

Whitefish Dunes Friends

Minutes 10 December 2015

Present: Don Gustafson, John Rock, Carl Scholz, Rich Dirks, Chuck Birringer, Lynn Zawojski, Adele Douglass, Fred Viste (Park Manager), Cindy and Tim Wick (visitors)

The agenda was approved after two small items were added (Don/John R)

The minutes from November were approved (Chuck/John R)

The treasurer's report showed income of \$2,118.04 and expenditures of \$1,4523.83 since the last report. The bank balance is \$26,478.89 of which \$9,028.24 is held in reserve accounts. Year to date income is about \$3,000 ahead of last year, due mostly to increased clothing and miscellaneous sales. Book sales have declined, perhaps due to a decrease in nature programming which tends to drive sales.

Fred's park report contained the following: 1. Attendance for November 2015 was somewhat ahead of the previous year. For the year to date (Jan-Nov) it is also ahead of last year as well as the ten-year average. 2. Sticker sales are somewhat down for the previous month, but up for the entire year, also ahead of 2014 by 21%. 3. Resident daily passes for the year are up by 37%. 4. Friends merchandise sales are up. 5. The 9-day hunting season saw few hunters. The biggest issue seems to have been hikers with dogs off leash. Fred has heard that two deer were harvested. In general, there were more hikers than hunters. Muzzle-loading season is still in progress. 6. Deer enclosure posts have been installed by Max Martin and John Swanson; fencing will be put up in the spring. Signage still needs to be created. The enclosure is in the area of the beech cutting. It was suggested by Carl that an inventory of existing plants be made in the early spring or summer. This will require a person with some expertise. Dale Goodner's name was suggested. 7. Some trail work has been done, mainly two stumps were ground out to allow for grooming equipment and some trees have been cut to widen the trail. John Craig assisted in this project. 8. Exhibits are up and functioning; walls need to be painted. 9. The mounted pelican has been received and will soon be displayed in the nature center. 10. Exterior of the shop

is being painted. 11. Master planning listening sessions are being planned by the DNR starting early in 2016. Friends members will be invited to express thoughts both individually and as a group. 12. Fred will be attending a Leadership Academy gathering of state park managers in Wheeling WV between Jan 10-14, 2016, one of three representing the state of Wisconsin. 13. Bird seed is needed, especially thistle, suet, and sunflower. 14. The shelter has been somewhat abused, mostly occurring on weekends. The staff will consider the options with respect to this problem.

Grooming Report: Rich reports that the snowmobile has been repaired (needed a new voltage regulator). Trails are in good shape and there is a growing list of grooming volunteers. The problem is that there is no snow, so all are encouraged to do a "snow dance."

Old Business: 1. Tractor. There was a protracted discussion about a new tractor for which we already have \$5,000 from the Raibrook Foundation. Lynn has done some research on a somewhat smaller machine than previously considered which with various discounts would cost just under \$16K. This would entail additional fund-raising of about 10-11K. Once acquired, the park would insure the machine and do maintenance. Fred and Rich both stated that this machine would very well fit the needs of the park and Rich reminded us that the present grooming machine is 15 years old. Clearly a fund-raising committee is needed and this will appear on the agenda for January. 2. Cash register. The books have been inputted. Chuck will develop procedures; training will be needed. The credit card unit has arrived, but still needs to be installed. 3. Candlelight ski: The date is January 30 from 5 to 8 pm. If there is no snow, a hike will be planned along the red trail.

New business: It was voted to have a "Volunteer of the Year" person designated each year starting in 2016 (Chuck/Don). Fred will make a recommendation at the next meeting.

Adjourn (Rich/Don) at 11:55 for a holiday luncheon. Next meeting to be January 21.