

ABITA SPRINGS TRAILHEAD MUSEUM MEETING MINUTES

March 30, 2021

Abita Springs Park on the Abita Beer Stage

Members Present: Marian Roper, Geralyn Lips, Peg Scimemi, Courtney Blitch, George Long, Steve Davis, Margaret Blitch, Stewart Eastman, Martha Gruning

Absent with notice: Ron Blitch (Member Emeritus), Barbie Bergeron, Carolyn Boudreaux

- Meeting called to order at 5 pm by President Courtney Blitch.
- A motion to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2021 meeting was made by Marian Roper and seconded by Peg Scimemi. Motion was approved unanimously. Secretary Margaret Blitch will send the approved version of the minutes to Kristin Tortorich, in compliance with the new guidelines from the TOAS.
- A financial report was presented by Martha Gruning. The current balance is \$29,856.64. Martha also reports that the Brinks security contract has no early cancellation option, and the museum will have to continue to pay for security service. The ATT/Uverse final bill has been paid. She believes the outdoor bathroom renovation expense should not have been billed to the museum and will clarify with town staff. In response to a question at the previous meeting, Martha explained that ASTM funds are invested in the municipal fund, but very little interest is generated from it.

Action item: Martha and Marian will clarify the charging of expenses of the bathroom renovation.

Old Business

- Preservation Project: George Long recommends that the board upgrade to a paid subscription of CatalogIt, a digital museum cataloging software, at a cost of \$360 annually. George met with St. Tammany historian and blogger Ron Barthet and he has agreed to volunteer to enter data into the system. George said a part-time staffer will still be needed to assist in data entry. Martha Gruning made a motion to allocate \$360 for the subscription. The motion was seconded by Steve Davis. The motion was approved with one abstention from Stewart Eastman.
- Quilting Exhibit: Peg Scimemi has begun outreach to interested parties for a possible exhibit in November or December.
Action item: Peg will check available dates with TOAS staff. Peg will meet with her committee to develop a format for the exhibit, to include discussion of sales and demonstrations. Martha will follow up with quilter Becky Hill and the Ozone Quilters Guild.
- Request by Sam Giberga to use ASTM as a band rehearsal space: No update. Space is still somewhat restricted because of storage of Abita Springs Art and Farmers Market materials.

New Business

- Larry Bergeron has resigned from the board. His notice has been received.
- Meeting schedule: There was discussion on whether to formally elect to forgo meetings during the months of June and July, which has been the practice. Committee meetings will continue and if there is a pressing need for a meeting, one can be scheduled with advance notice to the

town. Margaret Blitch made a motion to formally notify TOAS that the board will meet on the last Tuesday of each month, except for the months of June and July. The motion was seconded by George Long and approved unanimously.

- Busker Festival: GERALYN Lips has emailed 10 hot food vendors and will confirm vendor placement and coordinate with the Abita Springs Art and Farmers Market. Past vendors will be given until the end of April to confirm; at that time applications will be opened to others. George has updated the application and it will be available online. Coordinator Bryan Gowland emailed Courtney Blitch that most musicians are booked, and big crowds are expected.
- Museum reopening: The goal is to open Sundays only, with April 11, 2021 the target for the first Sunday opening. Docents are needed and all board members are strongly encouraged to volunteer.

Action Item: Martha will talk to docent Andie Oliver to coordinate staffing.

- Rental of directional signs on Totem Pole: The \$300 fee for three years of sign rental expired in January of 2021. There was discussion on extending the current agreement due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on local business and the presumption that there was less foot traffic in the park. Marian Roper made a motion to extend the current agreement to January 2022; Martha Gruning seconded the motion. The motion was approved with 7 yeas and 2 nays.

Action item: George will contact advertisers to inform them of the decision.

- Ethics Certification: 10 of 13 members have completed the course.
- By-laws: Committee has streamlined the by-laws, with input from staff at Town Hall. A draft has been sent to George Long for proofreading.

Action Item: The finished document will be sent to George Long and TOAS staff member Leanne Schaeffer for review and will be presented for a vote by the board at the April 27, 2021 meeting.

- Reduce size of board: TOAS would like to reduce the number of museum board members to encourage a larger pool of volunteers and museum members. The bylaws will be amended to reduce the board size by attrition. The possibility of museum membership will be discussed at the April meeting.
- Other items: Courtney Blitch distributed Conflict of Interest Policy forms, which were signed and returned by all present. Steve Davis and George Long have installed new window blinds in the museum. All documents affected by the Russian hackers on August 28, 2020 have been restored to their original file locations. All website and Facebook pages are up-to-date.
- Meeting adjourned at 6:24 pm.

Next meeting: April 27, 2021 at 5 pm

2021 ASTM Events: Busker Festival September 19, 2021

En Plein Air Nov. 12 – 14, 2021 (tentative)

Abita Springs Opry September 18, 2021; October 16, 2021; November 20, 2021