

**Florence County Blue Ox Trail Riders**  
**Meeting Minutes For: Monday, August 5, 2024**

**1. Meeting Called to Order**

a. Vice President Craig Balfanz will preside in place of President, Fran Modschiedler.

**2. Approval of Minutes from the last meeting-** Ron Julian motioned to approve the meeting minutes from July 1, which was seconded by Jerry Heidtke.

**3. Treasurer's Report:** Dean Lefebvre

a. **Monthly Financial Report** – Dean reviewed a spreadsheet showing current accounting information. The cost of insurance went up by \$400 on the account of the new “Rabbit”. Dean asked for a motion to approve the insurance payment. Eric Jensen made a motion to approve the insurance payment and Jim LeFavre seconded the motion. None opposed – the motion was carried.

b. **Funding Report** - \$24,000 in funding was available through the end of June for grooming of ATV trails. \$25,000 can be expected to come in later this summer. No supplemental funding for snowmobile grooming is available at this time.

c. **Other Business** - Dean stressed the importance of getting work/timesheets turned in on time. Dean has been receiving some worksheets via text message, but some are being lost in text message strings.

**4. Secretary's Report-** (Eric Jensen) will be working toward more automation for club membership renewals. This will include digital membership cards instead of ones that need to be physically mailed.

**5. Vice-President Report-** (Craig Balfanz) nothing to report

**6. President's Report-** N/A

**7. Equipment Managers Report:** (Ron Julian) The tractor from Tipler is serviced and is being prepared to return to service. There was an approximate cost of ~ \$1500 to repair and service the tractor. Discussion then swung to the New Holland tractor with tracks and its potential sale, given its limited utility to the Club – there is little market for those types of used tractors right now as others are available. If we wish to swap out the tracks for tires, this will cost on the order of \$10,000. A new 165 hp T10 tractor costs \$170,000, which would be much more useful to the club and could be used year round (unlike the New Holland with tracks). A discounted T10 tractor is currently available (with 160 hours) and would cost \$150k, including a full warranty. The dealership offered \$125K in trade in value for the New Holland – the Dealership is aware of the roof issue and bent frame. To outfit the new, discounted T10 with a loader frame and bucket would cost an additional \$20,000. It was generally agreed that if

the discounted T10 was purchased, it would be prudent to include the loader frame and bucket. Dean brought up financing options and Jim Gehloff made the point that the new tractor could be billed at \$90/hour, which would make up for financing costs. Contingent upon arrangement of financing, Dean made a motion to approve an allocation of up to \$50,000 to trade in the current New Holland tractor and purchase the discounted T10 (the cost of the new tractor with the loader frame and bucket minus the trade in value is \$45,000). A motion was made by Ron Julian and seconded by Jerry Heidtke, followed by an oral vote by the club members. The motion carried unanimously by vote of the members and was without opposition. A separate Corporate/Board of Directors resolution will be circulated for approvals once details of the financing packages are known.

A separate motion was made to purchase a new pressure washer to clean the equipment in Florence, but was not carried. Jerry Heidtke has a pressure washer that he is willing to donate. Jerry's pressure washer does not work Ron will make a motion at the next meeting to spend up to \$500 on a new pressure washer. Ron reported that he has accrued 70 hours and Jim Hixon had 18 hours in maintenance that is currently not funded by recoveries to the Club. This will be a topic of continued discussion in the future.

## **8. Public Relations Report-**

- a. The Landowner Appreciation Dinner will be held on Sept 14 (*note - the date of the dinner is actually Sept 21, and will be noted in the invitation letters*). Sandi made an appeal for any landowners that may have been missed in the notifications and outreach. The Blue Ox merchandise "store" is now open on the website – shipping is \$15 to your home, but is free if merchandise is shipped to the Blue Ox meetings. Sandi can coordinate this – Aug 15 will be the end of the sale. Sandi is also updating the 2024-2025 Trail Map with a target date of Dec 1 for printing.
- b. Eric will check with the Keyes Peak Skill Hill Pavilion to ensure that it is reserved for the dinner.
- c. The cost of preparing food "in house" (i.e. by Club members) was approximately \$1,100 last year. The cost of catering the event would be greater than \$2,000. It was agreed that the food would be prepared in house. Smoked tenderloin will be on menu and the Club will post a volunteer sign-up sheet online for side dishes, deserts, etc.. Roughly 40 people are expected to be in attendance.

