



SPLKA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 17, 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 October 17, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. in the White Lake Community Library, 3900 White Lake Drive, White Hall, Michigan. The Vice President, Sue Ann Schnitker, called the meeting to order. The following Board members were present: Sue Ann Schnitker, Sheila Meeusen, Doug Buikema, Bob Baltzer, Roger Pashby, and John Truxell. Board members absent were: Lenore Janman. Staff members present were: Executive Director Peter Manting, Shirley Mitchell, Jim Hardie, and WRLS Curator Matt Varnum. Guests: Kim McDaniel, Mary Butterick, Amy Harrington, Noah Harrington, Kirk Lindquist, Barb Lindquist, Patti Robinson, Ted Robinson, Tom Thompson,

Pledge of Allegiance:

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

Approval of Minutes of Board Meeting of August 22, 2015:

Sue Ann Schnitker submitted two corrections: Under Item 4, Lenore Janman read Shirley Mitchell's letter of resignation; under Item 9b, the photo of White River Light Station will be added to the Strategic Plan brochure cover.

Bob Baltzer submitted a correction under 8c: Kim's last name is McDaniel.

Minutes were accepted as corrected.

Audience Comments/Correspondence:

As there were a number of guests in attendance, Sue Ann asked all persons present to introduce themselves. Noah Harrington, Historian of White Friends, expressed concerns about the condition and storage method of the artifacts in the basement of WRLS. Noah would like to see those artifacts moved back to a display area in WRLS. Noah expressed concern as to how the sump pumps were installed and that additional shelving will not solve preservation issues for paper artifacts.

Tom Thompson of the Planning Commission for Fruitland Township also expressed problems with moisture in the basement at WRLS. Tom stated that the basement at Fruitland Township Hall would be a better place for storage.

Jim Hardie, SPLKA Maintenance Supervisor, responded that these basement issues were addressed in June when the basement flooded. Sump pumps were installed this summer to help rectify some of the water problems. Jim stated that Fruitland Township also had water problems in the parking lot at WRLS and that most of those problems were solved. Jim stated that SPLKA will install another dehumidifier in the basement, and we will be sealing the walls in the basement. Jim stated that it is now a matter of cleanup to protect artifacts. Future plans are to possibly digitally scan the paper artifacts. The garage at the residence for LSP is also being currently used for storage of some of the artifacts.

Noeh Harrington mentioned that future repairs should be split between Fruitland and SPLKA. Peter Manting mentioned that under the lease agreement, Fruitland is not obligated to share expenses. However, Fruitland has been very cooperative in the past by splitting expenses with our Association.

Jim Hardie stated that there is a roof drain right outside the tower, not in the tower, for water drainage. Jim stated that water sometimes comes from the ground and seeps through the cracks.

Amy Harrington said the Friends group is working on the landscape around WRLS for the spring of 2016. Amy also reported that GVSU is looking into the possibility of doing an archeologic dig on the grounds.

Peter Manting also thanked Friends for keeping WRLS open on Labor Day.

Committee Meetings:

Board and staff members met in their committees for approximately 30 minutes.

Reports:

- Executive Director's Report

Peter Manting reported on the following:

- All our lights will be closed by the end of October.
- Peter is working with Dr. Rick Plummer, Executive Director of White Pine Village, to put together a winter speakers' series which will promote both organizations.
- Jody Johnston, Silver Lake Park Manager, has agreed to allow SPLKA to sell merchandise at LSP on a daily basis and possibly having a trailer on site to store merchandise.
- A panel currently on display at Silver Lake Park which gives information regarding the dunes and lighthouses may be redone in 2016 to more specifically highlight our Association.

- Peter is working on several small grants to Oxy Chemical, Great Lake Energy and DTE Energy to support some of our current programming.
 - Small grants from Consumers Power, Boeing Aircraft, Progressive Insurance, and Bank of America were generated from keepers whose employers donate based on time that they volunteer for our organization.
 - Peter submitted copies of Bus Tours Magazine which featured Big Sable Point on its cover for its September, October, 2015 issue. Brad Reed supplied photos for the cover.
 - Also Peter wrote an article for the current West Michigan Plus Magazine featuring White River Light Station.
 - Other media including a Travel Michigan radio program, Pure Michigan, the Travel Channel, and Mlive have featured or will feature programs and articles on our lights.
 - Peter attended the Great Lakes Lighthouse Festival in Alpena in October.
 - Peter and Shirley put together the 2016 budget and it will be presented at this meeting. Peter hopes to set up interviews for her position by the end of October.
 - The final paperwork for the HSR for LSP has been filed.
 - The Go Fund account for WRLS has been fully funded.
- Treasurer's Report

Doug Buikema reported that we have seen a revenue increase of 35% over what we had at this time last year. Shirley Mitchell reported that SPLKA Assets are in good shape. Shirley reported that 223 trex boards have been sold. The figures in the SPLKA Asset Report still have the money from those boards in the checking and savings accounts. However, we will need to expend some of those revenues soon because of expenses over the winter. Income is up due to the tower tour increase, there has been an increase in contributions, and a profit was realized on bus tour days.

