

Medina County Bicycle Transportation Task Force

A.K.A Bike Medina County

Nov. 7, 2019

Medina County Administration Building

Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Secretary John Gladden (Medina County Park District), Dan Hostetler (Medina County Convention and Visitors Bureau), Second Vice President Lynne Nawalaniec (Century Cycles), Tony Ratajczak (NOACA Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Medina County representative), guest Shannon Rine (Medina County Public Transit Director), First Vice President Tim Smith, Treasurer Suzanne Swain (Friends of Medina County Parks), Jansen Wehrley (City of Medina Parks Director).

Call to Order

The meeting was moved to the conference room in the Medina County Auditor's Office, due to a schedule conflict with other events occurring in the balcony meeting rooms. Tim called the meeting to order at 11:35 a.m. President Beth Schnabel was out of town and unable to attend.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the Oct. 3 meeting were approved as read.

Treasurer's Report

Suzanne reported a balance of \$6,715.50. John forwarded a \$100 gift from the Kelly-Meadows family, donated to Bike Medina County in gratitude for John writing an obituary for a member of their family.

Old Business

John introduced Medina County Public Transit Director Shannon Rine, who is in his first year on the job. He shared that MCPT has 17-18 buses in daily service, with 11 of those providing on-call door-to-door service. The remainder of the buses run established loops in Brunswick, Medina and Wadsworth. The buses log 78,000 miles per year. He believes Medina County presents tremendous growth opportunities for public transit. He has been exploring initiatives to promote ridership, including development of bus passes, smart cards and mobile apps, as well as connecting to transit services in adjoining counties. MCPT is engaged in a transit planning process with NOACA. Shannon would like to increase routes to include industrial parks to help those who face transportation barriers to employment. He believes a robust public transit system is a driver of personal independence and economic development. Shannon cited a study showing \$1 of investment in transit leads to \$3-\$4 in economic growth. MCPT is funded through ridership fees, grants and federal dollars. There is no local funding match. Shannon is continually seeking grants to help grow the system.

He said bicycles are a natural fit with public transit in Medina County and is grateful to connect with BMC. However, he noted the transit system first needs to stabilize funding and expand routes to make the system work for cyclists. He envisions scheduled stops throughout the county where cyclists could plan to meet a bus, put their bikes on board, travel to their destination, and return the same way. Cyclists can now put their bikes inside MCPT buses, as long as the bikes do not displace mobility equipment needed by other riders. Shannon doesn't know what became of the bike racks that had formerly been installed on MCPT buses, since they date to before his arrival, but said he would investigate. He added there is a significant cost associated with purchasing and installing bike racks on buses.

Committee members responded positively to Shannon's vision and offered to assist in any way, including providing letters of support for grant applications. He recommended working together on creating a special promotion to encourage cyclists to utilize public transit, perhaps sometime in spring. John suggested BMC fund advertising placards for the buses to promote a "bring your bike on the bus" campaign in conjunction with National Bike Month in May. Shannon was receptive and wants to keep the lines of communication open.

Shannon left the meeting at approximately 12:30 p.m.

Tim and Suzanne reported BMC's participation in the Fall Foliage Tour was a positive experience.

John reported there has been no word on the park district's TLCI grant application submitted to NOACA. Tony added the grant awards typically are not announced until April or May.

Regarding last month's discussion about whether or not student drivers receive instruction in the new 3-foot passing law, Tony pointed out the real question is whether driving instructors are receiving appropriate training. Beth had previously noted she is waiting for more information on this topic from the Ohio Bicycle Federation.

New Business

After discussion, Tony suggested BMC join the Ohio Bicycle Federation to better stay in the loop on statewide bicycling issues. Additionally, the added support will help make OBF a stronger advocate for cycling in Ohio. John moved that BMC become a member of OBF at a cost of \$50 per year. Dan seconded. All voted in favor.

There was discussion of options for upcoming meetings. Tony suggested an alternate agenda for the December meeting focusing on BMC's accomplishments for the year and inviting the public to give input on goals for 2020. It would require a core group to meet before the Dec. 5 meeting to organize the presentation. All agreed. Lynne will reach out to the group to schedule a meeting date.

John noted that if the December meeting was going to be public-focused, it would not be appropriate include specific budget planning discussions for 2020. That work should take place at the January meeting, not as part of a public forum.

Jansen offered his support for the idea of quarterly meetings (or whatever frequency works best) for public officials to give them the opportunity to discuss current cycling-related projects and potential points of collaboration. It would align with the original intent of the task force. All agreed. John noted BMC has evolved into its own group with a different purpose than the task force. The task force should be comprised of agency officials who set the agenda for their meetings. BMC would be more of an advocacy and event-planning group open to all. Jansen noted BMC could hold its meetings prior to the task force's public meetings.

Committee Reports

Lynne requested to table the Lake to Lake Harvest Ride report until December, when Beth could be present.

Tony reported on his conversations with park district director Nate Eppink regarding the stalled Signature Square connector trail. Tony is hopeful the plan can be revisited and other options developed for this project due to its importance.

Suzanne noted the Village of Seville is seeking to expand its trail system.

Jansen reported the city should soon know the results of a grant application that would fund connecting the multi-use path along Reagan Parkway to the new path on North Court Street. If the application is unsuccessful, the city would seek state capital budget funding.

Jansen hopes to talk with Nate in the near future about completing the NOACCA-funded bicycling signage project on South Court Street that currently ends at Sturbridge Drive. Additional signage is needed to direct cyclists to park district trails, but that signage would be outside the city limits, so the park district's involvement is needed.

There was discussion about the potential for utilizing former interurban corridors and utility rights of way in the Brunswick Hills and Medina Township areas for trail development. Tony suggested that if the park district's NOACA planning grant request is successful, the work could include research on what would be required from utility companies and private property owners to construct trails.

Adjournment

Tony moved to adjourn. Suzanne seconded. Tim adjourned the meeting at 1 p.m.

Next Meeting

The final meeting of 2019 will be 6 p.m. Dec. 5 at the Medina County District Library. Ask at the front desk for the room assignment. There will be an informal holiday gathering at JoJo's following the meeting, for all who wish to attend.