



SPLKA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

December 19, 2024 9:30am

SPLKA In-person & Virtual Meeting

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

1. Call to Order/Establish a Quorum (AI)

9:32

2. Pledge of Allegiance (AI)

Led by AI

3. Audience Comments/Correspondence (Jack)

- a. Julie Slagter, who is managing gift shops and marketing, joined us.
- b. Gregg was in attendance and said goodbye to the board. He hopes to do some volunteering for SPLKA.
- c. A number of Christmas cards have come in from volunteers.
- d. Jack has met some of the new Fruitland Township board members.

4. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of meeting minutes - November 2024 (AI)

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Nic and seconded Larry. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Treasurers Report (AI)

Balance sheet shows lower bank accounts and assets

Jack noted that we wrote a check in November last year that would have been cashed in December. The check was for roughly the same amount.

We are keeping a bigger stock of inventory in the off season to have inventory for online sales.

Net income this year is higher than last year, which is good.

Al made a pitch to Jim Gallie for help from the State of Michigan. Jim indicated that he needs proposals from the association to get funds.

Al spoke about the rip rap and repair of the brick wall at BSP

Motion to accept the report was made by Bobbi and seconded by Mark. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Staff Reports: (Jack)

-Executive Director

List of past and future meetings in written report

Fundraising collaboration meeting

Jack thinks there may be an open door at Wonderland Tires for a partnership with SPLKA.

There is a podcast available now

The new maintenance person is starting in January and Julie started on the 10th. She raised \$450 dollars on line in two days right after starting.

He is working on reports to the cities and state of Michigan.

Jack has met with Jim Gallie and met the new park interpreter.

Jim stated that an alert will go out two weeks prior to the opening of reservations for the state park.

-Marketing

-Operations

Amy is starting of what-if plans for BSP

-Maintenance

Gregg has been visiting all locations.

Jim Foster has been hired and will overlap with Gregg for 2 weeks.

The trailer is back at the LSP house. It looks great. Repairs went well.

We will re-establish the Restoration and Maintenance Committee in late January. The committee is to include: Dean, Nic and Larry

Dean asked about inspecting the tower with a drone. The HSR was very thorough. Jim said that a No Cost Use Permit would allow a drone inspection.

-Site Manager

Training new staff

Looking at alternative events for WRLS

Looking at kids' events

Continuing concert series on a smaller scale

b. Officer Reports: (optional)

- President

Jim thanked Al for his leadership through the past years and keeping the organization solvent through the trying times over the past few years.

Mark thanked Al for staying on for six years as president.

Rob encouraged Al to focus on the accomplishments which were huge.

- VP

No report

5. Committee Reports: commentary and questions (led by committee people)

a. Finance –

No report.

b. Education – Nov. 22 Meeting Minutes, Committee Chair Needed

Liz Lewis checked out the entire SPLKA website. Her insights will be forwarded to Julie.

Julie is sprinkling advertisements for educational materials available.

Mark is willing to continue as chair and will keep the Board informed.

c. Archive –

Jack had conversations with Fruitland Township. He wants to evaluate the storage location that they have offered. It is dry and will be temperature and humidity controlled. He would like to move the archives at WRLS to that location. He would like to move photos, awards, etc. Large items would stay at WRLS. Jack is trying to sort out what is ours and what is theirs.

e. Personnel – Julie Slagter (Dec 10, 2025), James Foster (Jan 2, 2025)

- i. New hires have started. Amy started in November, Julie in December and James will start in January.

f. Outreach –

- i. Reached out to Bobbi for help getting auction items.
- ii. Jack and Bobbi have a meeting set up for January 16.

6. Unfinished Business

a. Manistee North Pier Light (MNPL) – Insurance Update

An insurance proposal has been received. It has been a struggle to find coverage. Insurance companies have stopped taking on new lighthouses. The company who has provided an estimate is owned by Nation Wide and is highly rated. Jack recommends that we go with them and keep an eye on the company. He also recommends that we continue to look.

Al recommends that we approve it to get us started.

