

Helena Vigilante Runners

Board Meeting #38

Meeting Minutes

November 28, 2016

I. Call to Order

Patrick Judge called to order the 38th meeting of the Helena Vigilante Runners at 7:04 pm on November 28, 2016 at 107 W. Lawrence, 2nd floor conference room.

II. Roll call:

The following 14 board members were present, making a quorum:

Pat Judge, President

Jeff Thomas, Vice President

Aubrey Curtis, Secretary

Ann Seifert, Treasurer

Julie Ackerlund, Board Member

Joel Harris, Board Member

Shiloh Hernandez, Board Member

Erik Makus, Board Member -- thank you for the treats!

Kathleen McElwain, Board Member

Christy Stergar, Board Member

Lila Thomas, Board Member

Sarah Urban, Board Member

Jesse Zentz, Board Member

Regrets:

Sean Connolly, Board Member

Rebecca Shaw, Board Member

Guests:

Eric Grove

III. Approval of Minutes

Jeff Thomas moved approval of the minutes from the 8/15/2016 meeting. Julie Ackerlund seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. Special Guest: Eric Grove

Eric described his proposed "Scratchgravel Initiative". He's been working with the BLM and users groups to develop a recreation proposal for the 5500 acres of open space NW of town. The BLM released a Resource Management Plan and Travel Plan in 2009 (limited motorized use to 5 trailheads), but deferred planning for recreational uses. In 2017, they

will take those issues up again and will be inviting proposals from the public. Eric hopes to coordinate a proposal with several users groups:

- mountain bikers
- runners
- hikers
- equestrian users
- dog walkers
- folfers

In addition, the local landowners will certainly weigh in, as will representatives of mining claims (one of which is active).

He's talked to roughly 130 individuals so far (44% of whom are landowners), and is now approaching users groups. He asked HVR to form a working group (Jesse agreed to chair it), to meet with Eric and provide specific feedback to his survey questions.

Eric noted that there are roughly 40 miles worth of roads, mostly double-track jeep roads. Possible improvements might include: directional trails, separation of user groups (especially equestrian and mountain bike), improved trail structure / trail design, etc. He encouraged us to brainstorm about what we would ideally like to see out there. Pat and Jesse noted that Helena had hosted a Montana Cup event there in 2000, but that it fell from consideration this last year due to limited parking and shelter.

Eric noted that some people prefer the area be left just as it is. But he thinks change is inevitable (5000 people projected to move to the Helena valley in the next 10 years), and that it's better to be proactive than reactive. The initiative is just a personal project of his, but he has received moral support from PPLT and Bike Helena.

He hopes to have his proposal ready to go by Spring, and thinks that ultimately the plan will be designed very professionally by probably an out-of-town firm.

He can be contacted at: eric@greatdividcyclery.com

Eric also asked that people weigh in on the Forest Service "Ten Mile South Hills Project" -- comments are due on December 5th. He personally supports the proposed action (Alternative 4) because of its robust trail proposals (such as the "Ridge to Bridge" trail, which would essentially extend the Mount Helena Ridge Trail by 3 miles, as well as a long-term vision of rebuilding the Brooklyn Bridge trail and ultimately connecting Helena's trail system all the way to the Continental Divide Trail through the Travis Creek Divide, Black Mountain, Colorado Mountain, Moose Creek, etc.).

V. **Financial Report**

Ann Seifert reported a checking account balance of \$13,886, with some of it restricted for specific purposes, like the HEAT Meet, and Sun Run (Pat had \$3,566 for the latter). Pat reported that the annual fundraising campaign was successful, having brought in \$3,851.78 in donations (exceeding the \$3,500 goal). Ann and Sarah reported on the Ales for Trails fundraiser that was held on October 30th. Tenmile Creek Brewing sent us a check for \$90 (\$1 per pint sold that day), and we also received \$20 from Loft Yoga Studio for the "Down Dog and Draughts" joint fundraiser they conduct with Tenmile. The next HVR Ales for Charity event is Tuesday, December 6 at Lewis & Clark Brewing Company. Jesse suggested having a raffle for a Tread Lightly gift certificate to boost attendance. Pizzas could also be purchased.

