

**2020 TRI-COMMUNITY  
NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL COMMITTEE AGENDA SPECIAL MEETING  
FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 2021 – 2:00 P.M.**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ROLL CALL**
- 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (2/26, 3/5)**
- 5. PUBLIC COMMENTS/TODAY'S AGENDA TOPICS ONLY (LIMIT 3 MINUTES)** *Use the "raise hand" button in the participant's screen found in the Zoom interface or enter \*9 if calling in by phone to raise hand.*
- 6. INTERVIEW FINAL TWO ENGINEERING FIRMS**
  - A. C2AE (10 min. Presentation, 20 min. Q&A)**
  - B. WIGHTMAN (10 min. Presentation & 20 min. Q&A)**
- 7. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION & VOTE**
- 8. REVIEW NEXT STEPS**
- 9. PUBLIC COMMENTS (LIMIT 3 MINUTES)** *Use the "raise hand" button in the participant's screen found in the Zoom interface or enter \*9 if calling in by phone to raise hand.*
- 10. MEMBER CLOSING COMMENTS**

**NOTICE:**

This public meeting will be held using **Zoom** video/audio conference technology due to the COVID-19 restrictions currently in place.

Join online by visiting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2698572603>

Join by phone by dialing:

**(312) 626-6799**

-or-

**(646) 518-9805**

Then enter "Meeting ID":

**2698572603**

Please send questions or comments regarding meeting agenda items prior to meeting to:  
[hleo@saugatuckcity.com](mailto:hleo@saugatuckcity.com)

# Tri-Community Trail Committee (TCC)

Minutes: Feb 26, 2021 Meeting

Meeting commenced at 2:00 PM.

**Present:** Brenda Marcy, Cindy Osman , Jerry Donovan, Kathy Mooradian, Ken Trester, Holly Leo, John Adams, Richard Donovan. Also attending were Joe Frey- Township Manager, Ryan Heis-City Manager of Saugatuck and Rich Labombard, City Manager of Douglas.

Motion to approve minutes made by Osman, seconded by Marcy. Motion passed

Motion to approve agenda made by Mooradian, seconded by Marcy Motion passed

**Public comments.** None

**New Business and Open Discussion: Presentation of the 4 Engineering proposals received back from the RFP.**

Richard D presented CZAE and Beckett Raeder ; Adams presented Moore Bruggink and Wightman. They presented highlights based on key **factors** identified by our group as being important to the final decision but encouraged we all study and make up our own minds as they (FOBST) are not engineers or experts in engineering either. Note too that FOBST has no connection to any of the four firms. Factors included but are not limited to **things like:** previous trail building, project Mgr expertise, understanding of 'our' project, good communication skills, grant getting experience, construction oversight and more. After each presentation **discussion was open to the group**, comments were shared.

To simplify it even more, a 2page **Summary Comparison Document** was provided to the committee as a tool. We thanked them for all the detail and work that was put into this presentation.

The goal of the meeting was to get to 2 finalists from the four. To facilitate this, Marcia Casper was invited in to share an evaluation form that has helped Saugatuck City Council make decisions in the past. She went through the form and its' weighting of criteria/factors. Asked if all were okay with the priorities and weight percentages. No objections came forward. Tool was accepted. It was mentioned to keep in mind that the estimates were not a huge factor since they are not truly accurate until a design is ready for exact quotes.

**Next Steps:** It was decided that speed mattered to keep on track to the grant process. All members would rank the four firms using the excel RFP evaluation Marcia Casper shared and get it back to Holly Leo by Monday morn at 10 PM. Marcia will analyze the results and Holly will schedule a voting meeting probably on Friday to discuss results and agree the two finalists.

Once the finalists are selected they will be contacted to come to the NEXT scheduled committee meeting to be interviewed by the members. An engineering firm will be chosen as winner from this process but checking out the firm will still be necessary.

**Public Comments:** None

**Member comments:** The importance of reference checks was brought up and a bit about the process of doing them.

Leo made a motion to close the meeting. Trester seconded it. Meeting adjourned at 2:35.

