

**Old Fort Commission
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Wednesday, June 17, 2015 at 5:30 PM
Old Fort Madison Factory in Riverview Park**

PRESENT: Charles Block, Dave Moehn, Carol Foss, Sharon Harp, Chuck Ford, Russell Savage, Dr. Eugene Watkins (Site Manager), David Varney (City Manager), John Luna (Management Analyst), Brian Wright (City Council Liaison), and Linda Baxter (Gift Shop).

ABSENT: None

GUESTS: Andy Andrews, Ted Kolbet, Franz Hoenig, Doug Harp, and Shelly Dowling.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: by Moehn at 5:36 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Foss MOVED, and Harp SECONDED, to APPROVE the MINUTES of the April 15, 2015 Regular Meeting. MOTION CARRIED 6 – 0.

SITE MANAGER'S REPORT:

1. Old Fort staff has been busy with tours.
 - a. May 7 – Danville Elementary.
 - b. May 8 – New London Elementary.
 - c. May 9 – Pack 25 Cub Scouts.
 - d. May 19 – Grimes Elementary.
 - e. May 21 – Lincoln Elementary.
 - f. May 25 – Holy Trinity.
 - g. July – Hope Haven will tour.
 - h. On May 6 Watkins spoke to 8th graders at the school. They will make a trip to the Old Fort so they can actually view the old weapons.
2. So far this year there have been many tours and many visitors representing:
 - a. 33 states.
 - b. 45 Iowa towns.
 - c. 15 foreign countries.
 - d. 1256 visitors into the gift shop.
 - e. Grand total for 24 days of operation and 7 or 8 tours is \$6,446.
3. Old Fort staff has begun training for The Big Event on July 4. Activities will include:
 - a. Cooking.
 - b. Musket demonstrations.
 - c. The Cannon will be fired 18 times at 1:00 PM on the 4th.
 - d. A volunteer is still needed to perform the toasts which accompany each firing.
4. A repeat of Rifles, Raptors, and Reenactors will be held on August 1 and 2.
 - a. The event may be renamed to something more representative of the activities.
5. Siege will be held on the usual days in September.
 - a. Still need \$450 to pay for the Drum & Fife Corps.
 - b. 13 reenactors will be coming from Fort Osage.
 - c. Housing will be needed for the groups.

6. Watkins hasn't yet head back from the National Park Service (NPS) on the status of the National Battlefield Grant Report.
7. Watkins has applied for a \$15,000 grant from Midwest Foundation to help cover the cost of necessary structural repairs in the Old Fort.
8. Volunteers – Watkins cited several of the volunteers:
 - a. Chuck Ford has done a lot of cooking.
 - b. Ted Kolbet has spent a lot of time volunteering, often coming directly from work.
 - c. Tim Watkins has been an invaluable resource.
 - d. Tim Gilbert is a frequent volunteer.
 - e. Shelly Dowling is also a reliable volunteer.
9. Watkins has finished writing biographies of soldiers stationed at the original Fort Madison.

INCOME / EXPENSE REPORT:

1. Luna provided a spreadsheet of income and expense.
 - a. YTD Budgeted Income and Expense is: \$111,700.
 - b. YTD Actual Income is: \$ 66,358.
 - c. YTD Actual Expense is: \$ 86,974.

GIFT SHOP REPORT:

