

Motor Mill Foundation

Minutes (DRAFT)

December 16, 2025

The regular meeting of the Motor Mill Foundation of Clayton County was held Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at the Osborne Conservation Center. Those present included: Ken Zichal, Chris Schoen, Jay Elvers, Brian Balster, Larry Stone, and Chuck Morine, as well as Clayton County Conservation Board Director Jenna Van Meeteren and naturalist Abbey Harkrader. Lee Pool and Sandra Walter were guests. Zichal called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

## **AGENDA**

Stone moved to add items on a report on Van Meeteren's meeting with Terracon representatives about the pillars in the Mill. He also asked to discuss a proposal from Dan Slagel to clarify the November minutes treatment of the UMGC grant and the Freedom Bank CD. Balster seconded. Carried.

## **MINUTES**

Morine moved to approve the minutes of the November 18 meeting, with the following clarification proposed by Slagel:

### *UMGC Grant*

*Zichal and Slagel attended an October 28 event to receive a \$20,000 grant from the Upper Mississippi Gaming Commission for basement pillar repair.*

### *Certificate of Deposit*

*Anticipating no major claims to the MMF checking account in the coming months, Slagel suggested that a portion of the account balance be invested in a Certificate of Deposit at Freedom Bank. After a brief discussion, Metcalf moved and Balster seconded opening a \$40,000, 6-month CD at 3.9% interest. The motion carried.*

Schoen seconded Morine's motion to make the change to the November minutes. Motion carried.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Slagel submitted the following treasurer's report:

Motor Mill Foundation Treasurer's Report December 16, 2025

Date

11.17.2025 Beginning Balance 65,747.16

### Receipts

	<u>Source</u>	
11.24.2025	Donation Cash Bridge Lighting(undesignated)	825.71
	Donation Cash - Ken and JoAnn Fishel	25.00
	Donation -Checks:	
	Gary and Donna Jones	25.00
	James and Joleen Jansen	100.00 (Donation for music)
	Penny and Gary Reed	50.00
	Mace and Kristin Klingman	40.00
	Robert and Hila Garms	20.00
	Rick Knivsland	20.00
	Larry and Margaret Stone	60.00
	Merchandise-cash	49.00
11.25.25	PayPal Donation (Metcalf)	9.31
11.25.2025	Square Merchandise	38.81
11.24.2025	Change return	120.00
12.2.2025	Rita Hill	2000.00
12.2.2025	James and Mary Stolley	200.00
	Total Receipts	3,582.83

### Expenses

11.19.2025	Cash Withdrawal for CD	40,000.00
11.20.2025	Slagel Reimbursement	489.31 (Candles, lanterns, barrels, OE Cart)
11.24.2025	Slagel Reimbursement	100.00 (Slagel paid musicians \$250 with personal check (copy below), partially reimbursed by Jansen donation).
11.25.2025	ACREC (electric)	76.12
12.02.2025	Heritage printing	157.93 (for Bridge Lighting)
12.08.2025	Metcalf Reimbursement	91.00 (for Bridge Lighting)
12.09.2025	Alpine (telephone)	17.81
	Total Expenses	40,932.17

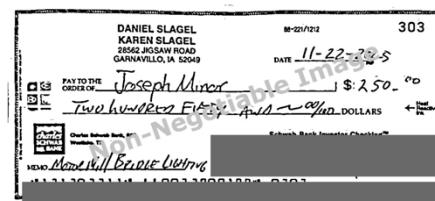
12.15.2025 Ending Balance on Hand 28,397.82

### CD

11.19.2025 FreedomBank 182-day CD @3.9% (Account # 1754935). Maturity 5/20/2026. \$40,000.

### Checks yet to clear:

11.19.2025 Rivals Bridge Lighting Merch. \$358.18



Elvers moved to accept the treasurer's report. Blaster seconded. Carried.

## OLD BUSINESS

- 1 BRIDGE LIGHTING REPORT – Morine noted the significant number and amounts of donations. Zichal attributed much of the success to good weather. He also suggested the need to look for new and different ideas for future lighting ceremonies. He said there should be better lighting along the road between the Mill and the Ice/Smoke House. Pollock acknowledged the need to better advertise the music at the event. Elvers praised the public cooperation with MMF volunteers who controlled parking and traffic on the bridge.

Stone moved to give extra commemorative ornaments and magnets to volunteers who helped with the event. Balster seconded. Carried.

Pool asked about the potential to put lights higher on the bridge. Morine noted that the long-standing county policy has been that lights are permitted – but climbing higher to install them is not.

