

Freedom Park Board Meeting
Tuesday, February 19, 2013
6:00pm

Start Time: 6:00p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

President Alice Dahl led members in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Members Present:

Alice Dahl, Harold Mussman, Robert Philpot and Randy Hall were present.

Tom Sullivan and Candy Johnson were also present.

Press member Lola Jean Brink of the Lowell Tribune was present.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the January 2013 minutes was made by Randy Hall and seconded by Robert Philpot. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4/0.

Approval of Claims:

After review, the motion to approve the claims for January 28, 2013 through February 11, 2013 was made by Randy Hall and seconded by Harold Mussman. There was no discussion and the motion carried 4/0.

Reports:

Freedom Park Updates

Tom reported that he had an incident with 4 teens at Freedom Park. They had been riding their bikes in the skate park. They were advised to leave the skate park. Next they went back by the disc golf area looking for a spot to ride their bikes. The police were contacted and the teens left the area. Officers advised Tom that they would request extra patrol in the park. In other business, Tom advised that our new signs came in for the skate park. Both signs will be mounted soon.

Tom advised that when he attended the IPRA Conference in January he attended a seminar about "Farmers Markets". There are several communities in the area that already have markets in their communities including St. John, Crown Point and Schererville. They hold these events during the week and held May through September. They also market items other than produce at these events. Towns provide an area to hold these events and interested parties purchase a space to sell their items. Tom asked the Board if they would be interested in holding an event like this at Freedom Park. Discussion followed. Alice expressed concern about holding the event at Freedom Park since it is not located on the main roadway in Town. Mr. Philpot asked where at Freedom Park we would hold the market. Tom advised we would hold the event right along the main thoroughfare of the Freedom Park entrance. Mr. Philpot asked about insurance. Tom said he hadn't investigated all details and he was just investigating the possibility of an event of this nature. Alice suggested that Tom speak to the Crown Point Chamber of Commerce since they organize and run their Farmers Market. Alice suggested the possibility of holding the event during soccer games since families are already at Freedom Park. Randy said that Crown Point actually blocks off the roadway on the southeast side of the square for their market, so it is very visible. Discussion among members followed about possible locations to hold this type of event.

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Alice asked if Tom had contacted Jeff Manes about showing his production about the Grand Kankakee Marsh. The film is names "Everglades of the North". Alice had suggested we show this film for "Movies in the Park this season. Tom advised that he would be contacting Jeff about the cost of showing the film here at Freedom Park and any other particulars.

Discussion followed.

Old Business:

Dog Park Updates:

The Park Secretary advised that the key system is in place and going well. Current membership (47) and revenue total \$2262.00.

Walk/Bike Update:

Tom advised that he had spoken with the Street Department who is doing the work on the path. They are now planning on doing the work in March.

Volleyball Court:

Tom said that work on the volleyball court will begin soon.

Disc Golf Update:

Tom stated he has seen people out there even during winter weather.

Softball Discussion:

Tom advised that Freedom Park has a 25-year agreement in place with the Lowell Little League which specifies that 34 acres is designated for their proposed complex. Plans have since been put on hold due to financial issues. Now the girls Bluebird League have contacted Freedom Park about putting fields here at Freedom Park too. Baseball and softball are played on different size playing fields so it is not possible to share the same fields. Tom advised that what is needed now is to either dissolve the contract or split the acreage in half so that the Bluebirds could have space in that area to put in playing fields too. Of course we still want the Little League whenever they are ready, but also provide space for the Bluebirds.

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Softball continued:

Alice asked about the original plans for having fields at Freedom Park. Tom advised that when we were talking with the Lowell Little League, their plans included softball fields as well. Now the "Girls Softball" is contacting us directly about moving ahead with plans for fields on their own. Tom advised that he had spoken with the Little League and they have no problem whatsoever with the softball going ahead however, the agreement has to be redone.

Mr. Philpot suggested that Tom have this discussion put on the Council agenda, then be present with the Little League representative to present a plan to modify the current agreement. Tom also stated that he has continued to be in contact with Mark Lewandowski who is the Bluebirds representative about the existing contract with the Little League and the need to have it legally revised to accommodate the current plans.

At this point Tom advised Mr. Philpot that Gregg Shook had suggested the Town Attorney be contacted first for advice on the process for revision of the Little League Contract. Mr. Philpot asked if the existing contract is with the Town of Lowell or Freedom Park. Tom advised Freedom Park. Mr. Philpot advised that he would speak with the attorney on Tom's behalf about the contract. Alice suggested that Tom speak directly to the Town Attorney, go over the existing contract and tell the attorney what is needed. Alice feels that a letter from the Little League is needed expressing a change in the contract to accommodate the Bluebirds, and agree to those changes. The Little Leagues only stipulation is that the contract also includes acreage for their fields in the future. At this time Alice noticed that the Little League agreement was not signed by the Freedom Park Board but by Phillip Kuiper-Town of Lowell. Tom said that would be understandable since Freedom Park property loan is with the Town of Lowell.

Discussion followed about the current agreement and the validation of the agreement since the Little League fields have not been built as originally planned.

Discussion about the validity of the Little League Contract followed.

(The contract was signed in November of 2009.)

Discussion ended.

New Business:

Donation for inscription on boulder by Freedom Park Shelter

Tom advised that several years ago he was contacted by Ron and Luann Brown. Ron and Luann had donated a large amount of trees to Freedom Park. At that time, they noticed a large boulder by the shelter. They suggested that they would like to have an inscription (see attached) engraved onto the boulder. They would like to donate the fee to have the boulder engraved. Alice stated she is agreeable with that and members agreed.

Alice asked for a motion to accept the engraving of the boulder. The motion was made by Randy Hall and seconded by Harold Mussman. Motion carried 4/0.

Alice asked if there was any other business. Discussion followed about the condition of the roof on the big barn at Freedom Park.

Tom advised that currently funds are not in our Freedom Park budget to replace the shingles. Discussion followed about the budget and available funds and possibility of an additional appropriation to pay for the roof. (All bids came in between \$10,000.00 and \$11,000.00 for a metal roof.) Discussion about the available budget followed. There was also discussion about the Freedom Park insurance coverage and the Town of Lowell's policy about filing insurance claims.

Alice asked if there was anything else to bring before the Board.

There was then discussion about future development of the Town of Lowell and the responsibility of developers who come to the Town of Lowell for development.

Public Comment:

None

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made by Alice Dahl second by Harold Mussman at 5:55pm.
Motion carried 4/0