1. Baxter provided a detail written report of Income and Attendance figures for March, April, and May, 2015.
 - a. Comparisons of similar statistics from 2010 were included.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Need a new member for the Old Fort Commission.
 - a. A new member is still needed.
 - b. Moehn has approached 6 or 7 people.
 - c. If anyone has suggestions for members please pass the information to Moehn or have that person contact City Hall.
2. No meeting May 20, 2015, due to lack of quorum.
 - a. No meeting was held on the scheduled date of May 20, 2015, due to lack of a quorum.
3. City is planning to replace the sewer line along the south side of Avenue H in 2016. This will need to be approved by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).
 - a. Moehn stated the trench will not be wide but is to be between 7 and 18 feet deep and may possibly cut through some original Old Fort buildings and perhaps destroy some artifacts.
 - b. The trench may actually be dug on the north side of Avenue H.
 - c. City has a budget of \$30,000 for an archaeological consultant.
 - i. Moehn has been led to believe that members of the Old Fort Commission will be allowed to stand and watch the excavation but will not be allowed to participate in the dig.
 - d. Current plan is if any human remains, or artifacts of significance, are encountered the dig will be rerouted and the Old Fort Commission will be notified.
 - i. Varney suggested that the Old Fort Commission (OFC) come up with contingency plans and recommendations to cover various "What-IF" scenarios.

- ii. Moehn stressed that artifacts and structures may be widespread throughout the area but locations are not known because the area has never been completely excavated.
 - iii. Contact the City Manager before starting.
 - e. Andrews pointed out that a 7 foot dig probably wouldn't contact any items from the original Old Fort era because of the large amounts of fill that have been placed on the area over the years.
- 4. Update on Battlefield Site.
 - a. Andrews reported that the title for the War of 1812 Battlefield should transfer to the North Lee County Historic Society (NLCHS) by the end of June.
 - b. The NLCHS may sell parking spots on the site to people wanting a place to park to view the July 4th fireworks.
 - c. Wright suggested having a freewill donation rather than having a fixed charge.
 - d. Andrews reported that the title contains a lien against using the land for certain retailing operations until Dollar General's loan is paid off.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. Non-profit status canceled by State as of May 30, 2015?
 - a. Moehn stated that Luna and Watkins received a letter from the Iowa Secretary of State's Office stating that the non-profit certificate has expired.
 - i. Moehn stated that he is not sure what this refers to.
 - ii. Moehn went on to say that the original Friends of the Old Fort organization (FotOF) had already been dissolved.
 - b. Luna stated that he thinks the letter probably refers to the original FotOF.
 - c. Luna will check with Bill Napier to see if this has any bearing on the Commission.
- 2. Viking Cruise Line schedule, 2017.
 - a. Varney stated that the City has given Viking Cruise Lines all the information that they have asked for.
 - b. Watkins and Jean Peiton (Tourism Directory) have prepared a spreadsheet detailing impact on the Old Fort Replica due to Viking Cruise Line stops at the Fort Madison dock in Riverview Park.
 - i. The spreadsheet was distributed to the Commission.
 - c. Watkins stated that if the estimates hold he'll have to look for full time staffing of the Old Fort Replica – perhaps 4 to 5 additional people.
 - d. Watkins stated that visitors definitely appreciate live interpreters as opposed to having to do self guided tours.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

- 1. Moehn, in referring to the agenda item of the sewage line, stated that the Public Works Director wants various groups to come up with a Master Plan that would deal with the impact of any future projects on areas of historical interest.
 - a. This would fall to groups such as the OFC, NLCHS, Historic Preservation, or any other groups that have an interest in the history of Fort Madison.
- 2. Moehn provided a lengthy narrative as to why it would be difficult to provide a Master Plan.
 - a. The actual extent of the original old Fort Madison is not known because it hasn't been fully excavated.

- i. Only minimal professional excavations have been conducted.
 - b. The extent of the impact of the original Fort Madison was much more than just the Fort grounds.
 - c. There could have been other cabins or structures in the area – perhaps as far away as within a mile (or more) radius.
 - d. There are other items of historical interest in Fort Madison than just the original Fort.
 - i. It isn't possible to catalog all of these because actual locations are not known.
- 3. No action was taken on the Master Plan recommendation.

ADJOURNMENT: Foss MOVED, and Block SECONDED, to ADJOURN the MEETING. MOTION CARRIED 6 – 0.

MEETING was ADJOURNED by Moehn at 6:53 PM.

David Moehn
Chair, Old Fort Commission

Date