

MOTOR MILL FOUNDATION

Minutes

July 19, 2016

The monthly meeting of the Motor Mill Foundation was held at Osborne Nature Center on Tuesday, July 19. Those in attendance on this evening were John Nikolai, John deNeui, Lee Lenth, Chuck Morriner, Dr. Ken Zichaël, Jenna Pollock, Abbey Harkrader, and Jessica Wegmann. President John Nikolai called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Prior Minutes

Chuck moved for minutes from last month's meeting to be approved. Lee seconded. No one was opposed and so approval was passed.

Treasurer's Report

Chuck began the report by calling attention to the large difference in attendance between the weekends of June 27th and July 11th. He noted that the lower visitation counts occurred on July 11th, when no sandwich board had been used to promote the tours.

Chuck also alerted the foundation to a change in Central State Bank's system, requiring an updated username and password for a more secure system.

A letter was received by Chuck from Silos and Smokestacks, asking for a gift from the Motor Mill Foundation. Zichaël moved to donate \$100. Lee seconded the motion. No one was opposed and so the motion was passed to donate \$100 to Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area.

John Nikolai adds that a letter of thanks was mailed to Burnell Smith for his donation to the foundation. Larry will also be mailing a set of prints to him as well.

John Nikolai motioned to approve the treasurer's report. Zichaël seconded. No one opposed and so the report was approved.

Volunteer Hours

Volunteer hours were submitted to Jenna.

Old Business

Clayton Co. Fair

Dates and booth space have been secured. John Nikolai proposed that this year the foundation should try to represent and promote the mill differently than in years past in order to keep people interested. Ideas voiced included using a laptop to display the aerial video taken of the site, as well as a new poster being created to promote improvements still being made such as floor replacements and interpretive

panels. Jessica volunteered to design a poster for this event. John Nikolai asked for one of the donated photos of the Decorah eagles in order to hold a drawing for it as another promotion tactic. John Nikolai asked for volunteers to watch over the booth during its time at the fair. Lee and Zichaël both volunteered.

150-year celebration

It was decided that this celebration should occur in the year 2020 since the Motor Mill was deemed a legal entity on January 1, 1870. John Nikolai proposed that this discussion be tabled for the time being until more information has been determined from other historical meetings of the foundation members.

New Business

Donations

Dave Beck donated 3 postcards to the foundation. It was decided that these postcards would be sold to the public for \$1 a piece or less.

Zichaël donated a fan to use at the mill for warm work days.

Silos and Smokestacks Grant

Jenna informed the foundation about a grant that she applied for within the month. The grant, if given, will cover the cost of the interpretive panels that were designed by Jessica. Example printouts of these panels were made available for viewing. Jenna also suggested that a smaller committee be made in order to review these panels prior to installation. Great interest was shown by many members for this committee.

Iowa Tourism Grant

Jenna discussed another grant she had applied for. This grant would cover the cost of signage on site as well as new brochures. Jessica has designed a new brochure, which was passed around to all members for previewing.

John Nikolai briefly discussed the UMGC grant that he plans to apply for and asked about specific due dates and materials from Jenna.

2017 Motor Mill Intern

Jenna brought up the idea of having a permanent part-time position for someone to have the mill open for regular hours, and that this position could possibly be an intern position. She stressed that there is a need for consistent hours. Chuck warned that consistent hours could change various statuses regarding the mill and the foundation. This would call for different standards and possible liability issues if the mill is recognized as a museum. It is determined that further research into the topic is needed.

The question of the overall objective of the foundation was also discussed. John Nikolai suggested holding workshops for students learning about stone structures

and architecture. He felt that it would bring many new faces to the site. Upgrades were brought up by Lee including a septic system closer to the mill and the utilization of the inn as a bed and breakfast or event center. It was decided that the major goal for the Motor Mill within the following year would be to open the mill for tours every weekend during the 2017 tour season.

John deNeui brought up his plans to install more lighting in the mill. He suggested adding 5 fixtures, at a total cost of \$230 or less. He reminded the foundation that this would require an additional investment into the amount of electricity needed to power the lights. John deNeui moved to keep the price of the project at or below \$230. Chuck seconded, and no one was opposed. The motion was passed.

Jenna informed the foundation that a group of boy scouts would be on site within the next few weeks for a service project involving the mill. Jenna suggested that the boys carry out some of the silt that has accumulated in the basement. All members agreed with this. John deNeui also mentioned that the materials needed to cover the flume openings are nearly gathered. He also suggested that once a considerable amount of silt is removed, it should be relocated to the western bank upstream of the mill.

Updates

Jessica gave updates on her activities over the last month which included designing interpretive panels and a brochure, as well as meeting with a local 4-H group on an interactive exhibit project. She also announced that she was very pleased with progress being made by holding historical meetings to produce a consistent list of facts on the mill's history.

John Nikolai called the foundation's attention to the timeline of the mill that is used by tour guides. Said he would like to see it updated with information from these historical meetings.

Lee announced that one of the mill bills is missing after falling through the floorboards of the mill. He plans to bring another mill bill to the site from his home.

John deNeui mentioned a company called Good360, which acts as a middleman between people looking to donate items and people looking to acquire them. He said that they occasionally possess computer equipment, which may be useful to the foundation.

Adjournment

John Nikolai called for a motion to adjourn. Chuck motioned and Lee seconded. No one was opposed and so the meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Wegmann