

Abita Springs Trailhead Museum (ASTM) Board Meeting Minutes Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at the Museum

Minutes taken by George Long and Courtney Blich during transition as Secretaries

Members Present: Martha Gruning, George Long, Courtney Blich, Marian Roper, Calissa Folse, Niki Mendow, Michelle Milner, Jimmy Nelson, Felicia Walker

Absent without notice: Stewart Eastman

Absent with notice: Ron Blich, Emeritus and Geralyn Lips, Emeritus

Visitors: none

Meeting called to order at 5pm by President Courtney Blich

Niki moved that minutes of the January 25, 2022 meeting be approved. Marian seconded the motion, which was approved.

Financial report by Martha Gruning, Treasurer: Account balance \$32,023.93

Unfinished Business

Songwriters' Circle: Discussion of concessions to be provided by ASTM. As this is a new event, it may be difficult to predict attendance. The town has suggested they would like to keep track of inventory in the future. Wine and beer for receptions has to be donated if provided free to attendees. Anything purchased for an event, such as the Songwriter's Circle, may be sold. ASTM will utilize a PO through the town to order food and products needed. Proposed dates are April 23 and October 1 but this has not been confirmed.

Not Your Mama's Gumbo Cookoff, March 12, 11-2pm: This event is jointly sponsored by the Town and Keep Abita Beautiful but KAB is requesting participation by community groups. Martha will secure a permit and order beer from Crescent Crown. Beer will be purchased with cash, not tickets. Volunteers are needed from 10-3.

Cajun Dance: Small crowds for previous events; Lynnette Soules and volunteers spearhead ordering of supplies through TOAS and serving concessions. ASTM is the recipient of the profits and we offer our assistance as needed. We suggest that board members attend one of the upcoming dances to observe set-up (usually around 3 pm on the afternoon of the dance) and concession procedures. Cajun dance lessons begin at 7 pm and the band begins playing at 8 pm.

Mac Mini computer update: Ron's report on the possible purchase of a smartboard will come later. Martha and George will meet with Kerry regarding other requests for new technology, which includes at least one wireless lapel microphone and a speaker system to be used by presenters during future events and presentations. George assumes a cost of no more than \$1000.

En Plein Air, April 29-May 1: George reports there are 23 participating artists; need better social media by us and the individual artists; CLECO sponsorship of \$1500 received. The sponsorship has been acknowledged on our website and on Facebook. The opening night reception is a lovely event and many community members volunteer to help. There will be a reception on the opening night and donations of appetizers, desserts, wine and beer will be encouraged.

Ethics certificates: Courtney reminded everyone to complete the online ethics training course (utilizing the Board member tab) and to deliver their certificate to her ASAP.

New Business

Election of officers: Nominations are George Long, President; Martha Gruning, V-P, Courtney Blitch, Secretary; and Niki Mendow, Treasurer with no opposition, passed unanimously. President George Long ran the meeting from this point forward. He expressed his gratitude to Courtney for her three years of service as president and all outgoing officers for their service. Courtney encourages board members to shadow officers throughout the year to have a better understanding of their responsibilities with the ultimate goal of transitioning into one of the officer positions.

Discussion of board members' museum interests: George encouraged members to communicate their goals as museum board members. Niki would like to promote the museum and the community. Jimmy is a long time resident of Abita Springs and is interested in preserving the stories of our community. Michelle would like to connect with the community and accentuate the positive aspects of the town. Calissa's dream career was to work in a museum as she enjoys the library experience. She is interested in the preservation of history and archives. Felicia supports the museum's mission and is interested in bringing children's activities, including art and music, to future events. Martha enjoys meeting new people and the opportunity to contribute to the community and has been involved since 2013. George has come from a family involved in many aspects of community service. He would like to encourage art and music experiences supporting creativity and future cultural opportunities. Marian appreciates meeting new people and believes in the museum's mission as it reflects the community's history. Courtney is interested in event planning and receptions which bring the community together. She is grateful to have the time to volunteer at this point in her life, sharing ideas and dreams to support the museum's mission.

The Archaeology of Abita Springs and the Florida Parishes: Frances Broussard's presentation was well-received and enjoyed by a full house. It was challenging to hear and observe artifacts, which were utilized to support his discussion. Courtney suggested that Frances allow photographs of his artifacts be taken in advance and presented on a screen. The reception was enjoyed by attendees. Discussion continued about ways to improve future presentations. Frances was pleased with the event.

George motioned, Martha seconded, to pay a \$100 honorarium to Frances. Motion passed unanimously.

Busker Festival, April 3, 11:30am to 7pm: As the TOAS is now handling this event, the museum will not be as involved in planning and logistics. The Town will select the hot food vendors, handle traffic flow and security, rental of port-a-lets, etc. The Opry sponsors the Busker Festival with an additional grant from the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival Foundation. The museum will handle ticket sales for the purchase of beer and soft drinks. Martha mentioned that the Mayor has an understanding with the owner of Abita Brewing Company to secure a beer truck for serving the beer and the museum is the recipient of the beer, soft drink, and water sales. Courtney suggests a meeting with Bryan, the Mayor, and George to clarify museum responsibilities as ASTM will no longer be handling logistics of the festival. Martha will create a sign-up sheet for museum volunteers to handle ticket sales and the sale of beer, soft drinks, and water.

ACTION ITEM: Martha will contact the Town to clarify who will pay the \$600 towards the Busker Festival sound requirements. Martha has a Busker Festival checklist, which she will provide to the Town as a guide to the tasks and responsibilities for the event. She will speak with Dalton Lambert regarding his experience with the beer truck.

Dale Hauck Exhibition and Reception, 5/13-29: Mary Davis is the museum intermediary for this event. Mary is contacting current owners of his work to encourage them to loan the paintings for inclusion in the exhibit. He is looking forward to the show. The museum receives 30% of any artwork sales during the event. There is also an anonymous donation of two Dale Hauck paintings which may be auctioned or sold with the museum receiving 100% of the proceeds. There will be a reception on the opening night and donations of appetizers, desserts, wine and beer will be encouraged. Courtney mentioned that the museum budget does include money for presentations/receptions. It would be helpful to purchase a few main food items, such as sandwich trays. Volunteers for the reception as well as docents for the museum will be needed.

ACTION ITEM: Martha will contact Mary Davis to communicate with Dale Hauck to secure his permission regarding the auction/sale of donated artwork.

Miscellaneous: George suggests that future communications use "ASTM" in the subject line for ease of reference. Limit any replies that do not include substantive information because the number of incoming emails can be overwhelming. Board members should familiarize themselves with the ASTM google drive folders.

Courtney encourages members to feel comfortable to suggest agenda items.

CatalogIt update: Emily has entered 335 items to date. CatalogIt will set up future users of the system. George would like to discuss further at the next meeting.

Next board meeting is scheduled for 5pm on Tuesday, March 29.

Motion to adjourn by Martha, seconded by Michelle. Meeting adjourned at 6:31 pm.