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Meeting Minutes – Apr 1, 2009

Attendance: Len Wilson, John Pilger, Tony Crosby, Jim Jordan, Sgt John Westmoreland (PCSD), Bill Adamson, Chuck Hill, Basil Baker, Joe Knable, Ralph Edwards, Jaime Richardson (GV News)

- 1) John Pilger (JP) called the meeting to order at 3:10 PM.
- 2) The minutes of the Mar 4, 2009 meeting were approved.
- 3) Status of Projects and Advocacies:
 - a) Santa Cruz County – John Pilger (JP) related the highlights (see attachment) of Lee Blackwell's attendance at the National Bicycle Summit in Washington, DC. Since his return Lee has learned that IMBA will not fight the battle to preserve mountain bike access to wilderness areas on a national scale, rather that local and regional advocates will have to engage at their level to preserve access. JP said that he, Bill Adamson, and Lee met in Nogales with local officials, the Tubac Chamber of Commerce, and the ADOT team that will study the next 10 years local transportation needs. While there, they made contact with Jesus Valdez, Deputy Public Works Director for Santa Cruz County, who offered to help Lee navigate the local government.
 - b) Bike Friendly Signs – JP said that a consensus on the placement of the first two signs is to place one on Camino del Sol northbound just north of Calle Tres and the other on La Cañada southbound south of Duval Mine Rd. A motion to recommend these placements to GVCCC was approved. Sahuarita has two signs to place in their boundaries. JP opined that Duval Mine Rd northbound north of Duval Mine Rd would be good.
 - c) Town of Sahuarita – Basil Baker has a contact in the town Planning Department to check on the missing bike link between Via Santo Tomas and the I-19 underpass. JP covered the bicycle fair to be held April 18 at ANAMAX Park. This is to be a family affair and will include a short loop ride and a bike rodeo by the town bicycle police. All are encouraged to participate.
 - d) GVCCC T&A Committee Updates – Jim Jordan said that the construction of the roundabout at Camino del Sol and Continental should begin in June. He said that ADOT seems to be on board to support the Transportation Enhancement grant to improve the Esperanza underpass at I-19. Ralph Edwards said a pre-submittal letter had gone to Matt Zoll last week and that he should hear during the week of 13 April if the grant proposal should be submitted. Ralph said that the letters of support will need to be updated and Jim said he would start the process.

e) Sherriff Department – Sgt Westmoreland arrived at this time. JP mentioned scheduling a photo shot at the sheriff’s in the near future to use in a press release to publicize the Ride of Silence. Jim Jordan asked if there was any news on the interpretation of the “two abreast” law. Sgt John said that an internal memo had circulated directed that riding two abreast in OK as long as the rules of impeding traffic are not violated. Bill said that he had crossed La Cañada twice at Esperanza and that duration of the green was not adequate for a bicyclist to clear the intersection. He will contact Pima Co about this problem.

f) Anza Trail – Bill reported on a site survey conducted today on the Anza Trail through the Torres Blanca Golf Course with Greg Hagen and Roger Anyon from Pima County and Norm Land, TPCBAC Facilities Subcommittee. Bill said that an agreement on the most acceptable route was reached which will keep the trail out of the river bed except at one place. (Later, Bill reported by e-mail that Greg has an agreement of the Golf Course for these changes and will be having permanent trail markers placed in a couple weeks.) Bill added that funds should be available next fiscal year to complete marking the trail north to Sahuarita. Eventually, this trail should connect thru Sahuarita to the Santa Cruz River Path (de Anza Trail) north thru Pima County and also connect to the Urban Loup planned to circumnavigate Tucson.

g) TPCBAC – Tony Crosby said that he would pass the two abreast information from Sgt John to the Enforcement Subcommittee. He also said he expects the TPCBAC Advocate of the Year and Commuter of the Year to be announced at the next meeting.

h) West Desert Preserve – Bill said the initiative is waiting on decisions from the mine.

4) Publicity/Education/Website:

a) Green Valley Bike Map – Chuck Hill said he would be meeting with Kelly Walter at the Green Valley News to see if they want to support the publishing of the map. Chuck said that he would be adding links to the website to various maps and ride descriptions in the area.

b) Ride of Silence – Chuck said all was on track.

c) GV News – JP and others discussed with Jaime Richardson the hope that news on bicycle issues could be published in the newspaper.

7) Public Concerns – Tony mentioned a guest commentary in the GV News by Hank Deutsch about the route of the Senior Olympics Bike Event, specifically the portion on Duval Mine Rd. Bill said the road is on the RTA list for paved shoulders and he will use the commentary as support. Tony said he would contact the race organizers and see if an alternative route could be developed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 PM. The next meeting will be May 6, 2009, 3 PM, in the GVCCC conference room.

