

Minutes of Friends Board Meeting 2-16-22

Present: John Swanson, Dick Weidman, Julia Stoneman, Liz Story, Rich Dirks, Don Gustafson, Jim Perry, Lynn Zawojski, Sarah Stepanik, and Erin Brown Stender. Guest: Max Martin

Absent: Susan Cubar, Adele Douglass, Doug Otopalik

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

Agenda: Motion to approve the Agenda: Don; second, Rich. All in favor.

Minutes: Motion to approve Minutes of 1-19-22 with corrections: Rich; second, Don. All in favor.

Treasurer's Report (Julia):

Income: \$15,057.50

Expenses: \$15,839.97

Active Grants:

- Raibrook Foundation: Brachiopod Handicapped Parking Lot.
- Raibrook Foundation: Tractor purchase.
- Knowles-Nelson: Brachiopod Trail enhancements.

Motion to approve January Treasurer's Report: Don; second, Jim. All in favor.

Park Report (Sarah):

- January saw only 3,717 visitors, which is 2,132 less than January 2021, and 635 less than average. This could be due to the car counter not working properly.
- No COVID updates at this time. Masking is still required when working indoors and/or around other people. DNR employees still not allowed to attend any in-person meetings.

Candlelight Ski Event:

- Approximately 730 attendees.
- \$1,300 in sales of Park passes at Contact Station.
- \$150-\$200 in Friends' sales that day.
- \$511 in donations.

Park Hiring:

- Positions are being advertised online. Interviews for both Whitefish Dunes and Potawatomi Parks will begin in mid-March for one full-time Visitor Services position and one full-time Naturalist. The Naturalist will split time between WFD and Potawatomi as agreed upon.
- New hires will probably begin working in late May or early June, as many applicants are college students.

DPS Projects for Funding Consideration in the 23-25 Biennium:

- Building repairs and upgrades
- Resurfacing asphalt path, including hill going down to picnic shelter
- Resurfacing Black Trail
- Replacing swim buoys in riptide area
- Reconstruction and updating of 1st Beach bathrooms.
- Reconstructing 2nd and 3rd beach accesses. 3rd beach access will be updated. 2nd beach access will address some structural issues due to shifting. Possibility of putting in some observation areas to make view of the lake more accessible.

Tractor Purchase:

- We had previously discussed donating the tractor to the Park. Sarah and Erin explained that because the tractor is worth more than \$15,000, the donation would need to be approved by the Natural Resource Board. Document submission for this would need to be made in early March in advance of their April meeting. Since it is our intention to donate the tractor, even though we don't have it at this time, a motion to that effect could put it on their agenda.

A motion of intent by the Friends to donate the tractor to Whitefish Dunes State Park when purchased: Dick; second, Jim. All in favor.

Trail Report (Rich):

Not much to report because of lack of snow. Things starting to taper off for skiing. We still have continued problems with hikers on trails clearly marked for skiing only. Thinking about widening narrower parts of the shared-use trail from Nature Center to WD.

Trail Ambassador Program:

March training has been postponed.

Events:

- Candlelight Event Recap:

A very successful event. We had plenty of volunteers for setup, but need more volunteers at the end of the night for take down and clean up. Cost of candles going up, so we're trying to come up with a creative solution. We need more gallon jugs for candles, and also an alternative to the butane lighters. Better lighting for sign boards would be helpful.

Guided Snowshoes Hikes:

Doug had suggested having some guided snowshoe hikes, but with current snow conditions this probably won't work. John suggested that we might engage other local people to come out and lead some special hikes sometime in May.

Active Projects:

- Brachiopod Trail Signage: No news at this point.

Park Manager Projects:

- Sign holders ordered for new dune etiquette signs

- New shelves put up in back room

- Duck mounts by Mike Orthober completed. We should start making decisions on any viable freezer specimens that we would like mounted. Sarah will send a list of animals and will get prices for those we're interested in having mounted.

- Snowshoe rack will wait until summer.

- EV Charging Station: Rich has contacted John Hippensteel but has not heard back at this point. Will reach out again.

- Old Baldy Repairs: Sarah has not heard from Piel, despite repeated attempts to get cost or commitment from them. She might reach out to a different contractor if she doesn't get a response.

Projects for 2022-2023:

- Cave Point Access Trail: Still need reroute plan and archaeological sign off. We can move forward once we have those.

- Native American Village: Needs repair. Perhaps the spring work day could be used for clean up and basic repair. We would still like a consultant to provide input on how best to proceed. Sarah has contacted both Ho-Chunk and Menominee, but has not heard back yet from either.

New Business:

- Julia would like to invest in a simple QuickBooks program to assist with the Treasurer's role.

Motion to allocate \$200 in funds toward QuickBooks: Dick; second, Jim. All in favor.

- John suggested the possibility of creating a naturalist endowment fund with Door County Community Foundation. This idea had a positive response from the group. John will get more information so we can discuss next meeting.

Events Calendar:

- Spring Work Day will be sometime at the end of April. Will work around Sarah's availability.

By unanimous vote, we welcome Max Martin's return as a member of the Friends Board.

Motion to adjourn: Jim; second, Max. The meeting was adjourned by John Swanson at 5:09.

The next meeting is on Wednesday March 16 at 4:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Story

Secretary