

Abita Springs Trailhead Museum (ASTM) Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 21, 2022 at the Museum

Members Present: George Long, Courtney Blich, Martha Gruning, Stewart Eastman, Calissa Folse, Jimmy Nelson, Niki Mendow; Guest: Melissa Smith

Absent without notice: Felicia Walker

- Meeting called to order at 5:05pm by President George Long
- Stewart Eastman moved that minutes of the November 2022 meeting be approved. Martha Gruning seconded the motion, which was approved.
- Financial report by Niki Mendow - Account balance is \$40,930.41 as of December 1, 2022. November income came from donations to the museum and from the sale of concessions at Cajun Dance. Martha asked Janet Dufrene about an expense item of \$1500 charged to the Museum account for replacement of rotten railings around the building. She pointed out that the Town is responsible for museum building maintenance so the charge was confusing. Janet responded that it made sense to do it this way since the museum does not pay for utilities etc. Martha has drafted a letter to be presented to Janet and Dan after the first of the new year. She will then request a meeting after receipt of it. Martha suggested that perhaps the Museum will consider contributions to capital projects identified by the Town.
- Martha made a motion to amend the meeting agenda in order to discuss receipt of bids for refinishing the museum's floor. Stewart seconded. Motion approved.

Unfinished Business

- Martha provided an update on the classical guitar recital stating that it was a spectacular performance with an attendance of about 20. Tips were generous and they would like to do it again.
- Francis Broussard events - George set dates with Francis for three presentations: January 15, February 26, and March 26 at 4pm. Topics are Choctaw and other indigenous cultures plus archaeological digs. State Archaeologist Chip McGimsey will be presenting with Francis on one or more of these dates. ACTION ITEM: George will meet with the Town to determine our level of involvement in an Earth Day event. George will also find out if the two speakers can be paid since it has been determined that an honorarium is not permissible under state law.
- Volunteer party update: Martha said the party was well attended and fun. Volunteers who regularly work the concessions at Cajun Dance seemed to particularly enjoy meeting socially with board members and docents also in attendance. Courtney thanked Martha for opening her home and hosting the event and those who contributed food and drink for the event.

New Business

- Board election: George presented Melissa Smith as the sole nominee. She provided information on her background on archiving and her interest in history. She said she would like to contribute to the community as a board member. Board entered Executive Session with a motion from George, which was seconded by Niki. The board voted to approve Melissa as our newest board member. George moved to end the Executive Session, seconded by Niki. Melissa then returned to participate in the meeting.
- Quilt show: Courtney presented background on the quilt donated by the mother of former board member Peggy Scimemi. The intention was that the quilt would be raffled or auctioned as a benefit to the Museum. A discussion followed about the format a quilt show might take. ACTION ITEM: Martha will contact some involved in other quilt shows in order to gauge interest in one in Abita Springs. George suggested that we contact other shows, post on Facebook about the possibility of a show here in order to gauge interest also.
- Tree project: Courtney discussed our tree project, which consists of donors purchasing a live oak tree along with a commemoration plaque. The Town has two signs that need to be put in place. The Town informed us that maintenance of the signs is a concern and we may need to not offer them in the future. ACTION ITEM: Courtney will contact Leanne Schaeffer about these issues.
- George reviewed meeting dates for 2023.
- Floor refinishing bids: Martha presented three bids for refinishing of the museum floor. All were within a range of \$3500 - \$4000, which is approximately half of what was originally budgeted. It was determined that shoe moulding will need to be removed and repainted before start. ACTION ITEM: Martha will choose one of the three bids. Coordination will be required with Ron Blich to move to storage all of our exhibits before refinishing begins.

Meeting adjourned at 6:13pm, moved by Martha, seconded by Jimmy.