This policy covers guests, workman’s comp for paid staff members. It covers the same thing as our other policies.

Nic called for the question and moved to approve. Dean seconded. Jack modified that we move forward if the City of Manistee is still on board and has necessary insurance for their structures. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Trex Boards

Dean researched the cost of trek boards and feels it is about 50/50 cost/profit. He also stated that there are hidden costs. Aging volunteer base makes putting them out more difficult. We have used Gregg’s equipment to put them out in recent years. Renting equipment would need to be budgeted. Dean called for a better system of monitoring and tracking trek boards. Some boards need to be retired, and purchasers contacted to see if they want to replace at a minimal

cost or full price. Gregg had an idea to control the growth of the program. He proposed a 5-year plan for boards with the option to renew at 5 years.

Jack likes the concept of putting dates on them. He is not in favor of a 5-year plan. We have paper that links board to what is said. He feels that raising prices will help control growth. He suggested raising price incrementally and allowing a keeper's rate for boards.

The board agrees that this is not a situation requiring a board vote. It is a marketing issue to be determined by Jack and Julie.

c. Volunteer Insurance

Current insurance offers \$5000 for medical expenses for volunteers.

Jack would like to include a liability waiver for volunteers. He would like to have photo permission as a second waiver. Island insurance is looking at a separate volunteer insurance policy that volunteers could opt into.

Jack will check with the insurance carrier about coverage for third party.

Nic moved to approve the waivers and looking into opt in insurance for volunteers. Larry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dean has been trying to connect with the Little River tribe to discuss fundraising efforts. Initial contacts were encouraging, but there has been no further response to emails. He is encouraged to visit them when in the area.

7. New Business:

a. Celebrity Bartender

Jack met with Ludington Bay Brewing Company and they have seen a decrease in attendance overall this year. They want to work with new non-profits which excludes SPLKA this year.

Jack proposed a Turning On party for the launch of camera on LNBL in May.

b. WRLS 150th Anniversary – June 21st

- Fruitland Township, Dec 16 Update

They approved Jack's proposal for celebration, which includes beer, wine, police, etc.

The new Fruitland Township board of trustees is very supportive of the lighthouse.

Date for the 150th celebration is June 21.

Susan moved that the board approve the application for a liquor license for the celebration. Nic seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

c. MLAP Grant Completion

Application for reimbursement has been made. All documentation has been submitted.

Completion of the HSR makes us eligible for major grants.

d. COLA

COLA for this year was set at 2.5%. A 3% raise for long term employees is in the proposed budget.

A raise of 5% for Sara is included as she is taking on a lot of additional responsibilities.

These increases still leave a \$3000 surplus for SPLKA.

Nic moved to approve the proposed budget and Larry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

e. 2025 Annual Meeting

Jack is exploring venues in White Lake community. The Eagles Lodge is nice and has 150 capacity. Jack would have to become a member and tickets must be sold.

There is \$400 rental. He was hoping for a Saturday in September but it would probably have to be a Thursday. The Board is concerned that having the meeting on a weeknight would reduce participation.

Jack will see if Sunday is an option and will continue looking for a facility.

f. Approval of Officers

President: Susan Land

Vice-President: Erika Nielsen

Treasurer: Kathleen Guider

Secretary: Dean Collingwood

Al called for any additional nominations twice. Hearing none, Nic moved to have the secretary make motion and cast a single ballot. Bobbi seconded the motion. Secretary cast one unanimous ballot for the proposed slate.

New office space

There is a building available in downtown Ludington. Jack has a check list.

The site is close to the entrance to the SS Badger.

Jack feels that the space is perfect for SPLKA. Nic agrees.

Nic moved that the board approve Jack signing a contract with a realtor to look at the building. Mark seconded the motion. The board approved the motion.

8. Executive Session

No session

9. Open discussion

Good bye to Al

10. Motion to adjourn

11:36 Rob moved to adjourn and Mark seconded.

Next scheduled Board Meeting January 16, 2025 at 9:30 am, Zoom and in the office.