



SPLKA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2017, at 9:30 AM

“The mission of SPLKA is to preserve, promote, educate the public, and to make our lighthouses accessible to all.”

Call to Order/Establish a Quorum:

A meeting of the Board of Directors for the Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association was held on October 21, 2017 at 9:30 a.m. in the Ludington Office, Ludington, Michigan. The President, Kirk Lindquist called the meeting to order. The following Board members were present: Kirk Lindquist, Sheila Meeusen, Kim McDaniel, Jeff duPuis, Roger Pashby and Ted Robinson. Absent Board members: Bill McBeth. Staff members present were: Executive Director Peter Manting, Matt Varnum, Carol Cooper, and Jim Hardie.

Pledge of Allegiance:

All of those present stood and recited the pledge of allegiance.

Audience Comments/Correspondence:

Peter read a note from Milo Beman complimenting the work of our Operations Manager Rachel Bendele. Peter also read notes from a visitor with a delayed payment of a tour and from Dick Smith thanking SPLKA for the Shining Light Award.

Approval of Minutes of Board Meeting of August 12, 2017:

Peter submitted a correction on page 2 under the heading: Operations and Giftshop—Delete the last eight words of sentence 1. Kim made a motion to accept the minutes with the correction; Jeff seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

President’s Report:

Kirk commented that we have had a very successful year. Also, Kirk is looking at setting up a strategic plan during a daylong Board meeting in March or April. Board members should be thinking about what skills they can offer to the Board in 2018 and what committees they would like to work on. Kirk also highlighted the Board self-evaluations that will be discussed in November.

Kirk stated that he would also like some direction as to the Board Member’s role in orientation in April. Matt reiterated that at past orientations for volunteers, volunteers were reminded that when Board members work as keepers, they should be considered as just another volunteer; and that if keepers have suggestions for improvement, they should be reminded that they should talk with the staff.

Treasurer's Report:

Roger summarized some highlights from our statements. Peter fielded questions from Board members regarding our statements. Kim moved to accept, Jeff seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Staff Reports:

- Executive Director's Report:

Peter Manting reported the following:

- Our bus days this year have been very successful with the last two being held in August and September. Sales totaled \$7,500 for the two days.
- Michigan Lighthouse Festival was a huge success with estimates of over 2,000 people visiting Ludington and attending at least one or more of the planned activities. The SPLKA reception at the maritime museum was attended by 66 of our members.
- Big Sable along with other Michigan lighthouses are featured on the Vernors ginger ale cans for the months of September and October. Big Sable was also featured on the Labatt's beer bottles and beer cans this summer showcasing Michigan iconic structures.
- Ludington North Breakwater Lighthouse is featured on a new IPA put out by the Boathouse Brewery in Kalamazoo, Michigan. It is called Hazy Summer.
- White River LS hosted its last yoga on the lawn and its last concert in August.
- LNBL closed on September 5 after a year of record giftshop sales.
- Staff closed LSPL after the cleanup crew canceled their tour due to family and health issues.
- Spoke to Ludington Rotary Club about our lighthouses and keeper program.
- Staff moved to new office at the end of August and hosted an open house for members on September 16, the afternoon of our annual dinner in Ludington.
- Our annual dinner was held in Ludington on September 16 with Dr. Bill Lucas giving his presentation on the Michigan Lighthouse Legacy project of which he is the lead person.
- Attended a workshop in Holland, Michigan, put on by the Historical Society of Michigan which included visiting and climbing Big Red.
- Filed the following grants:
 - Keen Footwear Effect grant for \$10,000 to put towards school fieldtrips;
 - Great Lakes Energy People's grant for \$2,000 to put towards our activity books;
 - Muskegon Community Foundation for \$4,000 for new WRLS exhibits;
 - Oceania Community Foundation for \$2,000 to improve the deck at LSPL;
 - Mason County Community Foundation for \$4,000 to help us refurbish the portholes at LNBL.
- Other grant requests to be submitted include Oxy Chemical to help us refurbish LNBL portholes, State of Michigan for an MLAP grant for an HSR for BSPL, JSJ Foundation and Consumers Energy for our summer at the lights programming, and DTE Energy for funding our activity books.
- Funding for Big Sable's 150th birthday party was donated by West Shore Bank (\$500), from Sanders and Czapski Architects (\$250), and \$150 from one of our members. Vernors sent 8

dozen Big Sable soda cans and \$500 from people who could not attend our annual dinner in September.

- Working on the 2018 SPLKA budget.
- Also working on staff reviews for recommendations to be made to the Board in November.
- Met with Matt and representatives from the Muskegon Community Foundation regarding funding for our new exhibits at WRLS.
- Had lunch with Mary James (past director) who was looking for help in having a reunion of the original volunteers from 1987 to 2001 and possibly getting them back to volunteering for SPLKA.
- Staff is looking forward to the Halloween celebration on October 28 at BSPL and the 150th Birthday celebration on November 1.
- Many of our volunteers have stopped in at our new office location on Ludington Avenue.
- Met with Bill Anderson this last week who is in the process of making Ludington a destination city by promoting sculpture trails, barn quilt trails, and other trails. Bill wants to develop a maritime trail with the museum. Bill also will be developing a brochure with all of the cultural activities listed for Mason County and our two lights will be featured as well.
- Got \$4,000 from Muskegon Community. Foundation previously mentioned in these minutes.
- Received a grant of \$1,000 from the Love Ludington Fund at the Community Foundation for Mason County thanks in large part to Cherie's nomination of our organization on Facebook.
- Will be having a radio interview with NPR radio out of Traverse City this Tuesday.
- Attended a meeting with representatives from SPLKA and Friends of White River.
- Dr. Bill Lucas will be in Ludington on November 1 to play for the 150th Anniversary at BSPL.

