the show.

Kenny also discussed the river mural project. He noted that a local artist would paint the river on the panels and that kids along the river could then paint/add to each panel as they saw fit. It was suggested that the panels should be canvas or some other lightweight material, so that they could be easily transported and displayed after the expedition.

7. Other – Parallel start for Expedition?

Kenny Price suggested that a small group of people could begin paddling from Vander Cook Lake and meet up with the main expedition in downtown Jackson. The reason for doing so would be to bring a piece of the expedition right past the WKHM radio station. That adds a lot of paddling to an already long day and may be better done the previous day. Perhaps better to simply see if the radio station staff would cover the Michigan Center or Jackson events, but there was some interest.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Rentschler 3/16/10

Next Upper Grand River GRE 2010 Regional Planning Meeting: Wednesday March 17, 2010, 6:30-8 p.m.