

## Whitefish Dunes Park Friends

Minutes 19 February, 2015

Present: Max Martin, Fred Viste, John Swanson, John Rock, Mary and Dale Goodner, Chuck Birringer, Carl Scholz, Lynn Zawojski, Adele Douglass, Dick Weidman (guest)

The agenda was approved (Max/John S).

Minutes from January were approved (Mary/Max).

The Treasurer's report was approved (Max/John R). Chuck reported that \$350 has been moved from the reserve to contingency fund as the later was getting somewhat low. Chuck asked Fred to get a letter from the DNR confirming that all items from the Shipwreck exhibit are finished so that the books can be closed on that project.

Park report: (1) Fred reported that attendance during January was 4,043 which is about 200 people ahead of 2014. The candlelight event (a walk instead of a ski event) attracted about 100 fewer visitors than a year ago. (2) Following the media contact with a Green Bay TV station about ice volcanoes, 181 cars entered the park the next day. Despite signage to the effect that the ice flow is unstable, many folks have ignored the warning, forcing park staff to spend time enforcing safety rules. (3) Pet rules are also being violated, especially on some recent weekends. (4) New LED exit signs have been installed in the Nature Center to conform to fire code. (5) Kristin has now been certified in pesticide use and can do invasive species work. She will also soon get certification for the application of aquatic pesticides. (6) Fred will work to get a plan for expansion of deer exclosures. He will work with Max to bring something to the March meeting. (7) Plans are underway to paint the exterior of the Nature Center sometime between mid to late summer. The work will be accomplished using a mixture of volunteers and park staff. The walls will need to be pressure washed and calked prior to painting. (8) April 25 will be the spring work day. (9) 2017 will be the 50 year anniversary of the park, some sort of celebration should be planned. The park was founded in July 1967. (10) The governor's proposed budget contains many challenges for the DNR and for parks. General revenue will be cut. Increased admission fees are to go into effect, and 66 positions will no longer be supported, especially those in the areas of research, communications, and naturalists, starting in July of 2015. He stressed that Friends groups will be more essential than ever.

Dick Weidman, ex president of the Friends, discussed the need for a new tractor to do trail maintenance and other tasks around the property. The present park equipment is inadequate. It is considerably larger than what is needed and the DNR needs to be reimbursed at the rate of \$32/hour whenever it is used. Dick had several quotes for a John Deere 35-40 horsepower, no cab, very maneuverable, machine. The quotes ranged from \$20K to \$26K. He suggested we

consider an application to the Raibrook Foundation to help purchase and further offered to handle paperwork application. Dick was hopeful that the foundation would provide a 50% match and the Friends would be responsible for about \$12K over a five-year period. It was voted (Carl/Dale) to have Dick move forward with the application process which needs to be submitted by March 1. (There were two abstentions) The results of the application will be known in about 4 months. If the application is approved, we could still decide not to go forward with the purchase.

Old Business: (1) Candlelight Ski. There was discussion about congestion in the shelter and different table arrangements were discussed. \$217 was received in the donation jar, considerably more than last year. Battery lamps are needed for the pit toilets. The fire should have been started earlier. Some brief discussion that the shelter might need to be enlarged since it seemed too small for the crowds gathered there after the walk. Carolyn has given the old candles to Hycliffe Park where they will be melted down to make fire starters. (2) John S. has done research about display materials. It was approved (Dale/Mary) to authorize up to \$300 to go forward with his proposal. (3) Medallions and Magnets. John S. showed several samples that can be implemented using Carolyn's design. It was approved (Max/Mary) to order 100 of these. (4) A defibrillator machine will be purchased with Friends' monies for \$1735. (approved Mary/John R.) Note: since then a donor has provided a machine for the park which has been installed in the Nature Center. Thanks to the generous donor).

More shelter recommendations to be included on the March agenda as well as a plan for an enclosure.

Adjournment was approved. (Max/Dale)