

Friends of Whitefish Dunes, Inc.
3275 Clark Lake Rd., Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

Minutes of Friends Board Meeting 10-20-21

Present: John Swanson, Dick Weidman, Susan Cubar, Julia Stoneman, Liz Story, Rich Dirks, Jim Perry, Doug Otopalik, Sarah Stepanik, and Erin Brown Stender

Absent: Lynn Zawojski, Adele Douglass, Don Gustafson

Call to Order: The Zoom meeting was called to order by John Swanson at 4:00 pm.

Agenda: Motion to approve agenda: Dick; second, Susan. All in favor:

Minutes of 9/15/21: Motion to approve minutes: Susan; second, Julia. All in favor.

Treasurer's Report:

Total income: \$2,828. Clothing sales still the highest income producer. Other income:

Donation: \$82.25

Raibrook Grant for Brachiopod Handicapped Parking Lot \$4,412 (our match = \$1,100)

Knowles-Nelson grant for Brachiopod Trail \$10,000.

Expenses: Total \$2,869.54

Motion to approve the treasurer's report for 9/15/21 Susan; 2nd Dick. All in favor.

Park Report (Sarah):

- September saw 30,314 visitors, which is 5,500 more than 2020, and 10,000 more than is typical. Higher attendance occurred on weekends. Weekday attendance dropped off when school began.

- October 1 off-season hours will be begin, which will remain in place until our regular season begins in May. Park will be open Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10:00-3:00, and closed Tuesday and Wednesday. Weekend hours will be 9:00-4:00. The contact station will be closed. There are no new COVID updates, and still no clearance for indoor meetings in Nature Center.

- Brynna's last day was 9/17, but she will be working 1 day/month.

- John Bagnall will be working 25 hour/week in winter.

Project Updates:

- New fence posts placed and in ground.
- Water heaters replaced in Nature Center and Shop
- 1st Beach access: Contractors revisited site and repairs will happen quickly
- WBA: No news on funding for turnaround
- Picnic area drinking fountain still out of order due to unforeseen circumstances. Currently winterizing waterlines, so on hold until spring
- Brachiopod ADA parking: We've been cleared by archaeologist on the proposed site, but Sarah would like to consult a biologist about possible endangered plants in the area. The area on the west side of the road where we would like the parking area is a designated State Natural Area, so that could present a problem. There is no such designation on the east side of the road, so we may have to move construction to that side. Sarah waiting to hear back from Program Director for final approval. Rich was concerned about an incline on trail to parking lot which could impact handicapped access. The engineer also had some concerns about this, but had some ideas as to how it might addressed. Erin said that a solution and funds to take care of this were actively being sought out.
- Fire pit: Thus far no one has requested to use it, but if someone would like access to it they can let Park staff know and it can easily be unlocked. There is a sign on top that lets people know what to do if they are interested in using.

Trail Report (Rich):

Trails are coming along nicely for winter. Brynna mowed the shared use trail and was able to widen it. On Dunes Day, 8 volunteers worked on trimming trails. Red trail has been trimmed beyond the 3rd beach access. 4 volunteers then got a start working on the new bypass, which will need more work if we want to use it this winter. Dick and Jim filled in some dips on the Yellow Trail bypass by Old Baldy.

Trail Ambassadors (Doug):

Doug continues to keep up the YouTube videos and knowledge base. Volunteers have been submitting hours, and to date 124 hours have been logged among 6 volunteers. It has been a positive experience. The committee will meet soon for a follow up talk about what they might need to address during the winter months and who the winter crew might be. Would like to continue to grow the program.

Annual Meeting/Holiday Party: This year the meeting will be held at Sevastopol Town Hall on December 9 @ 10:00 a.m. John will recap some of the things Friends have accomplished and talk about some future plans. Sarah will present a Park report, and Doug will talk about The Trail Ambassador program. Representative Kitchens will be in attendance.

Project List:

- Heavy equipment: Sarah presented a list of pros and cons for the different types of heavy equipment we've talked about, along with costs and usefulness of each vehicle. We also discussed other options, such as rental. After much consideration, it was agreed that a compact tractor seemed the best choice because of its versatility. We will do more research and come back to this. Motion to have Dick look at pricing: Rich; second, Jim. All in favor.
- Native American Village: A spring work day could be used for repairs and clean up. We would like to have a Native American representative give input. More signage could be installed.
- Old Baldy stair rails: We have Knowles-Nelson grant form ready to go, but no cost estimate from Peil yet. We need to know the cost to figure out what our contribution would be. If we don't have an estimate by November 15 we will put on hold. There is something called an Applicant Resolution, which would allow Sarah to submit the paperwork for the grant on our behalf if estimate comes in. Motion to approve Applicant Resolution with Sarah as our appointed representative, Dick; second, Susan. All in favor.
- EV Charging Station: John and Rich will continue working on this. Crossroads has some nice charging stations, and John talked to Laurel Hauser about costs of operation. One thing they use is a donation box, which has been successful.
- We have money set aside for Naturalist next year.

Old Business:

- Clothing selling very well!
- Stump grinding: Dave's is supposed to come and grind stump by Nature Center. Sarah will also have them look at stumps on Yellow/Green trail.

New Business:

- Still looking for new bookstore manager
- How will we manage kick sleds this winter? These would not meet DNR regulations for allowing on ski trails, so they would be limited to snowshoe/hiking trails. We will work on messaging to help clarify this to public.
- Volunteers of the year award: Motion to nominate Max and Dee Martin: Rich; second, Susan. All in favor.
- There will be an annual Zoom meeting of Friends of Wisconsin State Parks on October 26.
- DC Adventures will be by Friday afternoon for a recap and discuss any concerns they might have.

Other Business:

- No meeting in November
- Someone complained about a tree on the Clark Lake spur. Sarah will look at it and have it cleared.
- Sarah will redraw winter trail maps.
- Question whether 1st Beach access will be open. It will depend on how much beach is there prior to freezing over. Perhaps we can leave open with a “use at your own risk” understanding.
- Candlelight ski event: Will work around DNR schedule. Sarah will let us know on date.

Motion to adjourn: Dick; second Rich. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 5:24.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Story

Secretary