

# **BikeNet Annual Meeting**

## **February 24, 2005**

### **In Attendance:**

Mark Swartz, Mike Penfold, Chris Schmechel, Scott Walker, Fred Rogers, Jeff Essman, Joe Kane, David Kennedy, Sandy Kennedy, Tom Weeks, Don Forbes, Deric Weiss, Jeff Handlin, Patty Nordlund, John Ranny, Darlene Tussing, Dennis Stedman, Kathy Aragon, Zoe Smith, Paul Wold, Duane Braaten, Suzanne McKiernan, Mick Ohnstad, Sandra Kennedy, Ed Thurner

### **Welcome:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM.

Suzanne McKiernan emphasized how BikeNet is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and what we accomplish is achieved through our board members.

### **Update of 2004 Activities:**

1. On June 5<sup>th</sup>, National Trail's Day, Mike Penfold led a well attended hike along the former Bozeman Trail through Blue Creek. Mike sited some historical readings bringing to life what our ancestors may have incurred. .

2. Civic organizations helped with the PPL Montana Project to build amenities along trails. Big Sky Exchange built and placed a bench along the trail off of Bench Blvd. BikeNet member's, Tom Weeks, Mick Ohnstad, and Dick Spalding took the lead in building a roof over the bench. The Height Rotary constructed a kiosk along the trail by the Water Treatment Plant. A BikeNet crew poured a concrete slab and placed a concrete picnic table in Earl Guss Park, but a cover over the picnic table is still left to be built. Bruce Larson has generously agreed to oversee this project and the board will need to get a working crew together for construction this spring.

3. BikeNet has adopted a Funding Distribution Process to evaluate and fund potential trail projects using the money raised from Ales for Trails. Implementation of this process will start this spring.

### **Approval of the 2004 Annual Minutes:**

Paul Wold **moved** to approve the minutes from the 2004 Annual Meeting. Mick Ohnstad seconded the motion and the minutes were **approved**.

### **Ales for Trails 2004:**

Zoe Smith gave the report for Ales. BikeNet will be hosting its 5<sup>th</sup> Ales for Trails on September 30, 2005. We have a solid core of veteran volunteers but are looking to our community and board members to help fill some committee openings. With four years of success this fundraiser runs pretty smoothly and does not require a huge time commitment, except the day of the event. Notebooks have been written documenting what to do and whom to phone. This is a really fun community event that netted more than \$20,000 in 2004. If you are interested in getting involved phone Zoe at 248-7455.

### **Financial Report:**

Ed Thurner gave the financial report. BikeNet started the year with \$69,887.15 and ended the year with \$91,793.26. Income generated throughout the year mainly came from Ales for Trails at \$22,400, trail amenities at \$2,500 and memberships at \$2,900.

**Community Recognition and Thanks:** BikeNet recognized citizens who have made significant contributions to trails in Billings. Those individuals or businesses receiving a signed print from BikeNet were; Patty Norlund with Big Sky Economic Authority, who has been instrumental in obtaining grant money for the trail system; Jeff Essman who donated the proceeds from 1 Hour

Valet's "Look Good, Feel Good" coupon sale; and Bob Walker, State Trails Coordinator with Fish, Wildlife & Parks, who has been a tireless advocate of trails in our community and state.

**Election of 2005 Board of Director Nominees:**

A **motion** to accept the slate of Board of Directors as presented with the addition of Jeff Handlin was made by Patty Nordlund. Tom Weeks seconded the motion and it was unanimously **approved**. The 2005 slate is as follows:

Jim Downs	Jeff Essmann	Don Forbes	Rob Hunter	Dick Spalding
Dave Kelley	Bruce Larson	Jay Marschall	Joe Kane	Suzanne McKiernan
Kim Prill	Penni Reed	Mick Ohnstad	Paul Wold	Chris Schmechel
Zoe Smith	Mike Wambolt	Neil Stessman	Ed Thurner	Dennis Stedman
Tom Weeks	Deric Weiss	Paul Wold	Jeff Handlin	Doug Habermann

**Guest Speaker: Bob Walker**

Bob Walker, the state coordinator with Fish, Wildlife & Parks gave an overview of trails in Montana. Montana is behind in trail building compared to the rest of the nation. In the 1980's we were not organized and Montana missed the opportunity to acquire abandoned railroad right of ways. In addition, the only trails during this time period were natural trails. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) passed in 1991 finally bringing cash for non-motorized trails. Bob gave a brief overview where some of our cities are with trails.

-Bozeman has been progressive with trails throughout the area. They have adopted the slogan "Main Street to the Mountains" with their primary goal to connect urban trails to the Gallatin Range.

-Missoula has adopted a non-motorized trail plan. They have asphalt trails connecting city trails to country roads. They have had considerable cooperation between the City and County.

-Kalispell is still early in their trail building. They are building 20 miles of Rail Trails connecting Somers, Kalispell, and Kila.

-GreatFalls has the "River's Edge Trail" which has been funded in large part by ISTEA.

**Update on Current Projects:**

Darlene Tussing gave a presentation regarding The State of Trails in the Billings community. Although no trails were built this previous year, 2005 looks very favorable for several new trail and bike projects in Billings. Some of these projects include:

-Construction of the Swords Park Trail should start this spring/summer.

-The Big Ditch Trail west from the Shiloh Underpass by Coulton to Rimrock West Park.

-Stewart Park Trail connection from Central to Famous Dave's Trail. Once the master park plan is amended this spring, construction could take place this summer. In order to build the section of trail from Stewart Park to Monad, it would be desirable to get a ROW from the BBWA.

-TransTech will be constructing the trail through their subdivision this summer which is part of the Gabel Road Trail Corridor. Eventually this will link the Veeder/McRae trail to ZooMontana and link across King Ave. to the trail through Stewart and Descro Park.

-The Arlene Corridor will have a multi-use trail on the east side of the road from Poly to Broadwater. This trail is only about 3 blocks west of the Descro Park corridor. It is hoped that we could eventually connect these two trail segments with a trail along the Arnold Drain.

-The Alkali Creek road project will implement a multi-use trail that will extend to Black Pine.

-South Billings Boulevard will be widened and a multi-use trail built on the east side of the road connecting to Newman School.

-Lake Elmo Road reconstruction from Main St. to Hilltop will include a stripped bike lane.

-Although Shiloh Road is a longer term project, plans are being developed that will include a multi-use trail with the widening and redevelopment of Shiloh Road.

With the adoption of the Heritage Trail Plan by the City and the County, it is estimated that there could potentially be 70-80 miles of trails networking through the Billings area.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 PM.