

Bayfield Area Trails Committee
Meeting Notes: Jan. 26 @ 3 pm (action items highlighted)

In attendance: Jen Bratsch, Carol Fahrenkrog, Chuck Finn, Tony Jeannette, Kate Kitchell, Erika Lang
Absent: Julie Van Stappen, Gabrielle Van Bergen, David Eades

1. Welcome new members! Carol – representing the Town of Bayfield; Chuck – representing Mt. Ashwabay.
2. Administrative stuff
 - a. Agreed to set the standard meeting date and time for 2021 at the 2nd Tuesday @ 3 p.m. Tony has graciously set up the next 6 months on his zoom account. Please mark your calendars.
 - b. In accordance with the MOU, the group discussed and selected Kate Kitchell as 2021 Committee coordinator.
 - c. Members were asked to review the update report prepared by Kate for the City and Town of Bayfield. Please provide comments/edits by Feb. 1. Document o Google Drive: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1n3K-KtA-t4CM1OhlvJ-Zq3dI6fM3aMHN/edit>
 - d. Once finalized it will be posted on the BAT Comm. website, Facebook page, and available for Committee members to share with their organizations to keep folks informed.
 - e. MOU signatures pending: Bayfield County, Mt. Ashwabay, Town of Bayfield.
3. Round robin highlights:
 - a. **Landmark (Erika):** It is frustrating and disappointing that people are still going around the barriers on the Brownstone Trail. The slump area is very dangerous due to ice. Exploring options for re-route to avoid the bad curve on Hwy 13: will be discussing options with Dan Maki within the next couple of weeks. Kate is taking the lead on a grant proposal with Landmark and Tom Fitz at Northland College to do a baseline inventory of the resources along the shoreline corridor and Brownstone Trail between Bayfield and Port Superior. Landmark continues to work on improving communications about the Brownstone status and upcoming activities/plans.
 - b. **AWB (Chuck):**
 - i. Following up on Brownstone – related topics: Chuck is also on the Rec. and Fitness Resources (RFR) Board and working on a new plan for the open water swim (aka Point to La Pointe Swim). The 2021 route will parallel the shoreline along the Brownstone Trail and spectators will be able to view the swim from select locations along the Trail. There is an opportunity to collaborate with other non-profits to have public information/tables posted along the Trail for education and outreach purposes.
 - ii. AWB is going to be a Birkie partner this year as it is going to be a virtual event.
 - iii. A future topic of concern: as AWB trails become more popular and different accesses become developed, it will be increasingly challenging to ensure trail users are paying. A possible solution could be a trail pass for all related trails.
 - c. **County (Jen):**
 - i. Siskiwit elevated boardwalk has been installed and it is pretty great. Check it out. There is a notable amount of XC ski use at Siskiwit.
 - ii. County 15-year Rec. plan is out for public review (60+ maps).
 - iii. Yurts continue to be very popular.
 - d. **Town (Carol):** They are ramping back up to revise the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. This provides an opportunity to incorporate language and objectives related to trails, public parks and open space, Lake access, and Bayfield Area Trails efforts. Carol asked Kate to provide suggested language and ideas to be incorporated into the revision. The Town plans to have a revised rough draft for their Feb. Plan Commission meeting.
 - e. **City (Kate):** Focusing on grant proposals, planning for 2021, and signage. Paige at the Chamber is working on some standard trail sign designs that will include the BAT logo,

- standard fonts, colors, and design. Our goal is to have these first pioneered in the Big Ravine, then implemented on other Bayfield Area Trails so that we have some continuity and “branding” for the BAT system. She will circulate the design for BAT Comm. review when it is ready.
- f. **Communications (Tony):** Website & Facebook stats were presented, showing remarkable interest and continuing growth.
 - g. **NPS:** Two-day virtual stewardship conference March 30-31. Registration link: <https://www.northland.edu/centers/soei/apostleislandssymposium/>
4. Community survey results: Tony presented his excellent synthesis and compilation of results from 46 respondents. It is noteworthy that many of the BAT “regulars” did not respond (assuming that they know they are on “the list.”)
- a. This will be further discussed at the next meeting. **Committee members are asked to review the results with these general questions in mind:**
 - i. What should our priorities be for existing trails in 2021?
 - ii. What should our priorities be for additional trail connections? 2021, 2022, 2023 and beyond.
 - iii. What actions should we take to further enhance our communications and information (online, in the field)?
 - iv. How can we organize and plan in order to effectively utilize interested community members? Should we establish a Citizen Action Team to support BAT Comm.? And/or establish Subcommittees with a liaison to the BAT Comm.? Potential subcommittees:
 1. Communications & Information (website and Facebook content; email outreach; Chamber blasts; calendar of events; signage)
 2. Volunteers (training; program management; maintaining rosters & forms; project planning and implementation.
 3. Trails planning (includes landowner coordination & route selection): 1) Bayfield Hill; 2) Hatchery link; 3) City of Bayfield; 4) Red Cliff
 - v. How should we communicate and share the survey results? Email to all with thank you and link? Chamber blast? Post link on website and Facebook.
5. Trails Forum:
- a. This was proposed as a “2-stage” approach: 1) start with one large “plenary” workshop, 2) followed by follow-up workshops focused on a) trails and project planning and b) building BAT capacity through more citizen involvement in communications & outreach, volunteer programs, administrative support (secretary, accounting).
 - b. Discussion and Decisions: Go/no go decision
 - i. If there is no Forum, Brownstone could be addressed through a stand-alone Community Meeting (perhaps still co-sponsored by Landmark & BAT Comm.)
 - ii. While virtual meetings are informative, they don’t generate the energy and enthusiasm that a F2F event does. Such an event won’t be feasible until COVID issues are resolved...hopefully by summer/fall.
 - iii. **Decision:** Defer Forum until we can do it in a F2F setting. Perhaps this could be done in conjunction with the Open Water Swim. Keep options open.
 - iv. Notable ideas to consider: get trails on Avenza; register boxes at trailheads; non-profit collaborations.
 - v. We can facilitate planning and organizing volunteer support through other means: smaller virtual meetings, website, Facebook, email communications.
6. The group reviewed the working draft map of potential future trails that Tony and Kate have been working on. This will continue as a working draft.
7. Future Agendas: **Next Meeting: Feb. 9 @ 3 p.m.**

- a. Community survey results – 1) how do we use them, 2) how to share them more broadly, 3) thank the participants.
 - b. 2021 Priorities
 - c. Establishing additional organizational support: subcommittees? Citizen Action Team structure?
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Communications Update from Tony

Facebook: Launched from scratch on **11/30/2020**

- **129 followers** added to-date (60 Days), adding 5-10 per week
 - **18 posts** to-date
 - Averaging **40 views per post**
 - **3 posts per week** are scheduled through June, rotating through:
 - Trails Showcases
 - Autumn Memory Photos
 - Did you know?
 - Trails condition reports through Ashwabay
 - Leave No Trace Principles
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Big Ravine Hike Thank You Video:

- Website Video Embed: **220 views**
 - YouTube: **90 views**
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Bayfield Area Trails Website:

1,224 unique users have visited since July 1. On average, people are spending a little over **2 minutes** per visit and visiting **2.5 pages**. We are right in the mid-range for bounce rate (**53**), which is the number of single page sessions as related to all visits. 41-55 is considered average. That means our visitors find our landing page relevant to their needs and they are exploring.