

Abita Springs Trailhead Museum Board

Minutes July 27, 2020 meeting Recorded
by Geralyn Lips

Members Present: Geralyn Lips, Courtney Blitch, George Long, Martha Gruning, Carolyn Boudreaux, Stewart Eastman, Ron Blitch, Bryan Gowland, Absent with Notice: Anne Weaver, Steve Davis, Peggy Scimemi, Susan Foster, Marian Roper Visitor: Margaret Blitch (board member candidate)

Meeting called to order at 5:01 pm. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Financial Report: Martha Total cash in bank: \$30,912.81 2020 YTD net income: \$1800 Whole Town Garage Sale had a record number of registrants this year. All registration fees were refunded after the cancellation of this year's event due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Jani-King charge to the museum was in error; Town Hall will be absorbing it as agreed.

Old Business

Security/Sound System: George There are eight cameras focused on the museum which are up and running. The Town Marshall will be reviewing the footage from the cameras regularly and let us know of any infractions. There are eight more planned for future installation further down in the park. Once only the new system is in use, Martha and George will no longer receive alerts.

The museum is currently closed as we only have two docents willing to work, and many of the visitors and market people were not wearing masks.

Preservation Project:George George researched software used for the archiving of historic artifacts and records, and did a comparison of *Catalog It to Past Perfect*, two of the more popular products on the market. *Catalog It* is widely used, with its focus limited to archiving, and is less costly than *Past Perfect*. Therefore, George recommended that *Catalog It* be the software used for the project. He did a video presentation overview of the program for the board members present at the meeting. George said that our collection holds very few artifacts and those would be photographed. Most of what we have are postcards,

photographs and newspaper clippings. *Catalog It* would allow us to keep track of the ownership of items, and place limitations on their use to comply with the owner's wishes. When allowed, items could be downloaded by the viewer. The person working with Mary Davis would use this software. We could start with a free account which allows up to 150 entries. This might encourage donation of additional items, and we could perhaps hold donation days. Ron brought up the idea of partnering with the library, since they are archivists, and we are not.

Whole Town Garage Sale: Martha Vendors who registered and chose a spot this year will have first choice to reserve the same spot next year if they wish. They will be contacted on December 1st, then given one month to make their decision. Their 2021 registration fee will need to be paid by the end of December to reserve that spot.

Busker Festival: Bryan Bryan has been in communication with Ms. Robertson of the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation. She told him to keep the grant money from 2020, and apply for a new grant in 2021. Bryan made a proposal to the board that we consider a "drive-in" Busker Festival, with a target date of October 17th. He has been discussing the idea with the Mayor, who is "on board" with the idea. Cars would park in the field across from Town Hall in designated spots. Attendees would have space on one side of their car for their group to sit while practicing social distancing during the event. The performers would be on a stage in front of Town Hall. The Opry would cover the costs of the musicians. Bryan is reaching out to people regarding acquiring a stage as the Town Hall porch would not be high enough. The Mayor has been working on the logistics to determine how many cars could fit in the field. One question would be how to charge, per car or per person? Courtney raised the issue of lack of volunteers due to COVID-19 concerns, which would mean that we would not have enough people to be able to sponsor this on our own, and perhaps this could be a community effort. Bryan said he would like to form a committee to further explore the idea. GERALYN volunteered to be the Museum's liaison who would meet with Bryan and the Mayor.

En Plein Air: Ron En Plein Air had originally been postponed due the pandemic, but the decision was made to cancel it for 2020. The artists will be welcome to exhibit and sell the paintings which they had prepared for this year, along with any new offerings, at the 2021 event. Ron will explore the idea of an online exhibit.

Bike Fest: Stewart Stewart reported that the 2020 Bike Fest was postponed, but not yet cancelled for 2020. They are looking at a possible date in November. George discussed

the board relinquishing sponsorship of this event, since the

NEW BUSINESS

New Board Member: Courtney Courtney introduced Margaret Blich who had submitted an application to join the board. Margaret was asked to tell the board a little about herself. She said that her family has deep roots in St. Tammany history. She has many years of experience working in communications, and media management and consulting. She also has extensive volunteer and board experience. With six voting members in attendance at the meeting, Margaret was voted in unanimously.

Docent Manual: Martha Martha proposed creation of a docent manual that she is willing to work on during the downtime.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 PM.