

**Friends of Whitefish Dunes, Inc.**

**3275 Clark Lake Rd., Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235**

**Minutes of Friends Board Meeting 3/17/21 DRAFT**

**Present:** *John Swanson, Dick Weidman, Susan Cubar, Liz Story, Adele Douglass, Rich Dirks, Don Gustafson, Joe Jarosh, Lynn Zawojski, Sarah Stepanik, Erin Brown Stender*

**Absent:** *Jim Perry, Doug Otopalik, Carl Scholz*

**Call to Order:** Zoom meeting was called to order by President John Swanson at 4:01 p.m

**Agenda:** Motion to approve agenda: Don, second: Susan. All in favor.

**Minutes of February 18 meeting:** Motion to approve minutes: Adele, second: Don. All in favor.

**Treasurer Report:** Income \$500 for memorial bench. \$35 in expenses. Active grants: Raibrook for Brachiopod still open, and still waiting on Knowles-Nelson amount.

Motion to approve treasurer's report for February, 2021: Dick, second: Don. All in favor.

**Park Report (Sarah):**

- February saw 7,067 visitors, which is above average for month
- Averaging about 70 vehicles/day, which is high for this time of year
- Self-registration and kiosk open all day/everyday for vehicle sticker purchases
- No real issues with courtesy notices
- Drive-up window hours return in late May
- Observation decks and shelters remain closed.
- Beach accesses all in good condition after winter, with wider beaches. Stairs survived
- Will begin looking for more artifacts when there's more thaw
- Some of the best trail conditions of season in February, and good compliance with shared trail
- Received new interpretive signs — 5 replacement signs and 6 new. New signs to educate/show effect of walking on dunes. Placement of signs at 2nd beach access for the time being, which will hopefully curb issues there with walking on dunes.
- New DNR engineer, Amy Moore, will look at 1st Beach access and do some survey work there. Instead of idea of possible retaining wall, she will look at option for using deep rooted native plants to help with erosion. She will also work on water heater replacement.
- Roofing project has started to repair hail damage.
- Personnel update: Samantha Baldwin will be hired as a full-time VSA. She has a background in conservation and will be available in late May.

**Trail Report (Rich):**

There were finally good conditions in February after no snow in December and early January. Melt has taken place and 90% of trails are now bare. Rich suggested that winter trail signs be taken down at this point.

Perhaps grooming and trail groups can meet in May to do a follow-up on the winter's activities and analyze how things went to plan for next year.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

- **Friends Insurance Renewal:** Discussed whether to use the Stoneman Agency as the local agent for our current insurance company. One recommendation that Stoneman had was to add a rider to our current policy that would cover medical expenses for volunteers. John will follow up with Stoneman to get more information on cost for that rider. Motion to have local agency handle our policy: Dick, second: Adele.
- **Treasurer Position:** Nothing new on this. Susan is compiling a list of all her duties. John will check with Chuck again.
- **Memorial Benches:** Two benches in progress, with expected delivery in early May. John suggested putting Rick Ostrowski's bench on the boardwalk.
- **Wish List Priorities:**
  - Brachiopod Trail: We should be hearing from Knowles-Nelson in the first couple weeks of April.
  - Interpretive signs for Brachiopod Trail: Friends will seek out a graphic designer to create illustrations for the interpretive signage. Samantha, the new VSA, might be interested in putting together content for these signs.
  - Old Baldy: No cost yet.
  - Pollinator sign: Don has been in contact with Pulse about a sign. Sarah will check out Vacker Signs as another option. Size, educational benefit, and cost will be considerations. We will revisit next month.
  - Trail Ambassador Update: Doug, Jim, and Susan met and to discuss the goals and objectives for the program., We did not talk in detail about their meeting since Doug and Jim were not present. Susan is putting together the renewal letter for annual members, and may enclose a separate letter about the Trail Ambassador program. COVID restrictions might impact plans for the rollout of this program.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- **2021 Calendar:** Susan is putting together a calendar for 2021 based on dates from 2020. Motion to approve calendar: Rich, second Adele. All in favor.
- **Grant process:** Decide policy for grant process—what grants are pending, where the money is, and which are closed. Board to approve application for grants. All grants to go through Treasurer. Motion to approve any grant that is applied for The Friends of Whitefish Dunes be approved by the board: John, second: Susan. All in favor.
  - There is Natural Resources Foundation grant called Go Outside Fund, which provides funding to encourage children to engage in outdoor, nature-based learning. We would use this grant money for child-friendly interpretive signs. John will apply for this grant. Motion to approve application for Go Outside Fund grant: John, second Adele. All in favor.
- **Soda machine - Cans vs Plastic**

This topic was originally raised out of environmental concerns. Through our discussion it was determined that Park visitors prefer plastic bottles over cans because they reseal. We will continue selling plastic bottles in the soda machine.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

- John brought up changing our meeting day from Thursday to Wednesday, and the meeting time from 4:30 to 4:00, to accommodate some of our Board members' schedules. Motion to change meeting the third Wednesday of the month at 4:00: Dick, second: Susan. All in favor.

- Discussion about using Raibrook to partially fund (50%) pollinator sign. Motion for an application to Raibrook to purchase sign: Adele, second: Dick. 9 for, 1 against.

Next meeting 4/21/21 at 4:00.

Motion to adjourn meeting: Don, second: Rich. The meeting was adjourned at 5:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Story

Secretary