



SPLKA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

March 28, 2015 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 March 28, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. in the Ludington Arts Center, Ludington, Michigan. The President, Lenore Janman, called the meeting to order. The following Board members were present: Lenore Janman, Bob Baltzer, Sue Ann Schnitker, and Sheila Meeusen. Absent: Doug Buikema, Roger Pashby, and John Truxell. Staff members present were Executive Director Peter Manting, Jim Hardie, Rachel Bendele, Cheri Hockenberger, and Matt Varnum. Guest: Kirk Lindquist.

Pledge of Allegiance:

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

Approval of Minutes of Board Meeting of November 22, 2014:

Minutes were accepted as presented.

Audience Comments/Correspondence:

None

Presentation: Kirk Lindquist:

As part of his presentation, Kirk Lindquist gave the Board some background information about himself. Kirk also informed us that he was actually a member of the first Sable Points Lighthouse Board when the only light was BSP and that the Association was in the process of acquiring LSP as its second light when he left the board in 2002. Kirk also informed us that he was active in setting up the first gift shop, he was involved in the initial open houses held at BSP, and that he served as Secretary and Treasurer in 1992 on the lighthouse board.

Kirk was formerly on the board of the Michigan Lighthouse Fund (MLF). The MLF was designed to provide a way for money to come into all Michigan lighthouses. Kirk reported that the MLF was shut down in the fall of 2014. Since there was a balance left in the fund, each board member was allocated an amount to give to the Michigan

March 28, 2015

lighthouses of their choice. Thus, Kirk presented a check for \$1,400 to our Board with the stipulation that the money go towards the preservation of our lighthouses, not towards salaries. Kirk also presented us with an early photo of the lightsaving station downtown Ludington (near our current Coast Guard station). He also presented some early (1908) blueprints to the board as well depicting some of the buildings that the DNR dismantled. He also showed the Board drawings of LSP showing the keepers' quarters there. Besides the photo, drawings, and blueprints, Kirk also presented approximately 450 prints of LSP which will be sold in our gift shops, along with a map of Michigan lighthouses published in 2006.

Kirk told us that he has ties with several fiscal agencies in Lansing as well and might have some resources for future funding for our lights. Kirk also talked about the early creation of the light tax charging ships coming from overseas. This money is still being collected today and goes into the State of Michigan General Fund. There is now nearly 20 million dollars in that fund. Board members discussed the possibility of having Kirk Lindquist be our speaker at our annual meeting in September, 2015.

Committee Work:

None.

Reports:

- Executive Director's Report

Peter Manting reported that the proposal/bid for cleaning and stabilizing the lens at LSP has been received from Lampist Kurt Fosberg. The bid was \$2,650.00. The DNR will pay \$2,499.00 of this amount, leaving the Association with a balance of \$151.00. Mr. Fosberg is scheduled to clean the lens in April.

Funding for the Historic Structure Report for BSP has not come through at this time. The State of Michigan DNR may use the matching money they set aside for the National Maritime Grant to help us fund the HSR. We should have an update on the grant by March 31, 2015.

Peter reported that Heritage Group has completed their report. Peter presented the Board with a Funding Source Strategy document submitted by the Heritage Group that shows our needs, strategies divided into three phases, suggested approach in three phases, along with a contact list of potential donors. Peter is putting together a strategy to submit proposals to these prospective donors. Board Member Bob Baltzer has been working with Peter on this project.

Two new employees have been hired for the Association. Jim Hardie is our new Supervisor of Historic Maintenance and Repair and Rachel Bendele is our new Operations Manager. Matt Varnum moved into the new position of Curator at the WRLS. Due to Debbie's illness, Cherie Hockenberger has been filling in at the position of Office Manager. Peter recommends that the Board hire Rachel and Jim to fill these

positions (recommendations to hire are listed later in these minutes). Peter hosted a staff trip to all our lights with Matt Varnum and our new employees so that everyone is familiar with the lights, their location, and what concerns need to be addressed.

In December, 2014, Peter and Matt met with the Seekers at their wrap-up luncheon. Two articles regarding being a Daykeeper at LSP and joining the Seekers group were submitted to the Oceana newspaper. A few new members were recruited for both SPLKA and the Seekers. The Seekers will continue to operate LSP on both Monday and Tuesday for SPLKA this summer as well as SPLKA's special events that take place after hours at the lighthouse.

Peter also met with the Breakers group in Ludington. Some concerns were addressed and the Breakers will continue to operate LNBL on Mondays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and are adding Sunday evenings from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. during the months of July and August. They will also man the light from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. in July for the four Friday Night Live events.

Peter met with Carmen Tiffany of White Pine Village and the new Maritime Museum. A couple of events planned for this summer include having Terry Pepper, Executive Director of GLKA, give a presentation in Ludington. Other events still need to be finalized.