Submitted by Kathy Mooradian, Recording secretary, on March 2, 2021

**2021 Tri-Community  
Non-Motorized Trail Committee Minutes  
Special Meeting Friday, March 5, 2021 2:00 pm**

Roll Call - Present: Leo, Marcy, Osmond, Donovan J., Donovan R., Adams, Heise, Labombard, Caspar and Wilkinson

Absent: Frey, Mooradian (sent comments in advance to Leo)

Approval of Agenda - A motion was made by Osman 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trestor And unanimously approved to approve the agenda.

Public Comments – None were made.

Review Engineering Proposals Utilizing Ranking Tool, Comparison Sheet & Committee Discussion  
- A motion made by Leo and seconded by Trestor to approve the top two ranked firms, C2AE and Wightman. Discussion followed. Discussed rankings. Kathy thought all four firms were great. Marcy, Trestor and Mooradian both had very close numbers with Wightman and Moore Bruggink. John said that most of Moore Bruggink's experience was older, Wightman was all newer projects. Richard echoed John and had the same feeling stating, "Wightman is larger and more recent experience. All were very qualified." Motion was unanimously approved.

Next steps – Interlocal agreement: Brenda suggested the three managers work on the inter local agreement. Ryan said they talked about it and will do it. Holly is trying to keep us on track because of grant deadlines. Ryan also got the largest TAP grant in the state.

Interviews next week: Ken suggested questions be prepared in advance. John said we always learn something from these engineers. Richard said they have an outline which they had from a previous series of interviews adapted for this. Committee members can add questions as well. Richard will let the top two firms know. We need to let them know what we want from them at the interviews. One idea is to give each firm 10 minutes to summarize why they are the best fit. Ken suggested allowing 20 minutes each to answer questions with the possibility of extending if needed. C2AE and Wightman should not include what's already in the proposals. Marsha said the project leader should also be on the Zoom call.

Public comments – None were made

Member closing comments – None were made

Holly thanked everyone for reviewing the proposals. A motion was made by Donovan and seconded by Trestor to adjourn and was and unanimously approved. Adjourned at 2:23 pm.

3/6/21

**Blue Star Trail – North Section**  
**QUESTIONS FOR ENGINEER REFERENCES**

1. Please describe the project on which [engineer] consulted with you, year completed, and your personal involvement.
  - a. Describe any work with stakeholders
  - b. Describe any work with grants
  
2. Please describe the performance of [engineer]. What were the pros and cons?
  - a. Project completed on time? On budget?
  - b. Did [engineer] demonstrate technical ability re trails?
  - c. “ “ “ basic or high level understanding of this project?
  - d. On a scale of 1-10, how well did you and [engineer] work as a team?
  
3. How did [engineer] interact with MDOT and/or DNR [or other government agency]?
  
4. Did the engineer actively consider and review ways to reduce the cost of the project?
  
5. Did you experience any significant issues or concerns with construction oversight ?
  
6. Did you experience any design weaknesses that became apparent after construction?
  
7. Example of any innovative approaches or actions?
  
8. On a scale of 1-10, how would you grade [engineer] on their communication (keeping you advised of status, any issues or delays, etc.)?
  
9. On a scale of 1-10, how likely are you to want to work with [engineer] again on a trail project?
  
10. Anything else we should know or consider in our hiring decision?

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: Tri-community Study Committee**  
**FROM: Holly Leo, John Adams, Richard Donovan**  
**DATE: March 10, 2021**  
**RE: Reference Checks on Engineering Firm Finalists**

To assist the TCC in selecting an engineering firm, between March 8-9 we each contacted two of the references for the finalists. Following is a summary.

