

Friends of Whitefish Dunes Park

Minutes Feb. 13, 2020

A meeting of the executive board (John, Susan, Adele, plus Jim and Rich) was held beforehand to discuss the Facebook page.

Present for full meeting: Rich Dirks, John Swanson, Jim Perry, Susan Cubar, Richard Weidman, Don Gustafson, Adele Douglass, Sarah Stepanik, Erin Brown-Stender.

The vice president called the meeting to order at 4:41. A quorum was present.

The agenda was approved with one addition (Susan/Jim).

The minutes from January 16 were approved with a minor correction.
(Susan/Don)

The treasurer's report showed income during January of \$579.75 and expenses of \$276.11. Donations at the candlelight walk event totaled \$215. The report was approved (Rich/Don).

Park Report: Sarah reported some plowing difficulties. The truck normally at Dunes Park has been sent to High Cliff. Dunes Park is now sharing a truck with Pot Park (where plowing normally takes an entire day). The snow blower from Pot Park has been brought to Dunes. A new furnace has been installed and is working well. The water heater is 25 years old; funds have been requested to replace it. The park has been experiencing phone issues; on the day of the candlelight event service was poor. New desk phones will be coming, at that time the hand held ones can be gotten rid of. Apparently they don't work anyway. Some water damage to the shelter support beams has been noted. Sarah has requested emergency funding to replace the door with a storm door and to repair the beams. Total cost of the repairs will be \$8,800. There is a push to get a handicap accessible fishing pier on Whitefish Bay Creek. Federal funds may be available. Curtis is working to inventory heavy equipment; some may be available to sell. The animals stored in the freezer have been tagged and bagged and are ready for Mike Orthober to evaluate. The estimate is that 424 folks attended the

candlelight event. Jim Perry led a media tour on the Red Pine Trail which was well received. Park attendance for January was 4249, a large increase from 2019. The estimate of a completion date for the Brachiopod Trail is 15 May.

Erin gave a park report for the wider district. Ben Bergey, Director of Parks and Recreation is leaving his post and has taken a job in Minnesota. It is hoped that the position can be filled by May. There remain many vacancies in the entire state especially park rangers and several superintendants. Peninsula Park is very short on employees, down 4 full time equivalent workers heading into summer. The district naturalist position is also vacant.

Trail report: Rich reports three days of grooming in the past week. There are a few bald spots, but generally the condition is good, with equipment working well.

Old Business:

The Candlelight walk was revisited, generally things went well. More volunteers will be needed for next year, especially if the trails are longer and there is cross country skiing as well as hiking and snow shoeing.

The summer naturalist position has been offered to Steve Umentum.

Dick Weidman has agreed to become a board member, but may have a conflict with the 3rd Thursday schedule. Joe Jarosh has also agreed to join the board. Voting will occur in March.

The concept of Trail Ambassadors was discussed; this will be modeled after campground hosts. Training will be needed. Sarah is receptive, and regards this as a nice educational opportunity.

Facebook page: Susan will ask Liz Story to see if she's interested in helping out. Jim will be an editor, others may help. We also need to explore if an agency can be hired to do this job.

Firepit. Estimates are needed, also a policy as to how it will be managed. A lockable cover will be required to assure safety.

New Business:

Membership renewals are coming due, notices will be mailed in March or April.

Bi-law change: We voted to amend our bi-laws to allow nonvoting advisors on the Board who will serve for one year renewal. The change was approved (Article III, Section 4) (Don/Jim).

The DNR is encouraging parks to hold an event near Earth Day (April 22). Sarah felt that our Work Day on April 25 met that nicely.

John has gotten estimates for the kiosk for the Brachiopod Trail. Max Martin will do the construction. \$750 was approved for materials. (Susan/Jim).

Self guided naturalist trail. John contacted the park manager at Newport, who recommended Julie Hein. She designed the signage for that park. She is excited about working with on this project. She will walk the trail in June and get ideas.

Adjourn 6:13 pm (Don/Jim)