- 2 NEW BOARD MEMBERS – Balster moved to elect Lee Pool and Sandra Walter to the board by unanimous consent. Elvers seconded. Carried. Morine noted that this will be three-year positions.
- 3 DONOR RECOGNITION – The board held a lengthy discussion of how best to recognize donors. Morine noted that the wooden replicas of mill stones, with small plaques naming donors, was last updated in 2015. The initial plaques cited those with \$200 donations for mill windows. Morine has a list of 2016-2017 donors for which no plaques had been added. Balster favored updating the plaques, noting that Mill visitors often take time to read the names on the wooden millstones.

The board agreed that the minimum amount for plaques or other special recognition needs to be raised, but took no action on what that recognition should be.

The board also debated how to recognize volunteers. Schoen suggested a general sign showing the total annual number of volunteer hours. Another idea was a sign listing volunteers and number of years they had helped.

Zichal urged board members to bring more ideas to the January meeting.

## NEW BUSINESS

1 - BRIDGE LIGHTING – Pollock said the Clayton County Side-by-Side group has offered to help with bridge lighting next year. Elvers and Zichal agreed to meet with them. Stone stressed the need to coordinate with the Board of Supervisors.

Pollock also said the Central High School madrigal singers, who have performed for past Holiday Walks at Osborne, might be available to sing at a bridge lighting.

Walter suggested looking at ways to get out more publicity about the event.

- 2 SAFETY AND SECURITY – There has been no new information about the illegal entry to the Mill through the basement arches in October. Van Meeteren reminded board members to be sure to lock buildings.
- 3 FREEDOM BANK CD – The \$40,000 CD at Freedom Bank matures on May 20, 2026.
- 4 AD IN TOURISM MAGAZINE – Roger Thomas, with the George Meier Rural Heritage Museum, has asked if the Motor Mill Foundation would partner with the George Meier Museum, the Elkader Depot, and the Earth Moving Legacy Center on a half-page ad in the 2026 Visit Bluff Country tourism magazine. The publication is distributed in Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Illinois. The board concurred with the idea of supporting other organizations. Elvers moved to approve our \$149.75 share of the ad. Balster seconded. Carried.
- 5 TRRC – Dan Slagel and family have donated money to install a kayak/bike rack at Motor.
- 6 HERITAGE DAYS – The Clayton County Conservation Board is sponsoring listening sessions to get ideas for another event that might replace the former Heritage Days. Upcoming sessions at Osborne are Thursday, January 15 at 6 p.m., and Friday, February 6 at 10 a.m. Board members are encouraged to attend.
- 7 PROJECT PLANS FOR 2026 – Since Dan Slagel was absent, the board agreed to delay discussion until the January 20 meeting. Members were urged to review a draft of plans, which Slagel sent in a December 8 email.
- 8 SCREEN AND VIDEO PLAYER NEEDED AT INN? – Pollock noted that the Motor Mill master plan calls for video equipment to be in the Mill, rather than the Inn. She also noted the lack of space in the Inn – and the desire to minimize equipment that would have to be moved in case of a flood.
- 9 STUDENT VIDEO OF TURBINES – The board discussed ways to show the public the animated PowerPoint presentation about the Motor Mill turbines, which was prepared by mechanical engineering students from Brigham Young University Idaho. Would it be feasible to show on a small computer at the Mill or Inn? Could it be on the website?
- 10 BRIAN GIBBS CABIN CONCERTS – Brian Gibbs has expressed interest in hosting a concert at the Motor Stable on July 17. The board raised several questions, including concerns that donation jars for musicians and for Motor Mill be clearly separated. Pollock noted that Gibbs would be required to follow the standard policy of paying the Stable rental fee, having event insurance, and making a deposit if alcohol would be available. She noted that for liability reasons it should be made clear that a concert was a private event, and not a Clayton County event.

## **UPDATES**

TRAFFIC COUNTER - Stone said the bridge traffic counter recorded 15,361 vehicles from May 23 through November 24. That was about a month shorter time than previous years, because volunteers did not have access to the Mill while contractors were working on the pillars. Harkrader and Van Meeteren noted that tourism traffic has decreased slightly in the last couple of years.

PILLAR REPAIR – Van Meeteren met with staff from Terracon to discuss the need for a geotechnical study of the bedrock. The Terracon staff said it is more important to support the weight of the post and beams. Further engineering may be needed to decide how to proceed with the pillar repair.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Stone moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 p.m. Elvers seconded. Carried.

Larry A. Stone, secretary

Motor Mill Foundation of Clayton County