Peter and Matt Varnum met with Sam, Fruitland Township Supervisor, in January, 2015, to address any concerns from the last season and to introduce Matt as our new Curator of WRLS. Sam complimented SPLKA's operation of the light at WRLS and is very pleased. Peter also met with the Friends of White River to introduce our new Curator.

Other activities include:

- Peter has been working with Frontier to get internet service at both residences for LSP and LNBL.
- In December, 2014, our fall newsletter was mailed. Several members have made complimentary comments on the new format. Our next newsletter is scheduled to be sent around mid-April.
- Grant was received from DTE Energy (\$2,500) to finance a reprinting of our activities booklets.
- Grant was received from the Paine Family Foundation, Grand Rapids, Michigan (\$2,500) for our Capital Campaign Fund.
- Jeffers Family Foundation, which is based in Wisconsin, fund historic sites and help fund Historic Structure Reports. In the past, they have funded a lighthouse

project in Door County. They will be making a site visit in late April or first part of May to hear about our needs.

- New displays are being put together by Dennis Osborne, a local volunteer, for the second and third floors of LNBL.
 - Grant requests are in process to the Mason and Oceana County Community Foundations for educational and arts activities. Our submission will be for our “Night at the Lights” programs and for our educational booklets.
 - Attendance at the March 4 meeting of the Mason County Community Foundations fund holders.
 - Our “Nights at the Lights” program will consist of five Wednesday evening concerts at LSP starting July 8 and running through August 5. It does include an afternoon concert at BSP on July 26, an afternoon concert by the Dulcimer group on July 26 at WRLS, and an evening concert on August 6 at WRLS.
 - Peter made a lighthouse presentation to the third grade classes at Kalamazoo Christian Elementary School.
 - Staff meetings started on March 17 and are held every Tuesday at 1 p.m.
 - Cherie, our Office Manager, has been sending out eblasts and also posting information on Facebook and has increased our following with 60 new contacts.
 - Writing articles for the local newspapers, including a new magazine which will be published bi-monthly and is targeted at the 55 and older age group population. Distribution of this new magazine will be in Oceana, Muskegon, Ottawa, Kent, and Allegan counties. First issue is due out in June; Little Sable will be the featured lighthouse in that issue.
- Treasurer’s Report

Bob Baltzer reported for Doug Buikema who was absent. Bob explained and answered various questions from Board Members regarding our Profit & Loss Previous Year Comparison document and Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual documents. Treasurer’s Report was accepted as presented.

- Officers’ Reports

President’s Report—Lenore Janman showed the Board a short PowerPoint presentation on the St. Augustine Lighthouse in Florida and its surrounding buildings. Her presentation gave some new ideas on how to market some items in our gift shop and how to showcase some of our artifacts.

Vice President's Report—Bob Baltzer reported on the Jeffers Family Foundation in Wisconsin. This foundation will fund 50% of the cost for a Historic Structure Report and our Association would have to come with the other 50%. They do require that the Association have an HSR. Bob stated that this foundation is very liberal with money donated to maritime projects. As part of the Vice President's Report, Peter reported that he is continuing to research and apply for appropriate grant funding. Peter presented a booklet to the Board entitled Funding Source Strategy which was developed by the Heritage Group (see Executive Director's Report). Peter will be following through on the dates and applications for grants.

- Committee Reports

None.

Old Business of Board:

- Election of Board officers for 2015

Bob Baltzer made a motion to table this agenda item until the April Board meeting; Sheila Meeusen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- Guidelines for Keepers

Matt Varnum presented a new Volunteer Keeper Conduct code (handout) that he would like our volunteer keepers to sign at their orientation when they come to work their week/weeks at the respective lighthouses. He explained that the handout would be a good reminder as keepers may come to the April orientation and then come back to work their week/weeks a couple of months later. Board Member Sue Ann Schnitker has some suggestions and questions and will meet with Rachel. It was pointed out that the Board does not need to vote on this code.

- Operations Manual

Peter Manting reported that staff needs to review this document and that it will be available for Board members at our May meeting.

New Business of Board:

- It is the recommendation of the Board Personnel Committee that Peter Manting be issued a one-year extension to his current employment contract with an expiration date of December 31, 2016.

Sheila Meeusen made a motion to approve; Bob Baltzer seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

March 28, 2015

- It is the recommendation of the Executive Director to accept the resignation of Leslie Griswold, Assistant Director/Curator of White River Light Station for the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers' Association effective January 24, 2015.

Bob Baltzer made a motion to approve; Sue Ann Schnitker seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- It is the recommendation of the Executive Director to change the job description and title for the employee at White River Light Station from Curator of WRLS/Assistant Director to the new proposed Curator of the White River Light Station and adopt the new Curator of WRLS job description.