Treasurer's Report was accepted as reported.

- Officers' Reports

Vice President:

Sue Ann Schnitker congratulated and remarked on the great staff we have. She expressed thanks from Board members.

- Committee Reports (including Standing and Ad Hoc Committees)
 - Goal I—Fundraising::

Bob Baltzer reported that 223 trex boards have been sold. This committee is also working on having an Honor Wall listing donors of major contributions, possibly including interviews and news articles.

- Goal II—Physical Facilities:

John Truxell reported that restoration of the workshop/garage is proceeding at WRLS. Prints have been made that show the construction of building, electrical outlets, etc. However, John reported that the architect needed more detailed prints and subsequent prints were changed to reflect more detail. The architect fell and has been in the hospital with a concussion but his staff is looking at the prints. After they finish, the prints have to be taken back to Fruitland Township for approval before the actual work can begin at WRLS. The spring of 2016 will probably be the actual starting time on this project.

- Goal III—Education:

Sheila Meeusen reported that her committee would like to focus on developing and training volunteer presenters to make presentations about our lights. Sheila suggested putting an article in our next eblast asking for volunteer presenters. Once we have a list of people, we will begin making and distributing copies of a standard presentation which can be given to those people so that all presentations would be similar. There will also need to be a training session for all presenters. She also suggested possibly copyrighting our activity booklets.

- Goal IV—Establishing Positive Relationships:

Matt Varnum reported that his committee is focused on working more with the state parks, having better connections in Lansing and with other non-profit organizations, and connecting with the local population, especially with White Lake.

- (Retention) Ad Hoc Committee::

Sue Ann Schnitker submitted a one-page report on the committee's work. Sue Ann reported that Peter has been invited to join this committee. Bob Baltzer also reported that the key to retaining staff members is to empower our Executive Director to keep staff. Bob emphasized giving Executive Director more authority from the Board. Goal is to keep staff at least 3-5 years. Current committee members are Roger Pashby, Sue Ann Schnitker, Bob Baltzer, and Peter Manting.

Old Business of Board:

Roger Pashby reported that we need to revisit our tower tour increases. The number of tower tours were up at every light except for LNBL (records were not complete). This

will be a recommendation for our November meeting. Sheila will email Peter to remind him. Shirley Mitchell said the office is tracking number of climbers this year.

New Business of Board:

- First Reading of the 2016 Budget

Board members were given copies prior to this meeting to review. Peter Manting reported that the figures for the tower tours were based on what we actually took in this year. The budget total is \$444,420.00 and allows for the increase in things like wages and FICA taxes. Peter also expressed a thank you to Jim Hardie for putting together a forecast for 2016 in the maintenance area. Also, thanks to Matt for getting figures on installing security cameras at WRLS in 2016. Peter reported that money for replacement of beds and furniture at BSP is included, dividing the expense over 4 years. Shirley Mitchell reported that there is \$16,000 in contingency funds for emergencies. There was discussion on what the 2016 figure should be. The current budget figure for 2016 is \$17,600. Bob Baltzer will write a recommendation for November meeting. .

- It is the Recommendation of the Executive Director that the SPLKA Board of Directors accept Shirley Mitchell's resignation effective 12/31/2015.

John Truxell made a motion to accept; Roger Pashby seconded. Motion passed unanimously with regrets.

- It is the Recommendation of the Board President that the Board approve a 3% increase to the salary ranges for SPLKA employees, thus changing our Employee Compensation Policy 308/501.

^Doug Buikema moved to accept, Bob Baltzer seconded. Motion passed unanimously,

Discussion Topics:

- Discussion of Board Self-Evaluation

Sue Ann Schnitker tabled this business until our November meeting.

- Discussion about moving Board meetings from Saturday A.M. to Friday A.M.

Sue Ann Schnitker opined that she would like to see staff at board meetings. Peter Manting reported that the staff is not in favor of having meetings on Fridays. Matt Varnum reported that staff has Friday duties so he is not in favor. Having meetings on Fridays would eliminate some working people from serving on the Board. Changing locations for Board meetings was also discussed. Peter Manting, Lenore Janman, and Sue Ann Schnitker will submit dates for next year's meetings at our November meeting.

- Gift Shop

Roger Pashby reported that during his BSP tour, the gift shop runs out of supplies several times. Roger suggested that we find a better way (at present, staff must purchase supplies and bring them to the shops) to keep our gift shops supplied with merchandise by possibly getting a vendor. No decision was made.

- Announcements

Sue Ann Schnitker announced that the Board and staff is invited to Cartier Mansion for the November Board meeting and asked everyone to bring an appetizer for the Board meeting. Our meeting will be held in the Carriage House at the mansion.

Adjourn:

John Truxell made a motion to adjourn, Doug Buikema seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Meeusen