

Freedom Park Board Meeting  
Tuesday, August 20, 2013  
6:00pm

Start Time: 6:00p.m.

#### Pledge of Allegiance

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

Freedom Park members observed a moment of silence in honor of Cedar Creek Board Member Brian Mathias.

#### Board Members Present:

Alice Dahl, Harold Mussman, Robert Philpot and Randy Hall were present, also Tom Sullivan and Candy Johnson.

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

Guests present: Judy Walters, Edgar Corns & Sara Pierce. Also present: Bark Park representatives Sharon Hylek and Courtney Cherry.

#### Approval of Minutes:

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

#### Approval of Claims:

After review, the motion to approve the claims presented at the July 22, 2013 and August 12, 2013 Council Meetings was made by Robert Philpot and seconded by Harold Mussman. There was no other discussion and motion to approve carried 4/0.

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Reports:

Freedom Park Update:

Superintendent Sullivan reported that rain is really needed. Mowing, bush hogging, weed whacking and spraying continue. The trees continue to do well despite the lack of rain and we continue to work on getting gravel to the low spots. Benches are all in. Also, I met again with Brian about the disc golf. We have moved 2 or 3 different kiosk posts. He is planning on bringing out a large group of volunteers within the next two weeks so we will be doing some reorganizing as to how the course set up. Also, we are planning on holding a tournament here at Freedom Park, hopefully this fall. This will be a great fundraiser for Freedom Park.

Tom added that there has been a beautiful bench placed at Freedom Park. The bench has been donated by the Historical Society and installed by the Masons. The bench is made of limestone and has "Freedom Park" imprinted on it and has been placed next to the Freedom Brick Walk. There was no other discussion.

Old Business:

Bark Park Update:

Candy Johnson reported that there are currently 99 bark park members and total membership revenue of \$5177.00.

Walk/Bike Path:

Tom reported that the walk/bike path and the volleyball court are all "a work in progress".

Purchase of Equipment:

Tom reported that at the last meeting he was given permission to get prices on a mower and batwing. Tom advised that he did find one (1) batwing at Don Bales for \$3500.00 which he feels is a good price. He also found a Cub Cadet mower with the attachments that he would like to have. The price for the mower is also \$3500.00. Tom said that he had gone to four (4) different places. Two of the businesses did not have what Tom was looking for. Tom said that used equipment is selling as soon as it becomes available. Tom reported that he had found used equipment at Ruim Equipment and Don Bales. The John Deere was a nice mower but did not have the attachments and it was more expensive. Alice asked Tom to explain about the batwing. Tom explained that Bales wants \$3500.00 for the batwing which is so much more upgraded than the one we currently have and they don't take a trade-in

on a trade-in, but they will help me sell our current batwing. Tom advised he has a few places that may be interested in our batwing and will keep the Board posted.

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Tom asked for a motion to go ahead and purchase the batwing and Cub Cadet. After a brief discussion, the motion to go ahead and purchase the equipment that was discussed was made by Harold Mussman and seconded by Randy Hall. Motion carried 4/0.

New Business:

Courtney Cherry and Sharon Hylek were both present to discuss turning the maintenance of the Bark Park over to the Park Department. Discussion had been tabled at the last Freedom Park Meeting. After a brief discussion, the Board was in agreement that maintenance would be turned over to park staff. The motion was made by Harold Mussman and seconded by Randy Hall to turn the maintenance over to the park. Motion carried 4/0. Judy Walters was present and she advised that this change would not adversely affect the Freedom Park budget.

With regard to other "New Business", Judy Walters was present to discuss. Judy advised that it is budget time and she had recently met with Gregg Guerrettaz who is the Towns financial adviser. Judy advised that one thing that had been discussed was that Freedom Park does not have the funds for the "development" of Freedom Park. Judy has talked with Gregg Guerrettaz about refinancing the current "bond". We have a bond that we took out in 2002. The amount was \$700,000.00 and it was at 4.76% interest. Right now we owe \$395,000.00 which will be paid off in 2022.

Judy's question to Mr. Guerrettaz was what we can do to obtain more capital/cash so we can continue to develop the park but not increase our monthly bond payment. If Cedar Creek, West Creek and the Town of Lowell would be interested, we could probably bond now for another \$700,000.00 and pay off the old debt and we would still have approximately \$300,000.00 left to pursue "development projects" for Freedom Park. If we did this, the interest rate over the time of the loan would be anywhere between 1.5 to 4.0%. Judy advised that we would be extending the life of our bond payment by 7 years; however, we would be paying off the original bond and would have cash on hand to pursue development projects. Judy advised that this option is for discussion only at this time. She would like to know what the Freedom Park Board thinks of this possible solution. Tom asked if this would be another 20 year loan. Judy advised this would be a 15 year loan and would be paid off in 2029.

The annual payment would remain the same as that was Judy's goal, that the payment would remain the same even though the bond was refinanced.

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Judy advised that the other option for funding future projects would be to wait until 2022 which is when the existing bond is paid off. Then we could purchase another bond for development at that time. (However, the interest rate could be higher than current rates.)

Extensive discussion followed about possible uses for funds that would become available should above discussed option be approved.

After discussion the Freedom Park Board made the decision to plan a "work session" to further discuss refinancing. Motion was made by Harold Mussman and seconded by Randy Hall to table any decision until a work session is scheduled for further discussion. Motion carried 4/0

Alice asked if there was any other business to come before the Board. Courtney Cherry of the Freedom Bark Park announced that the 6th Annual Barktoberfest will be held on Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup> from 12 to 4pm. The event kicks off with the "costume Judging contest" at 1:00pm. Next comes the "pet blessing" for all animals at 3:00pm. At 3:30pm there will be a "canine display". Pet vendors will also be present. Next, Courtney Cherry asked for permission to place banners on the fence at the Bark Park. It is hoped that the banners will help people realize that vandalism of Bark Park, including damaging the lock and key system in order to gain entry is a criminal act. Signage would be placed at the entrance, then at both the large and small bark park entrances. The Board approved the display of banners but added that Tom Trulley would need to be contacted for final approval.

The Board discussed other options to secure the Bark Park including running electricity to the Bark Park. Robert Philpot made the motion to table further discussion about security options for the bark park. The motion was seconded by Harold Mussman. Motion carried 4/0

In other business, Alice Dahl announced that Cedar Creek is going to donate a tree in memory of Mr. Brian Mathias to Freedom Park. A plaque will be placed by the tree in Brian's memory and donated by West Creek Township.

Mr. Philpot discussed the liability of flying model planes out here at Freedom Park. Discussion followed. Judy advised that the parks liability insurance should cover this type of recreation as long as long as it is listed with our insurance company.

There was no other business and motion to adjourn was made by Harold Mussman and seconded by Randy Hall at 6:45pm.