Sheila Meeusen moved to approve; Bob Baltzer seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- It is the recommendation of the Executive Director that Matt Varnum be issued an individual employment contract for 2015 for the position of Curator at the White River Light Station, with a work schedule of eight months full time and four months part time for an annual salary of \$19,167.00, plus housing of \$7,000 and utilities of \$2,000.

Bob Baltzer moved to approve; Sheila Meeusen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

It is noted that Matt is well qualified for this position after working for SPLKA as Operations Manager. Matt has his Bachelor's degree in Historic Studies and is working on his Masters' degree Matt started this position on January 31. Peter recommended that he continue with Board approval.

- It is the recommendation of the Executive Director that we pay Matt Varnum a \$500.00 mileage stipend for 2015. Payment will be split in two payments one in April, one in September.

Bob Baltzer made a motion to approve; Sue Ann Schnitker seconded. . Motion passed unanimously.

- It is the recommendation of the Executive Director to hire Jim Hardie to the position of Supervisor of Maintenance and Restoration. The position of Supervisor of Maintenance and Restoration is seven months full time (April through October) and three months part time (November, December, March). The pay for this position is \$23,305.00.

It is noted that Jim is well qualified for the position; Jim's references have checked out and he started in this position on March 3 and was issued a "letter of intent to employ" awaiting Board approval of hiring.

Sheila Meeusen made a motion to approve; Bob Baltzer seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- It is the recommendation of the Executive Director to hire Rachel Bendele to the position of Operations Manager. The position is eight months full time (March through October) and four months part time (November, December, January, February). The pay for this position is \$17,500.00.

It is noted that Rachel is well qualified for the position; her references have checked out. Rachel started in this position on March 9 and was issued a "letter of intent to employ" awaiting Board approval of hiring.

Sue Ann Schnitker made a motion to approve; Bob Baltzer seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- It is the recommendation of the Executive Director that Cheri Hockenberger be hired as a temporary Office Manager for the 2015 season. This is a part-time year round work schedule at the hourly rate of \$10.00 an hour. This is a temporary position until Debbie Dyer is able to fulfill her position.

Sheila Meeusen made a motion to approve; Bob Baltzer seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Topics:

- Annual Meeting/Appoint Committee

Lenore Janman reported that the date is September 19, 2015. The location, menu, and other details need to be planned. The speaker and program needs to be finalized. Three seats are open on the Board this year. Committee members appointed are Sue Ann Schnitker, Lenore Janman, and Sheila Meeusen.

- Dedication of the 145 Trex Boards/Appoint Committee

Peter Manting has scheduled a dedication ceremony in May. Committee members appointed are Sue Ann Schnitker, Lenore Janman, and Bob Baltzer. Peter will be sending out invitations to this ceremony to those who donated trex boards in the coming weeks.

- Height Requirement for Climbing the Towers

Peter Manting explained that 36" is the current height requirement. Some of our volunteer keepers would like it to be higher for safety reasons. It was decided that a meter which is 39½" will be the new height requirement.

- By-laws Revision Committee

Members appointed are Lenore Janman and Roger Pashby.

March 28, 2015

- Board Work Session on April 25, 2015

Lenore Janman reported that the Board work session will be held in a conference room at the Chamber of Commerce office in Ludington. The work session will begin at 9:30 a.m. Sue Ann will supply a continental breakfast for Board members. Peter will be in charge of lunch. This will be an all-day meeting. Board members will be working on developing a new Strategic Plan.

It was noted that the volunteer keeper training is April 24 at the state park building with volunteers arriving between 8:30 and 9:00 a.m. Carmen Tiffany or another representative from White Pine Village will be speaking. Matt Varnum and Rachel Bendele, our Operations Manager, will give a welcome and show a video. Board members are urged to attend the April 24 training as well as the work session on April 25.

- Action Items:

Bob Baltzer explained that LNL is on National Registry. Lenore Janman and Sue Ann Schnitker will be working on getting WRLS onto the National Registry. Deadline for preapproval is the July Board meeting. Closing Manual is finished. Peter Manting met with budget planner for the State Parks Funding Plan. This item is closed. Jim Hardie reported the flagpole at BSP will be extended 4 feet. This will be finished by our May Board meeting. Of the 14 items on the Action Item list, all but 3 are completed.

- Announcements

Rachel has been updating lists of volunteers for 2014 and 2015. She has also sent out brochures to be posted at various places in their community.

Sue Ann announced that the Bed & Breakfast Association will be doing a lighthouse weekend this summer. Details are yet to be finalized.

Peter gave an update on Debbie. A fundraiser is planned for April 4 at the American Legion in Ludington.

Adjourn:

Bob Baltzer made a motion to adjourn; Sheila Meeusen seconded. Meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Meeusen