

Whitefish Dunes State Park Friends

Minutes from January 15, 2015

Present: Max Martin, John Swanson, Rich Dirks, Carl Scholz, Brian Pentoff, John Rock, Dale and Mary Goodner, Chuck Birringer, Fred Viste, Lynn Zawojski, Adele Douglass

Meeting called to order at 4:45pm

Agenda approved with two small additions (Max, Mary)

Minutes approved (Max, Dale)

Treasurer's report approved (Max, Dale)

Rich gave the current ski report. The area has been light on snow this year, but trails have been groomed. As in past years, there is a problem with folks walking on the trails, despite improved signage against this.

Dick Weidman has asked to borrow some equipment (the Tidd-Tech groomer) for use in grooming trails around Sevastopol School. Max reminded us that the machine is seldom used since we have a replacement machine. It was voted to permit this school use as needed, with the understanding that any damage that occurs will be repaired. (Max, Carl)

Rich reminded us that a conversation needs to take place between Fred, John, and himself regarding the old sled. It has been repurposed with the box seat removed and could be used for other tasks, such as hauling. The sled has a solid hitch, takes up much space in the shed, and shows some evidence of porcupine chewing.

There was discussion about putting a very visible "donation jar" encouraging skiers to donate to the grooming fund and making them aware of the large amount of volunteer support involved in providing the ski and hiking trails during the winter.

Fred gave the park report. (1) Attendance for the entire year was slightly down from the previous year. (2) He reminded us that all press releases must be reviewed by the park staff and the state media folks prior to publication. Suggested lead time is two weeks. (3) Hunting closed as of 4 January. There will be a new season 1 April to 5 May, mostly for turkeys. More substantial orange vests are needed to protect hikers and other visitors. (4) \$217.89 is still owed to the DNR for the Shipwreck Exhibit, this should finalize that project. (5) The park staff is suggesting a sale to help reduce merchandise inventory, something like buy one or get second ½ off. No action was taken on this suggestion. (6) Friends are urged to update their bulletin more frequently and consistently; he urged something like a list of animals, plants and birds to be seen in the park. (7) 2017 will be the 40th anniversary of the park, some sort of celebration

should be planned. (8) Three new furnaces have been installed in various buildings, new thermostats are coming.

Old Business: (1) Planning for Candlelight Ski event on 31 January. Fred announced that all park staff would be available that night. Cancellation policy was discussed in view of the adverse weather in 2014. (Fred will make the call based on weather forecast. There will not be a change in date which caused so much havoc in 2014. The event will simply be cancelled). John and Mary Rock will donate popcorn and cider supplies.

New Business: (1) A donation of \$1,000 has been received from the Thomas O. Brown Foundation which "supports parks and other beautiful places." It is suggested that further contact be maintained with this foundation. (2) Rich suggested that the park replace the tractor which doesn't do the job being asked of it. (3) Dick Baudhuin and Max repaired the deer enclosure at Dick's expense. Max asked Fred if another enclosure could be added into the cut over or natural areas to more clearly show damage caused by overbrowsing by deer. Better signage for the present enclosure was also suggested. Fred agreed to explore this issue. (4) It is learned that \$5,250 will be our fee for the taxidermy of animals presently in the taxidermist's (Mike Orthorber) hands. It is unclear how many of these projects were approved by the board. The matter was deferred until the next meeting while Lynn gathers more information (5) There is a proposal to open a g-mail account so that all electronic mail from officers will indicate the source as coming from the Dunes Friends. This should encourage more people to actually open their mail. (6) Shelving options to better display clothing. Chuck, Mary and John S. will continue to explore this topic. (7) Lynn is working with Carol on clothing design for 2015. It was approved to move \$500 into the contingency clothing fund so that more purchases can be made. (Max, Brian). (8) Memorial Benches. Chuck suggests a form be prepared to which the purchaser can attach a check so there will be no confusion as to whether or not payment has been received. Brian will add something to the face book page regarding the possibility of purchasing these memorial benches. (9) Letterheads and Envelopes: Chuck wants proper stationery to prepare thank you letters, something looking more classy, than what presently exists. Funds are available in the supply account for this purpose.

It was announced that there is a proposal for a business to operate helicopter flights for tourists. A discussion ensued about the noise these flights would produce and the disturbance of the quiet normally found in the park setting. Members were encouraged to write the Gibraltar and Ephraim Town Boards as well as the County Airport Commission expressing concern. (Note: the company has since withdrawn the request for approval).

Brian requested \$239.76 reimbursement for the GoDaddy account which was charged to his credit card. This was approved. Brian will see if the shipping domain portion of this service can be deleted since we're not using it.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:25pm. Next meeting to be at 4:30 on Thursday February 19 at the Nature Center.