

**Old Fort Madison Commission
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Wednesday, October 17, 2012 at 5:15 PM
City Council Chambers**

PRESENT: Martin Graber, Charles Block, David Moehn, Roxanna Crail, Carol Foss, Sharon Harp, Kris Schoene, Dr. Eugene Watkins (Site Manager) Neal Boeding (Council Liaison).

ABSENT: John Luna (Management Analyst) - Excused.

GUESTS: Byron Smith (City Manager), Linda Baxter, Ted Kolbet, Bob Foss.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: by Moehn at 5:15 PM. Moehn Welcomed new Commission Member, Kris Schoene.

APPROVAL OF September 19, 2012 MINUTES: Printed copies of the Minutes were not available. (Note: Minutes are available on the City Website.)

SITE MANAGER'S REPORT:

- A. Girl Scouts were scheduled for an October 6 overnight in the Old Fort.
- B. Scout Groups are working out well.
- C. Old Fort Staff is keeping busy with tours.
 - a. Tours are scheduled for October 5, 9, and 19.
 - b. Tours include:
 - i. School Groups.
 - ii. Bus Tours.
 - iii. American Cruise Lines.
 1. This was very well received.
 2. The group was bussed to Fort Madison from the boats docking point.
 3. It would be convenient if boats could dock at the Fort Madison dock.
- D. The Old Fort will be open weekends through the end of October at which time hours will be curtailed.
- E. Watkins was asked to speak at the University of Iowa for the October 11 unveiling and dedication of War of 1812 informational panels in the Old Capital museum.
 - a. Artifacts from the 2009 Battlefield Site dig by the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) were on display.
 - b. Watkins was approached by OSA to put information from his talk online.
 - c. **OSA expressed interest in Watkins' book.**
- F. Fire at the Old Fort:
 - a. The fire, discovered on October 1, was started in the wood pile between the **Enlisted Men's Barracks.**
 - b. There was extensive damage to both buildings.
 - c. The fire is still under investigation.
 - d. No artifacts were lost.
 - e. Some of the beds and mattresses were lost.
 - i. These were handmade and will be difficult to replace.
- G. Ted Kolbet represented Fort Madison at the Mississinewa Battlefield 1812 Bicentennial

event near Marion, Indiana.

- H. Franz Hoenig and Trent Lorton represented Fort Madison at the Queenston Heights - Lewiston War of 1812 Bicentennial event near Lewiston, New York.
- I. Moehn added that the October 11 event at the University of Iowa was an elaborate affair and included an extensive buffet of refreshments representative of the 1812 period.

INCOME / EXPENSE REPORT: None.

GIFT SHOP REPORT:

- A. A written Gift Shop Report for September was submitted by Linda Baxter.
 - a. A 2012 one day record (Admissions/Gift Shop) total of \$1,861 in receipts was set on September 8 (first day of Siege).
 - b. An all time monthly record total of \$7,612 in receipts was set in September.
 - c. The Old Fort had guests from all 50 states this season.
- B. A big draw for the Old Fort during the Siege Weekend was the Lewis & Clark Fife & Drum Corps.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Informational Signs along 4th Street.
 - a. Public Works has not yet picked up the signs.
 - b. Stands for the Signs have not yet been designed.
 - c. Signs have not yet been installed.
 - d. Acquisition of the Battlefield Site could change placement of signs.
- B. Bicentennial Weekend for the Old Fort.
 - a. Moehn stated that people liked seeing the cannon in the parade.
 - b. Moehn stated that the Lewis & Clark Fife & Drum Corps was well received.
- C. Status of new member with the Mayor.
 - a. Kris Schoene has been approved by the City Council to replace former Commission member Neal Boeding, who is now on the City Council.
- D. Status of battlefield site owned by Holy Trinity.
 - a. City Manager Byron Smith provided an update, and fielded questions, on the status of the Old Fort Battlefield Site (the block bounded by 4th & 5th Streets and Avenues G & H).
 - b. A private development group is in negotiations for the property which could result in a hotel being constructed on the NW corner of the block.
 - i. The development group has indicated an interest in offering to sell the east portion of the block to The Archaeological Conservancy.
 - ii. This could happen within the next three months.
 - iii. The Conservancy buys archaeologically significant sites to hold and protect - **not necessarily to develop.**
 - iv. This could be a Win-Win for Fort Madison: develop the west side of the block and preserve the battlefield on the east side.
 - c. The National Park Service is advertising grant availability (typically \$5,000 to \$75,000) aimed at planning, and perhaps archaeological work, on battlefield sites.
- E. Status of monies donated to Old Fort Madison.
 - a. Donations are being passed through to the Friends of Old Fort Madison (FoOFM) from the Community Foundation.
 - b. FoOFM has been trying to get non-profit status but the process has been complicated.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Plans for possible Christmas activities at the Old Fort.
 - a. Harp is working on obtaining donations of lights to decorate the Old Fort for the Holidays.
 - b. Lighting could include the three blockhouses, factory, quarters and stockade.
 - c. Members stressed that the lights should be visible from the street.
 - d. John Luna is looking into locating a Christmas tree to be erected at the Old Fort.
 - e. Since the Community Parade of Lights is scheduled for November 23, the weekend before (17-18) will be targeted for the Old Fort event.
 - f. It was suggested the tree be placed in the garden area.
 - g. Foss will work with Fort Madison school art teachers to have students prepare decorations.
 - h. Watkins will work to publicize the event.
- B. Possible Bicentennial Activities for 2013.
 - a. Moehn received an email from Mary Ottonson, Fort Madison Main Street Director, outlining the availability of grant money from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
 - i. Preservation grants are available for planning and education.
 - ii. Moehn is not sure if these could be applied to the replica Old Fort.
 - iii. Perhaps money could be applied to the battlefield signage and programming.
 - b. Moehn suggested that something be done in 2013 to commemorate the bicentennial of the March and June attacks and the burning and abandonment of the original Fort Madison, possibly at siege time.
- C. Byron Smith stressed the need to market the Old Fort.
- D. The Catfish Bend lease on the dock runs until 2016.
- E. Harp proposed that the Commission do something to recognize the contributions (including cooking meals and volunteering) of the Fort family makes to the Old Fort.
- F. The November meeting of the Old Fort Commission will be held November 14 due to the Thanksgiving holiday the following week.

ADJOURNMENT: Graber MOVED, and Foss SECONDED, to ADJOURN. Motion CARRIED 7 - 0.

Meeting was ADJOURNED by Moehn at 6:24 PM.