

Motor Mill Foundation

Minutes

December 15, 2020

CORRECTED DRAFT

The regular meeting of the Motor Mill Foundation of Clayton County was held Tuesday, December 15, 2020, at the Osborne Conservation Center, with the option of a virtual ZOOM connection, which was deemed necessary because of concerns over spread of COVID-19. Those present at Osborne were: John Nikolai David Beck, Jon deNeui, Chris Schoen and Lee Lenth, along with Clayton County Conservation Board naturalist Abbey Harkrader. ZOOM attendees were Ken Zichal, Larry Stone, Chuck Morine, Jane Metcalf, Mark Yackel-Juleen and Conservation Board director Jenna Pollock. Dave Metz, of the Pine Creek Mill, was a guest via ZOOM. Nikolai called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

AGENDA

Pollock asked to add three items to the printed agenda: 1) discuss applying for an Iowa Rural Heritage Revitalization grant for the Inn; 2) discuss a possible intern for summer 2021; 3) review bid documents for Stable repairs. Beck moved to approve the agenda with those additions. Zichal seconded. Carried.

MINUTES

Lenth moved to approve the minutes of the November 17 meeting as distributed. Beck seconded. Carried.

FINANCIAL REPPORT

Morine presented the following treasurer's report:

Nov. 17 Beginning balance – 15, 772.12

Receipts

Nov. 23	donations	30.00
	Return the change	40.00
Nov. 23	donation: Larry & Margaret Stone, Dennis Beck memorial	50.00
Nov. 23	donations; bridge lighting	960.00
Nov. 30	donation; Scot & Jane Christiansen	2,500.00

Dec. 11	donation; Melanie Menken	
	In honor of Don Menken	100.00

Total receipts		3,680.00
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Expenses

Dec. 11	Alla. Clayton Elec	42.10
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Total expenses		42.10
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Dec. 15	Current balance	19,410.02
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Beck moved to accept the treasurer's report. Lenth seconded. Carried.

Nikolai noted that Alpine Communications did not charge for burying and installing the telephone line.

OLD BUSINESS

1 – NOVEMBER 21 BRIDGE LIGHTING – Harkrader estimated that 125 people may have attended. Lenth said the Littleport Fire Department supper went well,

2 – PRESERVING THE WOOD TURBINES – Dave Metz said he has contacted a Colorado company that makes a chemical that will replace the water in wood. The process takes about one month. Metz suggested obtaining a gallon of the chemical and testing it on a small sample of wood from one of the turbines.

Schoen said his hope is to dismantle a turbine to repair and rebuild without breaking it. But he has concerns about getting the bolts removed. Metz said it should be relatively easy to cut the bolts, then manufacture new ones.

Zichal argued that, given the uniqueness of the turbines, we should pay to have at least one restored professionally.

Schoen said a vacuum chamber and humidity control might be needed for the restoration process, but Metz said no special equipment is needed with the chemical from Colorado.

Schoen said it's important to preserve at least one turbine. Then the second turbine could be taken apart to see how it was built. Zichal agreed that it would be worthwhile to spend the money to have experts preserve a turbine.

Metz countered that part of the success of the Pine Creek Mill restoration has been the ability to find affordable ways to get projects done.

Beck pointed out that James Crosby, John Thompson, and J. P. Dickinson also may have taken that approach. Beck has discovered journal notes by Crosby that suggest the turbines were built by Dickinson and Thompson, and not purchased commercially. That makes the Motor Mill turbines unique. "We have industrial folk art," declared Yackel-Juleen.

Nikolai said a preserved turbine needs to be prominently displayed. Lenth wondered if that location could be on the rock ledge on the road side of the basement. Schoen voiced concern that it could be impacted by flood waters. Nikolai said the turbine could be placed near the millstones on the first floor.

Metz said a replica turbine built of pressure-treated wood could be on display in the basement without fear of damage from flooding.

3 – PLATFORM PROJECT – Lenth said the basement platform is complete, with stairs and cattle panel safety fence in place. Yet to be determined is how/whether we want to install any lights.

4 – ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION IN THE MILL – Nikolai has been in touch with Alan Wessels about installing a required ground, and replacing one of the outlets on the outside pole.

NEW BUSINESS

1 – TRAFFIC/PEDESTRIAN CONFLICTS – Morine, Stone, Lenth, and Pollock met with County Engineer Rafe Koopman at the Mill on Dec. 10. Koopman suggested orange traffic cones and perhaps speed advisory signs to remind drivers to slow down and watch for pedestrians. He can provide cones and signs when the Mill opens for tours in the spring.

Nikolai has written to Koopman to inquire about installing speed bumps, but Morine and others agreed that would not be good public relations during the vast majority of the time when pedestrians are not present.

2 – SECURITY CAMERAS – Pollock is waiting for a proposal and cost estimate from Alpine Communications to install a security camera system to replace the current trail cameras at the Mill.

3 – JOSH FUNK PHOTOS – Nikolai has been in touch with photographer Josh Funk about selling Motor Mill images on the Motor Mill website or Facebook page. Stone will contact Funk to arrange details. (Update: Funk will donate three prints to the Motor Mill Foundation to sell. He also will choose other images to be displayed for sale on the website and/or Facebook, and will donate 50% of his proceeds to MMF.)

4 – BIDS FOR STABLE REPAIR – The engineer who evaluated the repair needs for the Stable wants \$4,000 to prepare bid documents. After discussion with Martin-Gardner Architecture, Pollock believes no additional documents are needed, as long as bidders are required to meet at the site before submitting bids. Pollock will solicit bids and bring them to the February MMF meeting.

5 – RURAL HERITAGE REVITALIZATION GRANT – Pollock is researching a potential grant to help pay for renovating the Inn. The federal grants, which are administered by the State Historical Society, range from \$75,000 to \$125,000, with a one-to-one match from the recipient required. The Clayton County Board of Supervisors, the Conservation Board, and the Historic Preservation Commission all have agreed that MMF may apply. Stone moved to authorize Pollock to proceed with the application. Beck seconded. Carried.

5 – SUMMER INTERN – Pollock asked for suggestions on what the duties of a summer intern should be. In the past, some interns have not understood their responsibilities, and have not been especially productive. The board agreed that an intern should work most weekends as a tour guide.

ADJOURNMENT

Lenth moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. Beck seconded. Carried

Respectfully submitted,

Larry A. Stone, secretary

Motor Mill Foundation