- d. An extended discussion took place regarding the documentation of landowners along trail routes. There is a list of landowners prepared in previous years (last updated in 2023) that is also tied to a map – Dean displayed this online portal at the meeting. Right now, there is no specific protocol for obtaining land use agreements with landowners along the trail systems. It was generally agreed that the responsibility of documenting landowners falls to the individual trail coordinators.

## **9. Trail Coordinators Report-**

- a. Call for volunteers for Florence-Spread Eagle Coordinator: Matt Petraska nominated Tom Harrison for Florence-Spread Eagle Coordinator. A motion in support of the nomination was made by Jerry Heidtke and seconded by Dean Lefebvre. There was no one opposed and the motion was carried. The Club thanks Tom for his volunteering.
- b. Matt Gummin explained that new trails signs are being made available by the Bureau of Corrections Enterprises (“BCE”). Matt explained that the new signs are traffic sign quality. They are currently stored in the shed. Tami Blafanz volunteered to make an inventory of signage in the shed and see what is needed. Trail coordinators and members in general will note locations where trail signage needs to be improved or updated. Members asked what the protocols are for signage, and Dean explained that the State of Wisconsin has a signage handbook. The Club has a copy that dates to 2019 (?), but is still relevant.
- c. Craig brought up that the Tipler-Long Lake routes are in bad need of brushing, including the grade. Rick Knepper proposed the weekend of Sept 21 for a volunteer brushing effort to be coordinated by the Club. Details will follow.
- d. Fran Modschiedler currently has two brushers stored at his property. Jim Hixon and Matt Petraska will coordinate to pick up the equipment from Fran’s place. Eric will call Fran to let him know that Jim and Matt are coming to pick up the equipment (update: Eric was not able to reach Fran as of 8/8, but will continue trying).
- e. Tom Harrison will provide a list of signage needed for his area of responsibility.

10. **AWSC Report-** Jim Petroff made the point that Blue Ox Club is somewhat unique in that it involved ATVs and snowmobiles, whereas other clubs can be specific to either. Other clubs use a cooperative to service equipment and the clubs are simply in charge of operating the equipment.

11. **WATVA Report-** Jerry Heidtke nothing new to report.

12. **Old Business-** nothing new to report.

13. **New Business-**

- a. A Commonwealth town meeting to be held August 26; an agenda item is to discuss opening of additional roads in Commonwealth for ATV traffic. A Blue Ox member will attend (Eric Jensen and Scott Weaver will attend on behalf of the Blue Ox club)
- b. Some vandalism was reported on a landowner's property near Buckeye Tower. This is a sensitive issue, as the route may be closed without this landowner's permissions. Apparently, ATVs went off trail and signage was torn down. Rick Knepper will coordinate with Matt Gummin to replace the signs that were torn down. The Club needs to maintain awareness of these issues and vigilance. If club members witness violators or offenders, this should be reported.

14. **New Member Introductions-** George Wiedenhoeft, from Iron Mountain, introduced himself as a new member.

Chris Olsen, of Fence also joined the Blue Ox Club at the meeting. We welcome George and Chris as members to the group!

15. **Social Gathering & Volunteer Fund- 50/50 drawing**

16. **Next Meeting is-** Monday, September 2, 2024 @ 5:30 pm

17. **Meeting Adjourned** at 7:32 pm.

Blue Ox Trail Riders Club Meeting, August 5, 2024, 5:30 pm

Attendance list

New members: please provide your address, phone number and email address.

Randy Smits

James Hixon

MARY Palmesha

George Wiedenhoest

Rue J. J.

Tom H.

Scott Weaver

JERRY HEISTKE

KURT PERSON

Rick Knepp

Carol Wunsand

Bin Wunsand

Mike Bopray

Jim LeFevre

Mary LeFevre

Rob Seidl

Chris Olsen

Mat Gummie

Jim Isloff

Jim Isloff

Sandy Petroff

Sandi Lefebvre

Tami Balfanz

Dean Lefebvre

Jim Balfanz

STEVE LALK

KERRI LALK