

## Friends of Whitefish Dunes State Park

Minutes January 16, 2020

Present: Don Gustafson, Carl Scholz, Rich Dirks, Susan Cubar, Adele Douglass, Erin Brown Stender, Sarah Stepanik (Park Manager), Lynn Zawojski, Jim Perry, John Swanson, Dave and Liz Story, Joe Jarosh (last three guests)

Prior to the meeting a reception was held to welcome Sarah Stepanik, recently appointed as park manager.

The agenda was approved (Don/Carl).

Minutes from December 5, 2019 were approved (John/Susan).

The treasurer's reports for November and December 2019 were approved (Don/Jim). November income was \$7,196.95, expenses were \$33,023.96. The major income was from the 2019 kayak concession (\$6,650.70) and the major expense was payment to Peil Construction for the brachiopod boardwalk replacement (\$22,882.91). The December income was \$381.83, expenses were \$408.73. At the close of 2019 the balance in the checking account was \$43,290.06 and the savings account balance (restricted funds) was \$20,179.03.

The park report was provided by Sarah. Funding has been approved for repair of the first beach access, as well as a retaining wall. ADA accessibility can only occur once lake levels have receded. The furnace failed recently, but is presently functioning. Emergency funds to replace it have been requested. There were about 2400 visitors in December and about 182,000 for all of 2019. Each of these numbers is a slight drop from 2018. Erin requested a change in the next Friends meeting date to Feb. 13, due to a conflict with a state-wide DNR meeting on the third Thursday of February. Approved.

Rich provided the trail report. There was snow, it melted. He hopes to have some for the weekend. Snowmobile operating nicely. He has picked up the snow-shoe trail groomer which is ready to go. There are four groomers presently volunteering, a schedule has been developed.

Old Business:

Candlelight event: scheduled for Jan. 25 from 5 to 8 pm. A weather (go/no go) decision will be made by the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Perhaps a walk/hike if snow is inadequate for skiing. Susan will send a message to remind volunteers. The parking lot will be sanded. It was approved (Susan/Don) to rent a light for the parking lot for \$165. Pick up is on Friday, return early Monday. Adele will bring her portable fire pit to be delivered by dark.

Naturalist Position: Erin passed around cost estimates for summer 2020. Steve Umentum is only interested in a split position (shared between Dunes and Pot Park). \$5,500 was approved (John/Rick) to fund a 50% naturalist position with an aspirational goal of having a 100% naturalist on site in the future.

New Board Members: Three persons are being considered. The board calls for as few as 10, not to exceed 13. An odd number is preferred. Voting for new members will occur in March.

New Business:

Trail Ambassadors: The concept was briefly discussed (purpose, duties and responsibilities, identification). More discussion needed.

Frozen animal bodies: There are 38 animals (or parts of) in a freezer. Sarah will contact Mike Orthober, asking him to assess whether these are of mounting quality.

Website: Chuck Berringer has updated it. An editor is needed (Jim Perry?).

Town board meeting: The Sevastopol Town Meeting will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in April. The Friends should be present to request funds from room tax income. More planning needed, especially by those officers living in the township.

Adjourn: 6:04pm. (Don/Rich)