

Friends of the Big Empty

Minutes

Board meeting

DATE May 7, 2024

TIME 6:01 PM

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY Alex Vukasin

IN ATTENDANCE

Exa Lee Smith, Alex Vukasin, Marcella Barden, Jessica McDermott, Mariah McDermott, Becky Offutt, Cindie Kesler

Absent: Brandi Kureska

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve 4/16/24 minutes with no changes meeting by Mariah, second by Cindie and approved unanimously.

REPORTS

1. Contest Entries – none since last meeting.
2. Sponsors/Treasurer –
 - a. one new member/sponsor: Victoria McLemore, Haskell, Buckaroo
 - b. one new member/sponsor in progress, Shirley Welch
 - c. \$928.47 bank, \$105 petty cash
3. Website Statistics (attached)

OLD BUSINESS

1. Google Map of The Big Empty locations we've visited link shown on Explore The Big Empty home page.
Action: The Explorations In Progress section shown on explorethebigempty.com home page has been duplicated on the home page of friendsofthebigempty.org
2. Status of the Places Project from all Board Members:
 - **Arts & Sciences:** Brandi; **Churches:** Cindie; **Dining:** Alex; **Golf Courses:** Exa Lee; **Lakes, Hunting, Fishing:** Jessica/Mariah; **Lodging & RV Parks:** Jessica/Mariah; **Museums:** Cindie; **Rodeos:** Marcella; **Courthouses:** Cindie
 - Received list of all county courthouses from Cindie.
 - Added a separate Courthouse section to the Places section.

Action: Everyone will continue to update their sections and prepare to make contact once the Mascot Contest is closed.

- 3. Tabled from 4/16:** Status of Chamber of Commerce Project from Marcella. Locate at least one Chamber of Commerce office in each of 13 counties. 10 had email addresses to inquire about non-profit memberships. 5 have responded so far. Memberships vary. At least one Chamber of Commerce in each county: Responses As of 5/6/24

County	Town	Application Submitted	Non-Profit Option Y/N	Cost	Type	Active Y/N
Baylor	Seymour		N	\$250	Business	Y
Cottle	Paducah					
Dickens	Spur		Y	\$35	Non-profit Org	Y
Foard	Crowell					
Haskell	Haskell		N	\$120	1-4 Employees	Y
Kent	Jayton					N
King	None					
Knox	Knox City					N
Hardeman	Quanah					
Throckmorton	Throckmorton	5/6/24 Included flyer and latest newsletter		Free this year		Y
Stonewall	Stonewall					
Wilbarger	Vernon					
Jones/Haskell	Stamford		Y	\$60	Non-profit Org	Y

5/6/24 Submitted application to join Throckmorton COC.

Action: Marcella made a motion to spend \$35 and \$60 to join Dickens and Stamford. Exa Lee seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Marcella will fill out applications and provide Cindie to issue a check for each.

5/21 Update: Marcella proposed to board members via email: “Since we do not have a specific date to complete this item, if we wait until Jul 1 to submit each application, we will only pay 50% for the first year. \$17.50 and \$30 instead of \$35 and \$60. I have the apps ready to provide Cindie to issue checks but want to get agreement on this detail. I need at least 3 responses to agree.” Alex, Cindie and Becky agreed.

4. Info received from Don Thompson to be included in our Notable Residents section of the website per Mariah who will follow-up for the photo to be included.
5. Reviewed Recap of 4/30 presentation for Munday Lions Club (Exa Lee’s portion and slideshow pdf)

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discuss Brandi’s resignation. **Action:** Marcella made a motion to leave the #4 position vacant until the term expires August 2024 while we recruit a new board member to start the next 3 year term, Exa Lee seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Office	Current	First Term Expires	Second Term Expires
President	Alex Vukasin	August, 2024	August, 2027
Treasurer	Cindie Kesler	August, 2025	August, 2028
Secretary	Marcella Barden	August, 2026	August, 2029
Board Member 4	Vacant	August, 2024	August, 2027
Board Member 5	Exa Lee Smith	August, 2025	August, 2028
Board Member 6	Jessica McDermott	August, 2026	August, 2029
Board Member 7	Mariah McDermott	August, 2024	August, 2027
Board Member 8	Becky Offutt	August, 2025	August, 2028

2. Discuss possibility of creating Venmo account for use at events. **Action:** Jessica made a motion for Cindie to create a Venmo account, Becky seconded, and motion passed unanimously.

3. Mariah reminded us of the mission statement shown on both websites and flyer. **A pinned comment will be added to facebook page.**
4. Mariah: Marketing team to attend local events/vendor fairs to inform, handout material and create awareness of FOTBE. **Cindie has a pop-up tent and will create a poster to display. Members will bring items for the rummage sale at Munday Market, Concrete Park, Saturday, May 11 at 9 am to setup. This will be a fundraising event for FOTBE. Marcella created name badges that everyone can wear at these events.**
5. The mascot contest ends May 30th.
 - a. Our next meeting on June 4th will be used to vote for the winning mascot.
 - b. Notify the winner.
 - c. Schedule presentation to be awarded in person by June 30th.
 - d. Take photos (not required if winner chooses)
 - e. Announce the winning mascot on both websites, newsletter, facebook, Instagram and local newspaper(s).
 - f. Clean up websites and remove mascot related materials.
6. Submitted donation/expense forms to Cindie for signature and will return receipts to donors. These covered the \$50 Jim Bob Art Park and Nature Trails Earth Day sponsorship and the \$25 April facebook ad for the Mascot Contest.
7. Newsletter ideas
 - a. Upcoming Events - shown on ETBE website.
 - b. Photo of the Month - Alex will submit one of the recent storm photos he took.
 - c. Recipe - Becky
 - d. Main article - Request more participation from the public and explain our mission.
 - e. Featured Sponsor - Texas Ag agency (Becky will try to submit a video to be linked to their sponsor page) **move to July**
 - f. New Member – Victoria McLemore, Haskell, Buckaroo
 - g. Exploration Suggestion -
 - h. Notable Resident - Don Thompson – **move to July**
8. Possible Future Notable Resident: Calina Mishay
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61558972541403>
 - a. Alex will try to reach out to see if she is interested.

NEW TOPICS

1. Game board idea from Exa Lee, Cindie will investigate further to see how we might add to our fundraising opportunities.
2. Exa Lee brought her oil derrick photo and will provide a narrative to go with it. We may eventually create a section for these types of photos.
3. Scavenger hunt suggested for kids and adults to get more involved.
4. Photo contest in the future.
5. Any RV Sales as a sponsor?

CLOSE MEETING

- Motion to close meeting 7:45 PM: Exa Lee, 2nd: Mariah Vote: Yes, unanimous

NEXT MEETING

- June 4th, 6-8 pm, Marcella & Alex's house

Website Statistics