VI. Jesse Reports

Jesse reported on the "Junior Vigilante" program. He had 24 participants in the fall cross-country program this year (compared to 11 last year), and had both boys and girls involved (still a few more girls than boys). He organized 12 workouts over 3 weeks (some of them hosted by the East Helena runners), and had three complete teams competing in the USATF meet in Bozeman on November 5th (boys 13-14, girls 13-14, and the state champion girls 11-12 team, which finished 1, 2, 3, 4, 6!). Jesse indicated that interest in the program is definitely growing, and that he was grateful to have the assistance of some parents, Sarah & Bryan Johnson, and a couple of the older (high-school aged) kids. The kids and parents should be officially welcomed into the HVR-fold as members and supporters -- there's a lot of enthusiasm there.

Governor's Cup -- Jesse reported that the Marathon Relay is back! Registration is open for up to 20 x 4 person teams, with the following legs:

- 1) "Gold Rush" -- 6.1 miles from Marathon Start to Silver City Bar
- 2) "Silver City High Rollers" -- 7.0 miles from Silver City Bar to Half-Marathon Start
- 3) "Iron Horse" -- 8.1 miles from Half-Marathon Start to Franklin Mine/Green Meadow
- 4) "City Slickers" -- 5.0 miles climbing back into town

Competitive Timing has been notified, but there are not going to be official splits for the various legs (unless Blue Cross organizes volunteers with clipboards).

The cost is \$160 per team and the divisions are:

- Open Men (can have 1 woman)
- Open Women
- Masters Men (can have 1 woman -- all participants must be at least 40 years old)
- Masters Women (all participants must be at least 40 years old)
- Coed (must have 1-3 men and 1-3 women, but that has some overlap with Men?)

Please give Jesse feedback on the registration process -- hopefully it's working well.

Also, the lowest early registration rates expire on November 30th -- just \$60 for the Marathon and \$10 for the 5k!

Nothing new on the Social Media front, the Physical Activity Working Group, Sports Complex, etc.

VII. Membership Report

Pat reported the the RRCA renewal period is now open, and that HVR members will soon be getting messages from runsignup. HVR's RRCA membership and insurance rates have not changed, and the cost of being an HVR member is still free.

Julie will notify vig listserv subscribers to look for the renewal messages, and also to sign up if they haven't already done so. Vig subscribers who don't sign up as official members of the club will be "purged" in January.

VIII. Speaking of Running Report

Kathleen reported that Heather Lieberg is available to speak to the group during her Christmas break, which is December 23-January 2. The group thought that Spring Break (last week of March) might be a better time of year, and Kathleen agreed to circle back to Heather with that proposal.

Other ideas for Speaking of Running talks:

- Joel Harris suggested Jason Mohr, who was a member of the only NCAA team in history to sweep the national cross-country meet with a perfect score. Apparently another member of that team lives in Montana as well.
- Ann suggested Suzy Favor Hamilton! Apparently local potter Emily Free Wilson ran cross-country with Suzy at Wisconsin, and could potentially help arrange a talk (along with Blair Haseman of Girls Thrive). Suzy now gives talks pertaining to mental health issues. We could potentially partner with NAMI (as we did with the very well-attended Nikki Kimball presentation).
- Jesse suggested either Mike Wolfe (who now runs a gym in Bozeman) and/or Jim Walmsley, who sometimes comes up for the Prickly Pear run. Shiloh said he would reach out to Mike.

IX. Outreach Report

The postcard is being dusted-off and will be ready for printing soon!

Language will be added about the "Youth Cross Country and Track -- Junior Olympics Prep" program, and also the "Speaking of Running" program.

A final decision was made NOT to include the August Road Race in our list of events.