### **C2AE**

#### **1. Thad Beard: City Manager of Rockford/Formerly Otsego**

- a. Worked with C2AE for 15 years at Otsego. They were engineer of record. Worked mainly on road projects, but was one small trail
- b. Did both planning and project administration. Rarely were there surprises and they addressed issues effectively.
- c. C2AE led public outreach for multiple projects, including a project to reduce road from 5 to 3 lanes. Did a good job. Used a traffic consultant out of Lansing.
- d. Worked on all Act 51 MDOT grants. Provided engineering input on one MNRTF grant (They had an existing relationship with another grant administrator).
- e. Worked with Mark Adams as primary contact. More limited experience with Cory Davis who provided oversight.
- f. Work was on time and on budget, even on complex projects with sub-contractors. Conservative with budgets.
- g. "Really enjoy working with them. Pleasant people, very professional."
- h. They share projects with broader team thru group meetings to get better input.
- i. Worked with 3 different key players--rate all three as 8-10 on communications.
- j. Overall engineering experience a 10.
- k. "Highly recommend"

#### **2. Julie Clark, TART Trails**

- a. C2AE has been working with TART for 2 years on the Nequamah Trail (TART switched firms early on ).
- b. Steady, solution oriented, on-time, on-budget (even when budget is reduced, also, the only engineering firm that has ever *stopped* them from spending money)
- c. "Very responsive, good follow through, they deliver without bluster, ego, or razzle dazzle."

- d. They pay particular attention to the local stakeholders and have a particular strength in facilitating community issues and willingness to tackle difficult topics.
- e. Effective listeners, receptive and solution driven.
- f. Helpful currently with difficult maintenance discussions: “Leading the way.”.
- g. Experience with resort & urban trails- an asset for communities like Traverse & Saugatuck w/density & tourism
- h. TART has really liked all of their subs-contractors.
- i. Point of contacts are Amanda Fox & Laurie Pointer
- j. Not utilized for grants as MDOT sat on selection committee due to project constraints

**3. Dave Kurdwa: Community Development Director, St Johns**

- a. St Johns has worked with C2AE since late 80’s. Recently worked on a ¾ mile trail.
- b. Do both planning and project administration. Inspectors do a good job. Really know contractors.
- c. Worked directly with Corey Davis. Very positive on his ability to communicate effectively, especially with the public. Gave specific examples. “Most firms can do technical work, communications and getting everyone on board is the tough part”. Rates communications a 10.
- d. Worked on 1 MNRTF grant and numerous other state grants. C2 takes the lead with some help from staff.
- e. Provide comprehensive proposals and don’t low ball estimates. Know costs. Let know if adjustments.
- f. Rates ability to work with team a 10.  
“I get along well with their people”. Easy to work with.
- g. Fantastic job with MDOT. “It is their wheelhouse”
- h. Very good at providing options. What can we do to reduce cost and meet budget? Gave specific examples.
- i. Overall experience a 10. They do use other consultants but like C2 for complex projects and multiple funding sources.

**4. Andrew Demcheck, Manager, Dewitt Township (517-668-0270)**

- a. Has been in the position since 6/18. C2AE has been their regular engineering firm for almost 20 years. On his watch the firm has worked mainly on a sewer project and some facility upgrades, but no significant trail work (through they do have non-motorized trails).
- b. The firm has not been involved in any grant applications on his watch.
- c. Their work has been on time and budget, allowing for Covid interruptions. They are responsive.

- d. He particularly appreciates their ability to explain concepts in plain English.
- e. The sewer project involved MDOT and other agencies, and there have been no issues.

## **WIGHTMAN**

### **1. Kevin Stack, Barrien County Road Commission**

- a. Worked with Wightman on 3 major trail projects.
- b. 9 mile extension of Indiana/Michigan Trail. “Fantastic job”. Worked on funding opportunities including MNRTF Grant.
- c. Complete reconstruction of Union Pier including 1.2 mile, 10 ft path
- d. Union Pier project involved extensive public outreach. Wightman did a “fantastic job” coordinating, planning meetings and updates.
- e. For the Indiana Niles project, Wightman led effort for MNRTF grants. They did everything but sign the application.
- f. Did work to reduce costs and carefully consider material quantities.
- g. Work well with MDOT and know requirements.
- h. Worked primarily with Melani Stanage in Niles office. Worked with Ben Baker on Red Arrow project last 2 years.
- i. Met budgets and timelines. Only delay was MDOT. On a \$2.6 million project, bids came in \$30,000 under estimate. “They know their costs”.
- j. “definitely recommend for trail design”
- k. Worked very well as a team. Rated a 10.
- l. Rated communications 10. At a minimum received weekly update, often 3-4 per week.
- m. Overall rating: 9. Only minor issues. Project reviewed by multiple people before goes out to bid. Some minor issues with surveying.

