

Friends of the Big Empty

Board Meeting Minutes

DATE November 7, 2023

TIME 6:00 PM – 7:45 PM

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY Alex Vukasin

IN ATTENDANCE

Board Members: Exa Lee Smith, Cindie Kesler, Alex Vukasin, Marcella Barden, Brandi Kureska, Jessica McDermott

Volunteer Members: Mariah McDermott

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM. Marcella provided the minutes of the 10-17-2023 meeting. Changes made to correct the spelling of David Kachel. No other changes were made.

Motion to approve 10-17-2023 with changes: Marcella, **Second:** Exa Lee, **Approval:** Unanimous

NEW BUSINESS

1. Effective 10/18/23, Dee Shoemake resigned as Board Member 7. Mariah McDermott has expressed interest in replacing her.
Motion: Add 1 board member and nominate Mariah McDermott for Board Member 7 and Becky Offutt for Board Member 8: Cindie Kesler, **Second:** Exa Lee, **Approval:** Unanimous
2. **Mention:** Big Country Arts Celebration held in Benjamin on 11/4 (created flyer display with QR Code, providing examples at this meeting) **No further action.**
3. **Mention:** scams when board information is public and how to prevent being duped. (ex: Lion's Club publishes emails of officers and President appears to contact Treasure authorizing \$) (Mystery solved) Be sure board members are in your contacts (phone/email) to reduce receiving unknown texts/emails. **No further action.**
4. **Mention:** Added a field to photo submission page to gather "County" name. Thanks to Jessica for suggesting! Exa Lee suggesting adding a "Season (if known)" field which is also complete. **No further action.**
5. **Mention:** Photos for all Board Members have been posted. Photo of two new board members have also been added. **No further action.**
6. Discuss publishing a link to the photo release policy that applies to anyone who submits a photo/video. **Action:** Added "ALL PHOTOS/VIDEOS are subject to the [Photo-Video-Release.](#)" in two locations: Submit A Photo page and in the confirmation message. Added to Photo-Video-Release page: Disclaimer: Explore The Big Empty reserves the right to remove any photo/video in question for copyright violation.
7. We need a formal photo submission review/approval policy. See attached Photo Submission Process document to discuss if this is how we want to proceed and suggest changes if necessary. **Action:** Marcella and Jessica will work together on managing the mailbox and photo submissions for Explore The Big Empty.
8. Sponsors Discussion:
 - a. We need to list the Sponsor details on the org website for those who have signed up. The draft page is invisible to the public until we can fill in the blanks. See attached **Sponsors Draft** for example to get this started. **Action:** Added Texas Ag Insurance Agency, By the Books Business Services, Munday Emporium

- b. We need to email sponsors a link to [Sponsor Graphics](#) to upload their files. Provide the email addresses to Marcella to be granted access to the link. **Action:** Emailed Becky Offutt and Cindie Kesler.
 - c. Depending on the sponsorship level selected, we need photos/graphics from each Sponsor to post on the Sponsors page. (\$700 = full page, \$500 = half page or \$200 = business card size) Since this is a website and not a printed document, suggest switching to a 3 photo gallery, 2 photo gallery, 1 business card graphic or photo. **Action:** Marcella updated Membership Form
 - d. **THIS ITEM TABLED:** We need a volunteer to write a monthly newsletter announcing new Sponsors as promised in the membership section. _____
9. **Move from 9/5 TABLED:**
- a. Contest - 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. Exa Lee added that David Kachel agreed to be a judge.
 - b. Contest - Alex brought up an inspirational idea (tumbleweed) for the mascot contest. Others mentioned horned toad, RV, jackalope. Cindie offered a new purple video camera as a prize for the contest. Need a list of ISD's in all 10 counties to contact Superintendents. **Action:** Marcella gathered the ISD contact information.
 - c. **See attached Logo Contest with ISD List document to discuss if this is how we want to proceed and suggest changes if necessary.**
- Action:** Remains tabled while we work on drafting an email.
10. **Move from 9/5 TABLED:** Social Media Admin - Official emails are obtained for both websites. Ready to create facebook (created 10/1/23), Instagram, etc. accounts. Determine who will administer these accounts. **Update:** Facebook.com/ExploreTheBigEmpty is up and running and following all the city and chamber of commerce offices we found so far. Will try to have a list generated. If you are not following and have a facebook account, please follow and share posts whenever possible. **Action:** Jessica will look into creating the Instagram account for Explore The Big Empty. She now has access to contact@explorethebigempty.com and will work with Marcella on managing the mailbox. If successful, we will link the Instagram account to the website like we do with facebook. Marcella sent the GoDaddy invite to Jessica to help manage Explore The Big Empty photo submission/posting process. The next step will be for Marcella and Jessica to meet and discuss the process.

OLD BUSINESS

9/5 TABLED:

- 1. Fundraising - Ideas from the group include a recipe book, including photo winners in a calendar, postcards, or puzzles of website photos.

9/26 TABLED:

- 1. Create a Membership Committee to add new members, provide instructions to subscribe to either Friends of The Big Empty or Explore The Big Empty notifications, where to find calendar events on ETBE or minutes on FOTBE websites. Unsubscribe Option always provided on notifications generated by either website.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Reminders: November 11 - Honor Our Veterans in Benjamin, November 25-Christmas on the Square in Munday

BOARD

- 1. **Motion** to end the meeting at 7:45 pm: Exa Lee, **Second:** Brandi, **Approval:** Unanimous

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, November 28th, 6p-8p, 111 N Munday Ave, Suite 1, Munday, TX 76371
or online via Google Meet (email contact@friendsofthebigempty.com for the link)