Tony Crosby, Scribe

Attachment: Lee Blackwell's report on the National Bicycle Summit

Hi everyone,

The League of American Bicyclists and IMBA conference is a done deal. I learned a lot, accomplished some things on behalf of all cyclists. I think it behooves every citizen to visit DC at least once to see how it all works. Thanks again to SDMB, Epic Rides and MBAA for paying my way.

The conference started off with a bang as I attended a special IMBA session specifically about the bikes in Wilderness issue. Jenn Dice of IMBA asked attendees to share success stories from home. She kept the meeting moving and a lot of very good information was shared in the two hour session. The participants were able to get the ideas verbalized without a lot of rambling.

Here are a few of the ideas which came out of that 2 hour meeting.

Team with local landowners,
Create conservation areas as an alternate to wilderness.
Stake your claim to the area, in other words, get out there, use the area, introduce it to others,
Talk to your county supervisors, know your allies, be proactive,
Write your own land use bill.

A few other ideas: Don't assume that e-mails and forums are private even within a club. In light of this it is good to always take the high ground in discussion even in the club forums. Kirk the lawyer for IMBA shared a story about how a long negotiation was destroyed by a member of a club who just blasted a congressman who had been on the edge of decision but the terrible blog ended all the hard work which had been done. IMBA lost the negotiation. Another point made was the value of a printed club newsletter. A club newsletter looks impressive to legislators.

Next we joined the main conference of the League of American Bicyclists. There were about 500 people from all over USA. At this point I met Gene Holmerud and the other Arizona delegates. He is from the Coalition of Arizona Bicyclists. Gene did all the scheduling for the 5 delegates from AZ to meet with 2 Senators and 4 Representatives on lobbying day. It was lot of work doing that scheduling and I really appreciated that effort.

We had dinner in a big room and watched a slideshow of bicycling in Copenhagen, Denmark. Copenhagen was seeing decline in cycling about 25 years ago. The city made a big effort to reverse that trend and now cycling and walking is increasing every year for day to day commuting and recreating. When it snows in Copenhagen the plows work the bike lanes before working the streets. One thing I noticed in the pictures, very few people wear bike helmets. Nothing was said specifically in the presentation but he did make one interesting comment. He said "don't talk so much about safety" when promoting bicycling to government. He did not elaborate but I thought it was a very interesting comment.

Next came the hard part. The main purpose of the summit is to network with cyclists and to lobby Congress for better laws for cycling and for continued funding. There are many funding

mechanisms. Many of the attendees are already familiar with the funding; it was a swirl of acronyms. I tried to read and absorb the "issue papers" The "issue papers" were:

America Bikes Agenda this has to do with how the gas taxes are distributed

Clean TEA this has to do with climate change legislation

Complete Streets this is policy to be sure that bikes are considered in design of new streets

Bike Caucus We ask our Congress members to join

Recreational trails funding. IMBA specifically asked us to lobby for continuation of this source.

I was being asked to lobby for this stuff but I barely understood it myself. I did my best. I know more now.

On Wednesday we had "breakout sessions"

I got to see a session on some clubs in Washington and NY efforts to build bike parks in urban areas. Very impressive parks,

There was a session on getting developers interested in funding trails in their developments. Lots of cost benefits statistics.

Later we went to a speech by Larry Seltzer. Very well delivered and moving speech about kids in nature. It may be that a whole generation of kids is growing up never touching soil, always under close supervision, not knowing nature.

Thursday was Congress day. We all gathered at the Capitol and then dispersed to our Senators and Reps.

We met with Senator Kyle's staff, McCain, then over to the house side where we met with Giffords, Pastor, Shaddeg, Mitchell. It was interesting how each office was different. Some staff seemed knowledgeable and interested, others seemed to be just putting in the 20 minutes.

Here was the really fun part. It was so great to pull out my stack of personal letters about the Wilderness and place them on the desk. The letters were very, very effective and I think above everything we did they got attention. Thanks so much to everyone for writing those letters and getting them to me.

In conclusion, the summit is great for making connection to our Congress to remind them of all cyclists. I learned a lot too. A dedicated and sustained effort can bring change. I need to contact all the offices we visited and ask if they considered the points brought up. Bikes in Wilderness, America Bikes Agenda, Clean TEA agenda, Complete Streets, Bike Caucus, and Recreational Trails Funding, Safe routes to Schools funding.

I think IMBA is going where the people are, where the potential members are. Bike Parks, Gateway Ride parks, trail networks. The reality for most of the country is that it is urban, crowded and many people are going to ride close to home at a bike facility. Most people do not have the luxury of riding in grand remote places. The numbers who do that are small and even less have contact with IMBA. The language IMBA uses when referring to protecting a trail is that it should protect "significant mountain biking opportunities."

IMBA is doing a good job, the staff is energized and competent. They are the only organization we have and deserve our support. That said, I believe we need to work with IMBA to keep attention to what I think is the heart and soul of mountain biking. To explore the unknown, take some calculated risk, feel the power of nature, maybe go where few have ever gone on a bicycle. If we lose the possibility to do that we lose the soul of the sport.

Lee Blackwell