

**Old Fort Commission
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Wednesday, December 19, 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), John Luna (Management Analyst), and Neal Boeding (Council Liaison).

ABSENT: None.

GUESTS PRESENT: Byron Smith (City Manager), Jimmy Wendorf (RSVP Director), Ted Kolbet, Doug Olsen, Representatives of the Ford Family, and Bob Foss.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: by Moehn at 5:15 PM.

APPROVAL OF November 14, 2012 MINUTES: Block MOVED, and Schoene SECONDED, to APPROVE the MINUTES. Motion CARRIED 7 - 0.

COMMENTS BY, AND DISCUSSIONS WITH, BYRON SMITH, CITY MANAGER (these New Business Agenda Item were moved up to accommodate Smith's schedule):

- A. Smith stated that the City's Employment Contract with Dr. Watkins has expired.
 - a. An original agreement with Council allowed funds to be diverted from Capital Account to fund a fulltime Site Manager.
 - b. If it is desired to continue with a fulltime site manager the Commission needs to be looking for ways to fund renewal of his contract and determine how to proceed.
 - c. Smith feels that Watkins has a great deal of knowledge about the Fort and has added a lot to Fort Madison by providing much historical data.
 - d. Crail questioned why we can't continue as in the past. Smith replied that 10% of the Budget had been set aside for Capital expense but the Fort Revenue won't cover the expense.
- B. Graber MOVED, and Crail SECONDED, to continue the Employment Contract with Dr. Watkins.
 - i. A discussion followed:
 1. Graber - is pleased with Watkins' work and cited the excellent program Watkins presented at a recent FM Rotary Club meeting.
 2. Moehn - has worked with Watkins for the past several years and feels that Watkins is doing an excellent job and deserves more money. He further stated that Watkins provides services way beyond what his job description calls for.
 3. Kolbet - noted that Watkins' work at the Fort is known throughout the region and he is recognized for his extensive knowledge.
 4. Foss - wants to go on record that Watkins is an asset to the community and we need to preserve that asset.
 5. Schoene - has worked with Watkins on a school project and was favorably impressed. He concurred that Watkins is a great asset.
 6. Harp - related that after Watkins gave a talk to students they all said the he is the smartest man in Fort Madison.
 - ii. The QUESTION was CALLED and the MOTION CARRIED 7 - 0.
- C. Smith stated that one of the results of the restructuring in City Hall was that RSVP

Director has now been funded to full time status.

- a. Jimmy Wendorf, RSVP Director, will use the hours that were devoted to City work and apply them to becoming Marketing Manager for the Old Fort.
 - b. Wendorf will spend about 10 hours a week to:
 - i. Get the word out about, and publicize, the Old Fort.
 - ii. Write Grant Applications to fund research projects.
 - iii. Work with the Developer to utilize and develop the Battlefield.
 - iv. Attract involvement from the National Park Service.
 - c. Moehn mentioned that the Hotel and Motel Tax Originally called for 40% of the revenue to flow to the Old Fort. The last resolution only called for 25% for Operation and 10% for Capital.
 - d. Wendorf stated that he will also be seeking Grants for Brochures, Uniforms and to create Events. He reminded the Commission that the tricky thing about Grants is that you can write them but they are not always granted.
- D. Smith discussed the burned out portion of the Old Fort:
- a. Repair estimates have been in the range of \$50 to \$200k.
 - b. **The City's insurance carrier says that repair specifications are needed.**
 - c. The insurance company adjuster will have input into the repair process.
 - d. The City has retained an Architect to evaluate the Old Fort's burned buildings and to prepare specifications for the repairs.
- E. Smith also suggested that the Commission consider all needs for the entire Old Fort complex:
- a. What to do going forward.
 - b. Buildings are leaning.
 - c. Foundations are settling.
 - d. Keep costs in mind.
 - e. Do we structurally improve the Old Fort?
 - f. Or, do we make the Old Fort look more authentic?
 - g. Is the Reconstructed Fort even the way to go?
 - i. Graber suggested the Commission think in terms of, What do we see the Old Fort as being twenty years from now?
 - ii. Schoene stated that he feels the Reconstructed Old Fort, concept should be continued.
 - h. **Moehn stated that the fireplaces in the Enlisted Men's Quarters are in the wrong location.**
 - i. **Smith replied that the Insurance repair won't make changes but will put things back as they were.** Smith went on to say that a possible use of bond funding could be to make repairs to the Old Fort and correct inaccuracies of construction.
- F. Moehn asked for an update on the status of the Hotel proposed for the Battlefield site.
- G. Smith replied that the Developer is working on financing but is behind schedule.
- H. When asked about the status of the investigation of the fire at the Old Fort, Smith mentioned that the investigation is ongoing and is moving in the right direction.
- a. Foss asked if cameras could be installed at the Old Fort.
 - i. Smith replied that yes, they could but funds would be needed.
- I. At that point Smith concluded his remarks and the Commission thanked him and Wendorf for taking the time to appear at the meeting and update the Commission. **The meeting returned to the agenda with the Site Manager's Report.**

