

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

### **Minutes of Friends Board Meeting 9/27/23**

**Present:** John Swanson, Dick Weidman, Julia Stoneman, Liz Story, Rich Dirks, Jim Perry, Doug Otopalik, Lynn Zawojski, Max Martin, Corey Meyer, Sarah Stepanik, and Erin Brown Stender

**Absent:** Susan Cubar, Adele Douglass, Don Gustafson

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:57 pm

**Agenda:** Motion to approve the Agenda with addition: Dick; second, Max. All in favor.

**Minutes:** Motion to approve the Minutes of 8/16/23: Jim; second, Max. All in favor.

#### **Treasurer's Report (Julia):**

Income: \$7,467.50

- Clothing, book, and miscellaneous sales doing well. Miscellaneous sales now include snacks.
- Dues
- Donations from Candlelight Event
- Donation for Picnic Shelter
- Donation from the Gary Cartwright and Liz Gifford Charitable Foundation
- Raibrook Grant for taxidermy mounts

Expenses: \$3,103.73

- Books
- Miscellaneous supplies for Picnic Shelter.

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

#### **Park Report (Sarah):**

- We had 41,874 visitors in August, which was 6,041 less than average, and 1,743 more than 2022. Our average attendance for August is 47,905 visitors, and August 2022 saw 40,131 visitors.
- Labor Day weekend was very busy, and we had our first capacity closure in many years.

#### Park Manager Projects:

- Native Indoor and Outdoor Displays: Sarah was quoted some very high numbers for each of these projects. We are considering establishing a grant committee to look into funding. Susan has offered to reach out to a contact at the Milwaukee Public Museum to see if they have any interest in working on this project.
- First Beach Access: The engineering department has decided to move ahead with a permanent earthen ramp instead of a temporary wooden ramp. They hope to have this installed by Spring of 2024.

#### Knowles-Nelson Projects:

- Brachiopod Trail: All interpretive and Talking Trail signs are installed, along with benches and interpretive components. The underwater periscope still needs to be installed, and we have until June of 2024 to do this.
- Old Baldy: Waiting for final confirmation on specs from Diamond Piers, but expect this within the next few weeks. We are looking at spring 2024 construction.

#### Picnic Shelter Repairs:

- While Mike Laaksonen was working on the windows and siding, he noticed considerable rot to the studs on the north side of the building. Studs and siding will need replacing. He will return in October to address the repairs needed. Siding will be delivered before this in order to prime and paint it before installation.
- Sarah still waiting to hear back from Door County Masonry on repairs to the chimney and cap.

### 2023 Enhancement Grant:

- Sarah is working on the purchase of a new entrance gate and new trail signs.

### Beach Warning Flag Pilot Program:

- Sarah has had no updates from the DNR. She will work to get something in place for spring.

### Seasonal Updates:

- Staff:

- Cearah's last day was September 5.
- Max's last day will be October 20.
- John Bagnall will change to off-season hours October 1.
- Curtis will continue working one shift per week throughout the winter.

- Off-season hours begin October 1:

- Contact Station will be closed for the season
- Nature Center: Friday - Monday 10am - 3pm; Tuesday - Thursday CLOSED.

- Picnic Shelter: Shelter will be unlocked for daily use beginning November 1.

- Water Systems:

- Outdoor drinking fountains to shut down last week of October.
- Housing scheduled to close during the first or second week of November

### **Pollinator Garden:**

- Don has added some new plants and grasses to the garden.

### **Trail Report (Rich):**

- The trail group met on 9/27. They plan to leave things basically the same as last year. The Red Trail will revert back to a ski trail from Nature Center to 2nd Beach access. The trails are in good shape.

- Snow mobile engine needs help with its overheating, and Rich thinks a larger radiator would help. The rollers are showing uneven wear, and he is looking for a way to extend their life. He would also like to purchase something to transport the small groomer. Rich will get costs on these items.

### **Events:**

Mushroom Hike with Charlotte Lukes 9/30 at 10:00.

Fall Work Day: 10/28 from 9 - noon.

Annual Meeting: December 8 at noon.

John will ask Charlotte Lukes about speaking at our Annual Meeting.

John wanted to respond to Dick Baudhuin after our last meeting. Susan, in absentia, made a motion that we take no action on either Mr. Dick Baudhuin's presentation at the August 16 meeting, or his request for his letter of support; second, Lynn. All in favor.

### **Old Business:**

- Allen Dewey Miller renaming: Sarah heard from Vicky Dirst asking if the Nature Center building might be named after him instead of just a room. A proposal packet would need to be submitted to the DNR for this request.

Motion for Friends support of Nature Center renaming: John; second, Rich. All in favor.

- The new FaceBook photo page has been successful.

- Naturalist Program: We discussed ways on how best to go forward with our Naturalist program. Will put on January agenda.

### **New Business:**

- Susan made a suggestion, in absentia, that we donate some money to the Door County Library to provide day passes to

the Park and support visitation. After some discussion, we decided to table this until October.

- Grant applications are coming due. The Wisconsin Coastal Management Grant and the Knowles-Nelson Grant are two grants under consideration. Both would be a 50/50 match grant for the Friends. We discussed having a mini-subcommittee to explore these grants in detail.

- We have not budgeted for the additional repairs needed to the Picnic Shelter. With the expanded scope of these repairs, there is an added cost of \$7,300.

Motion to approve expenditure of less than \$5,000 for this project: John; second, Max. All in favor.

- Going forward, our meeting days will be the 4th Wednesday of the month to accommodate schedules.

- We discussed some of the drawbacks for the Friends if purchasing a motorized track chair. Sarah brought up the idea of a Grit Freedom Chair, which would work well on trails and could be repaired by any bike shop. This would be a better option for the Friends.

- Map for kiosk will be in next month.

**Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn: Rich; second, Jim. The meeting was adjourned by at 5:27.

The next meeting is on Wednesday, October 25 at 4:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Story

Secretary