

Friends of the Big Empty

Board Meeting Minutes

DATE September 5, 2023

TIME 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY Alex Vukasin

IN ATTENDANCE

Board Members: Exa Lee Smith, Cindie Kesler, Dee Shoemake, Alex Vukasin, Marcella Barden, Brandi Kureska
Volunteer Members: Becky Offut, Linda Latham, Judy Hobert

ABSENT

Board Members: Jessica McDermott

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 7:04 PM

Marcella Barden read the minutes of the 08-26-2023 meeting. No changes were made.

Motion to approve 08-26-2023 Minutes: Cindie Kesler, **Second:** Dee Shoemake, **Approval:** Unanimous

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

- The Photo Release Form is finalized after adding the Description/Purpose verbiage used on Form 202. A copy of the final version is available with the 20230905 Minutes.
 - **No further action.**
- Marcella provided links to the draft versions of the websites to begin design discussions. This included type, design, cost, theme. A copy of the notes is included with the 20230905 Minutes. One item made clear by the group is that we should consider using larger print on photo captions.
 - **No further action.**
- Board updated on request to use Wyman Meinzer quote:
 - 8/26/23 Marcella sent email to Penny Bisbee (Jim Bob Art Park & Nature Trails) for Wyman Meinzer email address to obtain permission to use quote from Texas Highways article.
 - 8/28/23 Penny Bisbee let Marcella know that she contacted Wyman Meinzer to ask if we could use his quote from the Texas Highways article on The Big Empty and he approved.
 - “This is a land that you have to become a participant in,” he says. “It’s not going to jump up and hit you in the face. You have to become part of it. You have to stop, look and see, and imagine.”
 - Wyman Meinzer, Texas Highways, Published: October 15, 2017
 - 8/30/23 Marcella sent email to Wyman Meinzer to thank him and wish him luck on his 8/31 knee surgery. A copy of the email is included with the 20230905 Minutes.
 - **No further action.**
- Cindie brought samples for drafting the Bylaws for Friends of The Big Empty (FOTBE). A physical address is needed for each board member. Marcella will send a request to all board members for their physical address to be gathered and sent to Cindie.
 - **Action:** Bylaws will be available for review before the next meeting and board member signoff at next meeting.

- Exa Lee suggested asking Wyman and Penny, if available at the right time, to judge the photographs of which one would be chosen to represent the Big Empty when the website is set up. (Note: Wyman Meinzer is having knee surgery 8/31 per a recent facebook post).
 - **Action:** Move this item in future contest discussion.
- Alex brought up an inspiration idea (tumbleweed) for the mascot/logo contest. Others mentioned horned toad, RV, jackalope. Cindie offered a new purple video camera as a prize for the contest.
 - **Action:** Continue this item in future contest discussion.
- Fundraising ideas from the group include a recipe book, including photo winners in a calendar, postcards, or puzzles of website photos.
 - **Action:** Continue this item in future fundraising discussions.
- An Event Calendar has been started and can be updated as needed. It is in [the Google Drive](#) until it is ready to be posted on explorethebigempty.com.
 - **Action:** Any board member has access to make updates. Any volunteer member has access to view and can suggest updates.
- Possible categories to be created on explorethebigempty.com are Museums, Lakes, Golf, Lodging, RV Parks, Rodeos, Historic Sites, Dining, Fishing, Hunting, Churches, Cemeteries, Concerts, Dances. We will determine at a future meeting which categories make the most sense and who will be responsible for obtaining related information for each category. These may be assigned to one or more volunteer members.
 - **Action:** Continue this item in future discussion re website design and/or volunteer member activities.
- Frequently asked questions (FAQ) should be created for both websites. Effective FAQ pages enable businesses to respond, react, and anticipate the needs of their audience more quickly and appropriately than other types of destination page experiences.
 - **Action:** Continue this item in future discussion re website design.
- Once official emails are obtained for both websites, facebook, Instagram, etc. accounts should be created.
 - **Action:** We will determine at a future meeting who will take responsibility for administering these accounts.
- General discussion on types of membership – volunteer, supporter.
 - **Action:** Continue this item in future discussions re membership.

BOARD

- Term lengths for initial officers are defined as follows beginning 8/26/23: President – 1 year, Treasurer – 2 years, Secretary – 3 years. This is so each initial term will end on a rotating basis. The term length for each subsequent officeholder will be 3 years.
- **Motion** to proceed with purchase of both GoDaddy Web Marketing Packages with email - Basic Package \$9.99 per month for each package to be purchased on an annual basis. Marcella Barden will pay GoDaddy and be reimbursed by Friends of The Big Empty at a future date once funds are available: Marcella.
 - **Second:** Brandi; **Approval:** Unanimous
- **Motion** to proceed with a \$150 per month / 6-month term in the John Deere building for purposes of having an official location/meeting place and physical address in the Bylaws: Cindie.
 - **Second:** Marcella; **Approval:** Unanimous (Note: payment/reimbursement details not included in this motion and will need to be decided at a future meeting.)
- **Motion** to end the meeting at 8:15 pm: Marcella.
 - **Second:** Cindie; **Approval:** Unanimous

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, September 26th, 7p-8p, New Location Cindie confirmed with Jenna Searcey John Deere building space.