SITE MANAGER'S REPORT:

- A. Watkins reported on another fire issue:
 - a. **The Ford's discovered a fire, while cooking** with the Royal Rangers, under the

Second Floor Fireplace in the Officer's Quarters.

- b. They had to cut out a portion of the floor to insure the fire had been extinguished.
- c. Evidence of an older burn was discovered at that time.
- B. Wind blew ornaments off the Christmas tree. These were collected and returned to the students at the school.
- C. Watkins is working with Wendorf on ideas for the future.
- D. Watkins will be on vacation from Monday, December 24 until Monday, January 7, 2013.

INCOME / EXPENSE REPORT: Written report provided.

GIFT SHOP REPORT: Written report provided.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Informational Signage along 4th Street.
 - a. One sign has been installed and another is being printed.
- B. Battlefield Site now owned by Holy Trinity (Status of possible sale to Hotel Group).
 - a. HTC is now working with a new Developer.
- C. Status of monies donated to Old Fort Madison.
 - a. No update.
 - b. Moehn stated that the North Lee County Community Foundation made a contribution of \$333 toward the setup of an endowment. If the money is not spent it will return to the Foundation. Funds must reach \$10,000. Does the Old Fort Commission wish to setup and endowment? If so, the funds can be returned.
- D. Bicentennial Activities for 2013.
 - a. Moehn suggested possible activity in November to commemorate the fall of the Fort.
 - b. Moehn suggested possible activity in the summer to commemorate several small battles in July.
 - c. Moehn asked the Commission to be thinking of other activities.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Show of appreciation to Chuck and Cheryl Ford Family for all of their help with Old Fort Activities.
 - a. Fords thought this meeting was last week.
 - b. The Commission felt that it would be nice to have them present at an Old Fort Commission meeting to give them thanks on the record.
 - c. The presentation will be rescheduled in order to have a photo op for publication of the recognition.
- B. Update on insurance information and potential repairs to the two buildings damaged in the October 1st arson fire at the Old Fort.
 - a. **Covered during the City Manager's presentation.**
- C. Fire damage discovered by Royal Rangers under the upstairs fireplace of the Officer Quarters.
 - a. **Covered during the Site Manager's report.**
- D. Byron Smith, City Manager, will discuss options for additional revenue for ongoing operating expenses at the Old Fort.
 - a. **Covered during the City Manager's presentation.**
- E. Jimmy Wendorf is the new marketing director for the Old Fort.
 - a. **Covered during the City Manager's presentation.**
- F. Luna stated that the position formerly held by Jean Bergman will now be handled by

Dawn Helling.

ADJOURNMENT: Graber MOVED, and Block SECONDED, to ADJOURN and go into BUDGET PLANNING WORKSHOP SESSION. Motion carried 7-0.

Meeting was ADJOURNED by Moehn at 6:03 PM.

During the BUDGET PLANNING WORKSHOP SESSION Representatives of the Ford Family arrived for the OFC Meeting recognition presentation.

MEETING CALLED BACK TO ORDER: with a quorum present, by Moehn at 6:23 PM.

NEW BUSINESS ITEM:

- A. Show of appreciation to Chuck and Cheryl Ford Family for all of their help with Old Fort Activities.
 - a. Watkins presented the family with a Certificate of Appreciation, along with a Thank you card and gift from the Commission Members.
 - b. Block took a photo which was to be sent to Watkins for transmittal and Publication.

ADJOURNMENT: Graber MOVED, and Foss SECONDED, to ADJOURN. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Meeting was ADJOURNED by Moehn at 6:26 PM.