For now, the event should be considered retired due to the following concerns:

- safety issues, with ever increasing traffic in the area (new subdivisions are going in, and anticipated paving projects would also change the character of the race)
- MRL is no longer offering a train stoppage
- increasing likelihood of late summer fires causing smoke issues like 2015
- we had an excellent 50th event, with record numbers of participants (154), a great showing from the local schools (including the soon-to-be 2016 state champs from Townsend) and even a special guest from New Zealand (Steve Simpson). It was also great having early winner Dave Roberts out there, still running strong! \$1000 was raised, and donated to the high school teams. The commemorative batons were much appreciated. Conditions weren't particularly fast (windy), but we mostly avoided the rain and lightning. There were no complaints, injuries, or incidents reported.
- Coach Bill Gilbert is contemplating retiring from cross-country coaching this year, so it's a fitting end to his tenure with the event.

X. Race Reports

Erik Makus reported that numbers were down a bit from 2015 (58 vs 75), despite gorgeous race day weather. Still, the event was very successful, and even without some corporate donations that haven't showed up yet still nearly broke even. (However, he over-ordered t-shirts, and will look into splitting the order next year to get the exact number needed, delivering shirts after the event to those who register late.)

The plan is to move the race later in the month (September 23rd) to offer cooler racing temperatures. But Erik still thinks the 10:00 start time makes sense (for volunteers, out-of-town travelers, etc.). He said he would like to rejuvenate the "mhr" listserv & committee. Congrats to Jesse for shattering the Masters record this year!

Erik distributed packets including financial information, historic participation levels, and information from the post-race survey he conducted. He also noted that Competitive Timing now has a low-cost option for small races. Finally, he thought that earlier notice

in the IR would help with participation. Jesse suggested talking to Jason Walker at ESPN radio to profile the race.

Shiloh Hernandez reported on the second annual Helena Sun Run, which partnered with the Montanan Renewable Energy Association Clean Energy Fair this year. Numbers were down a bit in this race as well (115 registrants compared to 130 in 2015), and there were some problems with course marking. The beneficiary of the funds this year is the Holter Museum of Art, which will be placing a 20 kW photovoltaic array on the Baucus Gallery. Fundraising also dipped compared to last year (\$6,000 vs. \$13,000 in 2015), which Shiloh attributed to his two-month departure last summer. Still, the amount was sufficient for the 10% co-investment standard required by NorthWestern Energy in its USB renewable energy grant program.

The 2017 event is scheduled for September 16th, and will again partner with the Clean Energy Fair (but the fair may depart Helena after that). Shiloh was pleased to report that the Lewis & Clark Library Foundation "paid it forward" by donating \$1000 to the Holter project. He asked for ideas for future beneficiaries, and board members brainstormed the following:

- YWCA
- State buildings (DEQ, Historical Society, Governor's Mansion, other?)
- Helena Middle School (Vigilante Stadium!) and/or CRA Middle School
- Intermountain Childrens Home
- Leo Pocha building on Euclid

Pat reported that the 25th annual Montana Cup event was a success. In particular, the Helena team was thrilled to recapture the Men's Masters trophy (which came with a \$100 cash prize this year). The event had a record 299 participants, and benefitted from good weather. There were no incidents reported, despite congestion at several pinch-points. Racers were courteous to each other, and generally had a very positive experience. Pat was a bit disappointed with ridership on the bus, but thought that would improve in 2017.

XI. Other Reports

Pat passed around the "RRCA Runner Friendly Community" plaque, and asked the group for suggestions on where it should be displayed. People thought it could be rotated to several locations around town. HVR still hasn't done any press around that recognition. Jesse noted that the distinction is just for a five-year period 2016-2021.

XII. Adjournment

Pat Judge adjourned the meeting 8:53 pm. Next meeting is currently scheduled for February 20, 2016.

DRAFT Minutes prepared by Pat Judge and Aubrey Curtis.

XIII. Addendum

On December 4th, with support from a quorum of the board and no objections, Joel Harris sent a HVR letter to the Helena National Forest in support of Alternative 4 of the proposed "Tenmile - South Helena Project," largely due to its trail provisions.