

## Motor Mill Foundation

### Minutes (DRAFT)

January 20, 2026

The regular meeting of the Motor Mill Foundation of Clayton County was held Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at the Osborne Conservation Center. Those present included: Ken Zichal, Dan Slagel, Chris Schoen, Jay Elvers, Larry Stone, Lee Pool, Sandra Walter, Steve McCorkindale, Jane Metcalf, and Chuck Morine, as well as Clayton County Conservation Board Director Jenna Van Meeteren and naturalist Abbey Harkrader. Zichal called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### AGENDA

Van Meeteren asked to add an item on the Iowa Eats event sponsored by Silos and Smokestacks. Elvers moved to approve the agenda with that addition. Schoen seconded. Carried.

### MINUTES

Morine moved to approve the minutes of the December 16 meeting as distributed. Walter seconded. Carried.

### Treasurer's Report

**January 2026**

#### Beginning Balance (12.16.2025)

**28,397.82**

#### Receipts

|                                                          |               |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 12.15 Blackbaud                                          | 20.00         |
| 12.16 Donation (Paula Embretson, cash)                   | 120.00        |
| 12.16 Donation (Peter and Joyce Kann)                    | 100.00        |
| 12.17 Donation. (Jane and Scot Christiansen)             | 4000.00       |
| 12.23 Donation (Ruth Balster)                            | 100.00        |
| 12.26 Blackbaud                                          | 20.00         |
| 12.29 Donation (Mike Krieg via PayPal )                  | 244.53        |
| 01.16 Donation (Chris Schoen, Laura Elsinger via PayPal) | <u>195.53</u> |

#### Total Receipts

**4800.06**

#### Expenses

|                                             |              |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 12.16 Website Maintenance (Jansen Products) | 294.00       |
| 12.23 Rivals Merchandise (Bridge Lighting)  | 358.18       |
| 12.26 ACREC (electric)                      | 71.85        |
| 01.09 Alpine (phone)                        | <u>17.81</u> |

#### Total Expenses

**741.84**

#### Ending Balance on hand (1.18.2026)

**32,456.04**

## **CD**

11.19.2025 FreedomBank 182-day CD @ 3.9% (Acct. # 1754935). Maturity 5.20.26. \$40,000

Schoen moved to accept the treasurer's report. McCorkindale seconded. Carried.

Slagel also proposed the following budget for 2026:

Pier remediation – \$60,000; utilities - \$1200; merchandise - \$1500; materials/equipment - \$2000; web hosting - \$350; insurance - \$450; road dust mitigation - \$1500; tax preparation - \$250; printing/advertising - \$500; roof repair - \$1000; SPOOM dues - \$50. TOTAL - \$68,800.

Schoen moved to approve the proposal, McCorkindale seconded. Carried.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- 1 DONOR RECOGNITION – The board continued a lengthy discussion of how best to recognize volunteers and donors. Slagel said he felt founding board members needed recognition. Schoen said the public needs to be reminded of the tremendous amount of volunteer time and effort is required for upkeep, maintenance, and interpretation at the Motor Mill Site. Walter suggested having a small sign or plaque to annually highlight volunteer hours. Zichal said providing the recognition might stimulate other people to volunteer. He added that a plaque for donors also might motivate additional donors.

The board took no further action at this time.

- 2 PIER MITIGATION – Van Meeteren said she has spoken with two different engineers who have promised to look at additional options for phase 2 of the basement pier stabilization. Zichal suggested installing a laser sensor to monitor the pillars.
- 3 BRIAN GIBBS CONCERT – Stone had no new information on a Brian Gibbs proposal to host concerts in the Stable.
- 4 BRIDGE LIGHTING – Zichal attended the January 13 Board of Supervisors meeting to ask their concurrence with adding more holiday lights on the bridge. The Supervisors agreed, as long as "liability insurance and safety concerns are met."

Elvers has met with members of the Clayton County Side-by-Side club, who are eager to help with bridge lighting. They volunteered to buy lights, arrange for a lift to help with installation, and to donate \$100 to pay for electricity. They also could help with parking of visitors on the night when the lights are turned on.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- 1 VOLUNTEER PROJECTS – The board discussed several volunteer projects for 2026. Slagel showed a model of a boulder that Joe Miller is building to

demonstrate how flour, middlings, and bran were separated. Slagel said an interpretive sign could explain the machine.

Walter said Norby's has offered to provide trees and shrubs that could be planted around the Inn, and perhaps in front of the propane tank. Metcalf said the vegetation should be appropriate to the historical era of the Motor Mill Site. Van Meeteren said the Motor Mill Foundation must coordinate with the Clayton County Conservation Board on any plantings.

Elvers and Zichal stressed the high priority of installing a railing along the sidewalk leading up to the second floor of the Inn. Zichal said he would attend the Feb. 10 meeting of the Conservation Board to advocate for the project.

2 BEYOND HERITAGE DAYS – Van Meeteren said the Conservation Board has hosted three “listening sessions” to ask for ideas on what event might replace Heritage Days. The final session will be at Osborne at 10 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 6. A virtual wrap-up summary is planned for Feb. 24 at 6 p.m. at Osborne.

3 2025 VISITOR STATISTICS – Harkrader compiled numbers showing 2726 visitors in 2025 – down from 3803 in 2024. The board agreed that the comparisons may be approximate, given the difficulty of making sure visitors sign the guest book – or that they don't sign more than once. State officials have reported that tourism was down in 2025, which may have been a factor.

Several hundred people attended events at Motor, such as the 5/10 K Motor, the bridge lighting, Music Under the Moon, and a number of youth and adult educational programs. 30 volunteers reported working 1538 hours.

4 TRRC – Schoen reported the Turkey River Recreational Corridor is picking Turkey River Safari sites, one of which probably will be Motor.

5 SALES REVIEW – Slagel reported that merchandise sales declined from about \$4000 down to \$3000 in 2025. That was not a surprise, given the decreased number of visitors.

6 GRAU FAMILY MEMORIAL – Following the recent death of Ruth Grau, Stone spoke briefly with Chris Grau about what the family might think was appropriate to honor the family's support of the Motor Mill Historic Site over many years. Initial ideas were a tree planting near the campground or a sign by the road at the start of the trail to the Grau Savanna. Stone will seek more input from the Grau family.

7 HOW TO USE CAD FILES FROM BYU STUDENTS – Zichal urged the board to consider ways to show the public the video files prepared by Brigham Young University Idaho students to demonstrate the operation of the Mill. That might

involve obtaining another TV or an iPad computer. The board took no action at this time.

- 8 DOUG WOLFE DONATION – Doug Wolfe has offered to donate a grain cleaner and a hay hoist to the Foundation. The board concluded that we already have several cleaners, and the hay hoist was not something the Mill would have had. The board thanked Wolfe for his offer, but declined to accept the equipment.
- 9 IOWA EATS – Van Meeteren said Silos and Smokestacks is again hosting the Iowa Eats Food & Drink Festival on April 11 at the Waterloo Convention Center. As a S&S site, Motor is invited to have a booth. An estimated 1700 people might attend. Metcalf volunteered to go and take muffins to share with visitors. Walter offered to help.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

McCorkindale moved to adjourn the meeting at 8 p.m. Elvers seconded. Carried.

Larry A. Stone, secretary

Motor Mill Foundation of Clayton County