- White River Light Station Report:

Matt Varnum reported the following:

- Things have slowed down, but WRLS is open until Nov. 4.
- Township had a tree removed on east side of property.
- New storm windows installed.
- Invited supervisor, clerk, and a few trustees from the Board who visited. Thanked them for help and support that they provided us.
- Will be working on closing the museum and after closure, will be working in the workshop getting it ready for next summer.
- Jim added that movers are coming to move the heavier artifacts out of the basement to the workshop.
- Work bench is also going to be part of the new display.

- Operations Report:

Rachel submitted a written report and Peter highlighted the following:

- Busy with last minute details for Halloween party at BSP.
- LNBL (closed for this season) tours and giftshop had record sales for 2014-2017; total was over \$80,000 for 2017.

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- LSP (closed for this season) tours and giftshop had an increase of 33% from first year sales in 2016; total was over \$140,000 for 2017.
 - BSP (open until November 4) does not have final totals since they are still open; however, we are possibly at record sales this year.
 - WRLS (open until November 4) also does not have final totals.
 - Registration for volunteer applications for 2018 is open. Application processing begins in mid-November.
- Maintenance Report:

Jim Hardie reported the following:

Big Sable Point:

- All exterior painting has been completed.
- Sand has been removed from around sidewalks and light poles to facilitate entrance to the lighthouse.

Little Sable Point:

- Minor repairs made on the lighthouse and residence.
- Giftshop trailer and boardwalks have been moved back to the residence for the winter.
- Dick Smith donated an old Coast Guard generator which has been moved to the garage for storage.

Ludington North Breakwater:

- Old composting toilet has been removed and ceiling repaired where it was hung.
- New conduit has been run to clean up the wiring for the solar power.
- A few portholes have been removed for refurbishment.
- Upper floors and railings have been painted in preparation for next year.
- Lights have been installed on the second and third floors and hooked into the solar power.
- Painting of the lower exterior has been completed.

White River Light Station:

- Township removed the large dead maple tree on the south side of the driveway.
- Sidewalk and patio installation should be completed soon.
- Landscaping has been improved.

Ted and the Board congratulated Jim and his wife on the grounds work at WRLS. Also, Board members congratulated the entire staff on their work on getting the new office up and running and on the identity that the new office gives our organization in the Ludington community.

Strategic Plan Committees:

The above committees did not meet separately. Kirk wanted to concentrate on what the Education Committee was working on. Sheila and Peter updated the Board members on current projects including the following:

- Peter and Sheila reminded the Board that we have lighthouse presenters that were recruited in 2016 and were given a presentation highlighting our four lights. The presenters were trained at a separate session and the presentation was put together by then Board member Lenore Janman and Board member Sheila Meeusen.
- Peter stated that volunteer keeper Jack Beuge is doing a presentation at Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Jack has a three-part, two-hour lecture on lighthouses in general. Michigan lighthouses, and SPLKA.
- Board member Roger Pashby is also doing a lecture at the Lutheran Church.
- Peter also reported that Dan Hall would like to distribute our activity books at his concerts in schools.
- Peter sends out teacher guides and lighthouse activity books to our presenters when they need them.
- Kirk reported he talked with John Wagner who has lighthouse supplies that he would like to donate. Kirk will follow up with John Wagner to get materials.
- Board members were reminded that new committees will be appointed next year and they should be prepared to pick an area on which they would like to focus.

New Business:

- Board Evaluations of the Director

Kirk reminded Board members that the above evaluations are due in November.

- 2018 Budget Development

Peter and Carol presented a draft budget. Board will vote on in November. Board members can contact Peter during this month before November meeting if they have questions on the proposed budget.

- It is the Recommendation of the Executive Director to direct the staff to have the LNBL portholes reconditioned at a cost of \$15,000 for the upcoming 2018 season. Jim Hardie showed the Board members porthole samples from LNBL. Money will be funded from grants and our Capital Fund.

Kim moved to accept, Roger seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- It is the Recommendation of the Executive Director that SPLKA file a MLAP grant for a Historic Structures Report for BSP for \$60,000.

Roger moved to accept, Ted seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

- Annual Membership Meeting Report

Kirk reported that we had an open bar, not cash bar. Peter stated that Holiday Inn did not have a liquor license; therefore, the open bar was much less expensive. It also generated goodwill with volunteers. Attendance was about the same as 2016. Peter reported that more old timers came because of Dick Smith's award.

- Staff Evaluations

Kirk reported that staff evaluations are underway. Peter has to meet with each staff member. Kirk will meet with the personnel committee and urged Board members to get their director evaluations done by our November meeting.

- Personnel Committee Meeting.

Kirk will correspond with members and schedule a meeting in November.

- Bylaws Update

Kirk reported that copies of the updated By Laws have been handed out at this meeting. Each board member can update his or her board book with these. The updated copies reflect the changes and actions taken by the membership at the annual meeting in September.

Discussion Topics/Announcements:

Peter highlighted two events: Family Halloween event on October 28, and BSP's 150th Anniversary Celebration on November 1. Buses will be running at 11 a.m. Terry Pepper will be speaking. Kirk will be doing a welcome at the beginning. Dr. Bill Lucas will start by playing a fanfare. There will be a large tent with many activities.

Kirk announced that our strategic meeting will be held in March or April, 2018 for all Board members. Lenore Janman has been asked to facilitate this meeting. Kirk will check with Lenore to see if the April date would work as three board members indicated they would not be at the March meeting.

Adjourn:

Kim moved to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Next Board Meeting: November 18, 2017 at Whitehall Township Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Meeusen, Secretary