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Officials wait to decide on plowing Fox River Trail

Decision hinges on funding, level of interest

By **Tony Walter**

twalter@greenbaypressgazette.com

With time on their side, Brown County officials plan to hear from every possible interested person before deciding if the Fox River Trail should be plowed in winter.

"We're taking our time," said Supervisor Kathy Johnson, chairman of the county's Education and Recreation Committee.

The Fox River Trail stretches 20 miles from downtown Green Bay to the Brown-Calumet County line. Facility Management Director Bill Dowell has been asked to meet with officials from Allouez and De Pere to see whether there is both interest in plowing the trail and a willingness to help pay for it.

Steve Vanden Avond, newly elected president of the village of

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Allouez, said he has heard from approximately 15 village residents, all favoring a plowed trail.

"There's never going to be a 100 percent buy-in, but it doesn't seem like anyone has a problem with it," Vanden Avond said. "It sounds like a great idea."

But Vanden Avond said the issue hasn't come to the village board yet.

De Pere Mayor Mike Walsh said trail plowing hasn't reached the discussion stage with the city council yet.

"One way or the other, I suppose the question will be the funding," Walsh said.

Doug Hartman, the county's assistant parks director, said a preliminary cost estimate to plow the trail for four winter months is \$17,000. That includes labor, equipment and materials.

The county mailed a survey to residents who own property along the trail, with 60 percent of the respondents saying they want it plowed.

Dowell said one of the concerns is the effect that salt on the trail might have on landscaping.

County supervisors were split on the issue at Wednesday's board meeting.

Supervisor Tony Theisen, pointing out that the city of Green Bay is plowing a small portion of the trail from Porlier Street north to downtown, said he has heard no complaints from residents.

Supervisor Joe Van Deurzen said, "There are some who want to keep the snow there. It's not a question of money."

But Supervisor Jack Krueger said he favored a plowed trail.

"For the amount of use it gets, it would benefit Brown County to keep it open," he said.

The Education and Recreation Committee is expected to discuss the issue again at its meeting on May 3.

Story Chat

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