

Minutes from Abita Springs Trailhead Museum board meeting by Marian Roper and transcribed by George Long
February 23, 2021
Abita Springs Park on the Abita Beer Stage

Members Present: Courtney Blitch, George Long, GERALYN LIPS, Marian Roper, Carolyn Boudreaux, Stewart Eastman, Martha Gruning, Steve Davis, Barbie Bergeron, Larry Bergeron, Peggy Scimemi

Member absent with notice: Margaret Blitch

Emeritus Members present: Ron Blitch

- Meeting called to order at 5pm by President Courtney Blitch.
- A motion to accept the minutes of the September 29 meeting was made by George Long, seconded by Marian Roper; Motion was approved.
- Martha presented a financial report showing no new income and minimal expenses. Bank balance = \$30,078.81. We are still paying Brinks for security services even though their hardware and software systems were replaced by the Town during the automation upgrade in months previous. Our contract with Brinks expires in October.
ACTION ITEM: Martha will ask if the contract can be canceled early.
- Stewart asked if our money is being invested in the Municipal Investment System. That way we can earn more interest.
ACTION ITEM: Martha will find out if the Town is participating in this program

Commented [1]: ACTION ITEM: Martha will ask if the contract can be canceled early.
@msgruning@gmail.com
Assigned to Martha Gruning

Commented [2]: ACTION ITEM: Martha will find out if the Town is participating in this program
@msgruning@gmail.com
Assigned to Martha Gruning

Old Business

- Preservation Project: George will meet with Ron Barthet to gauge his interest in participating somehow. Ron is a very active St. Tammany/Northshore historian and blogger. George brought Ron's latest book to the meeting - "The Bridges of St. Tammany".

The Town is waiting for George to write intellectual property and physical item contracts to be used with each archive entry. George explained that physical items and intellectual property that individuals or families give to the Museum/Town can come attached with different rights for their usage, public display, or sharing with other individuals or institutions. **ACTION ITEM:** George will write and provide those contracts for review by the Town attorney.

George reported that Board Member Annie Weaver had intended to write grant proposals for funding to be used for the project but she delivered her resignation the day before this meeting and is no longer able to assist.

- Quilt show project: Peggy Scimemi reported that her initial research for the project leads to many questions about the form it will take. Barb suggested we not try to do what other organizations do and create an event appropriate for Abita Springs. It was suggested that having a display inside Town Hall during the Whole Town Garage Sale might be a good fit for that audience. George offered to work with the project committee at the appropriate time to create an agenda and registration forms for possible vendors, etc.

Commented [3]: ACTION ITEM: George will write and provide those contracts for review by the Town attorney. @georgelong13@gmail.com
Assigned to George Long

- Martha reports that she has been working on a comprehensive update of the by-laws to make them more easily understood. She will continue to enter her suggested edits and then pass it on to committee members GERALYN and GEORGE. All edits are tracked by the software program being used. She hopes it will be ready in time for it to be made available to board members before the next meeting when they can vote on its acceptance.
- Martha mentioned our need for someone with grant writing skills. She will check in with the Town and others to see if someone is available.
- GEORGE asked that we all be on the lookout for potential new board members now that SUSAN FOSTER and ANNE WEAVER have resigned.

New Business

- JESSIE SUMPTER was contacted by a band about the possibility of them using the museum occasionally as a practice space. Concerns for the safety of our exhibits were expressed. Many were in support of the idea but with a possible trial period, possible damage deposit, and oversight by Martha. GEORGE would introduce band members to the space so they are aware of parameters and other details. MOTION by Barb: Board agrees to allow use of museum for groups on a case by case basis in accordance with parameters set by the Board and with oversight by Martha and approval of Town administration. MOTION PASSED with one abstention.
- COURTNEY reminded board members they are required to complete the annual state's Ethics Certificate online.
- GEORGE reported on his meeting the day before with Mayor Dan Curtis and Janet Dufrene regarding possible fall dates for town events, including those the museum board hosts, which are the Busker Festival and En Plein Air. They also met previously with Bryan Gowland about the Busker Festival. Possible dates are flexible and dependent upon potential conflicts with other organizations and pandemic protocols. Busker Festival - September 19 with a rain date of the 26th; En Plein Air - November 12-14. Ron will speak to the artists involved for feedback on those dates.
- GEORGE stated that he thought the Cajun Dance monthly events are more adversely affected by the pandemic because it involves older people dancing face to face and changing dance partners within a closed meeting hall. These cancellations currently eliminate a funding source for the museum from concession sales.
- RON spoke briefly about the planned layout for a renovated Town Hall and Annex. Completion date is uncertain.
- Next meeting is March 30.

Meeting adjourned at 5:56 pm.