### **2. Natalie Dean, Assistant Manager, Dowagiac Township (for Kevin Anderson, Manager)**

- a. Has worked with Wightman since May 2019 on a number of infrastructure projects but also on an 8-mile non-motorized trail within the township.
- b. Communication is “great,” projects are on time and budget, work well with Twp staff as a team
- c. ‘You get your money’s worth” with the firm
- d. Firm assisted in obtaining an DNR grant for the trail, and their people are knowledgeable about grant requirements
- e. The landscape architects in particular were knowledgeable and creative.
- f. They prepared a maintenance plan for the trail.
- g. They have dealt with MDOT extensively and successfully on various infrastructure projects in the Twp., though not on the trail.
- h. “we have found that Wightman seeks to know the customer as much as they know architecture, engineering or survey work.”



**3. Jill Delucia, Director of Parks, Niles Charter Township, Indiana Michigan River Valley Trail**

- a. Consistent, reliable, positive partner to their trail for at least 10 years (hired at the onset).
- b. Come in on time, on-budget and are very responsive.
- c. The most difficult multijurisdictional task they managed: connecting the Indiana & the Michigan trails together. The trails did not line up geographically, they were two different materials (one was an old railbed and the other was an in a powerline corridor), there were different agencies and jurisdictions, and yet Wightman was able to engineer a solution and successfully connect them as one.
- d. "Very impressed" with how Wightman has handled delays and problems: "Every time we had an obstacle, they were a consistently good partner".
- e. "Very well versed in MDOT & AASHTO regs/signage"
- f. "They show up in person to celebrate milestones and ride newly built trails."

**TRI-COMMUNITY STUDY COMMITTEE**  
**Blue Star Trail**  
**QUESTIONS FOR ENGINEERING FIRM INTERVIEWS**

1. Firm's Trail Experience
  - a. Which project that you listed is most like the BST? In what ways?
  - b. Give examples where you did something creative/innovative with a trail project.
  - c. Give an example where you had to overcome a trail issue with MDOT engineering staff.
    - i. How do you expect you would address the difficult bridge configuration with MDOT engineers (strategy, not specific solutions)?
  - d. Example of similar project with multiple jurisdictions
  - e. Suggestions for how best to structure our relationship with you to avoid inefficiencies and added costs
    - i. what advice do you have for structuring our Interlocal Agreement among the municipalities?
    - ii. Who should be the lead liaison with your firm?
  
2. Staffing
  - a. Do you see any problem from your end to complete the project on the timeline we have presented?
  - b. What other projects are/will the person you propose as Project Manager and Project Engineer be working on this year?
  - c. Describe what trail work the PM has done within last five years.
  - d. How will the Landscape Architect contribute to the result?
  
3. This Project
  - a. What are likely problem areas?
  - b. Substantial conceptual design work has already been completed, which incorporates community input to date.
    - i. To what extent can you build off this completed work (avoid repetition)?
    - ii. How does it affect your work plan?
    - iii. How does it impact your cost estimates?
  - c. how would you recommend engaging with local governments and/or the public? What similar experiences have you had?
  
4. Financing/Grant Resources

- a. Explain your firm's relevant capabilities to take the lead on TAP and DNR grant applications.
    - i. Who in particular would be responsible for that aspect?
  - b. Besides TAP, DNR and Parks/Rec grants, do you see other sources of funds?
  - c. Do any cover engineering fees?
  - d. What range of fees have you billed for doing complete TAP or DNR applications for trail projects?
5. Fees
  - a. To confirm, your proposal is for time and materials not to exceed a fixed amount for the scope of work described.
  - b. What % of your similar projects come in near or under budget?
  - c. What can we do on our end to minimize engineering fees?
  - d. Will you bill monthly with a breakdown of tasks and hours for each member of your team?
6. How does your firm compare to the other finalist firm?
  - a. Why should we hire you?