

Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park Board Meeting Minutes for August 18, 2012 (9:05 to 10:50 AM)

In attendance:

J. Burd, D. Burd, A. Weltman, S. Breen, B. Breen, J. Zimmerman (Park Manager)

• **Financial report** given by Treasurer B. Breen for 2012 to date. (The report is available upon request.) Including pending deposits of August income from firewood and shirt sales, we have a balance of just over \$15,000.

- Discussion of our major sources of income: #1 is the Iron Run half-marathon + Charcoal Challenge 5k race; #2 campground firewood sales; and #3 merchandise sales (shirts and hats, etc.). Question raised of how much money we should carry forward *versus* spend now on projects. Various ideas put forward about spending perhaps 1/3 to 1/2 of the available balance, but there is no formal requirement and we can do whatever we feel is prudent.
- Discussed problem of still not being able to do credit card sales, due to lack of a phone line or remote connectivity (to verify card information at the time of sale). Research continues into technical options to solve this.

• **Park Manager's update** and list of possible projects -- J. Zimmerman

- Planning continues for **Fall Furnace Fest** (October 20-21, 2012).
 - Full agenda of event is pending. So far, 19 craft vendors and 9 food vendors have signed up. Discussion of where vendors will be located, and arranging so that noise from generators (needed by some food vendors) is not objectionable.
 - **Volunteers are needed** for various tasks on both days of the festival!
 - Possible additions to this year's event include more involvement by the Mansion; a ceramics demonstrator; and display of old tractors and farming equipment. A "hay mound" will be presented both days, in addition to the popular hayrides around the park – an extra stop should be added at the Mansion. Will also have the blacksmith and charcoal-making demonstrations, and live music.
 - The Hairy Hand & pumpkin float will begin at 7 PM on Saturday. Discussion of using Friends funds for buying pumpkins, as for last year. The harvest is expected to be better, hopefully not as expensive/not so many rotted pumpkins this time.
 - Also need to buy wax for making candles. However, for lighting up the pumpkin should buy manufactured "tea lights," as candles made at the booth are not as good for the purpose of lighting pumpkins at the Hairy Hand event.
 - Supplies of clothing for scarecrow-making are adequate -- more donations are always helpful but not urgently needed.
 - **Need donations** of cleaned cardboard juice & milk jugs, for making bird feeders.
 - Marketing needs to be increased, including to additional newspapers and into Gettysburg area/Adams County. Several Board members will assist, once a formal announcement of the event is drafted.

[Fall Furnace Fest planning, continued]

- Need better signs at the event including arrows pointing to types of vendors, entertainment, etc. Suggestion to buy several “corrugated plastic” weather-resistant signs, which are probably not expensive and are reusable each year if the wording is carefully chosen. Can add printed paper arrows and text using tape, for details specific to a particular year. Park manager to look into this.
- Similarly, need a better vinyl banner for Friend’s table (for all our event and merchandise sales tables, not just at Fall Furnace Fest).

- **National Public Lands Day** on September 22 will be our next volunteer event.
 - Volunteer activities will be from 9 AM –noon; afterwards we will have a picnic to recognize park volunteers, Friends members or not. Friends group will supply burgers and hot dogs, and people are asked to bring a covered dish if possible. A “public membership meeting” was previously scheduled for 1 PM.
 - Activities may include erosion control work along Mountain Creek; and assist with the ongoing project to control invasive plant species in the park.
 - **Attendees are asked to RSVP** on the DCNR website “calendar of events.”
 - Consideration of plastic sports bottles with printed logo as gifts to volunteers with substantial time logged in (such as more than 100 hours and more than 250 hours). However, the bottles are expensive, as much as \$9, and it was suggested this was too high – perhaps give other gift items such as embroidered patches.

- On a related note, **all volunteers are again encouraged to enter their specific volunteer hours on the DCNR website** so time can be officially recognized by the park and also by DCNR central office in Harrisburg. <https://www.volunteers.dcnr.state.pa.us/>

- **Infrastructure spending requests made by the park**
(Discussed prioritization for these ideas; Board members not in attendance should speak up by email. Board members present agreed to these, except 2 items as noted.)
 - **1.** Picnic tables -- 10 sets of metal legs (\$3000): the park is in the process of replacing wooden legs with metal legs, which last longer.
 - **2.** “Leave no trace” backpacking program, 2 sets of equipment (\$2000): for educational programs such as overnight hikes led by park educator. This is turning into a popular program. Will still continue to borrow equipment as needed from Kings Gap. This past year also borrowed from a park further away but that will not be practical in the future. If Pine Grove Furnace had some backpacking gear of our own, in combination with Kings Gap, it will enable these programs to continue.
 - **3.** Public address system for Laurel Lake (\$300): even though there is no lifeguard, the park rangers need a way to make announcements such as clear the beach if lightning storms or some other emergency.
 - **4.** Wood splitter (\$1000-\$1500): general agreement that we have ongoing need to split large quantities of wood for very brisk sales of firewood bundles. This summer, we’ve run out a few times of bundled wood ready to bring to the campground host. (Special thanks to those who have helped split and/or bundle,

most especially Bill who has put in enormous amounts of time and energy to keep firewood sales moving!) Although we often have access to a privately owned splitter, the park/friends group do not have one of our own. It would be better to have a dedicated splitter, and it was discussed as well worth the money due to the income generated. We also discussed it's better to get a new one and keep it maintained, than try to save money on a used machine of possibly uncertain maintenance history. We will check actual cost for a new 27 ton splitter, preferably with a Honda engine.

- 5. Recycling bins (\$1200 each): Friends to pay for one, park to pay for one. This is part of an ongoing effort to put more of these special bins throughout the park. Discussed problem of some people dropping trash "wherever" which can't be avoided, but nonetheless the recycling bins do get used. Discussed problem with alternative of trying to put cheaper "regular" cans relabeled as "recycling" in more locations – they get abused/misused and may be harder to empty regularly.
- 6. [Lower priority/not Friends budget this year] Bridge over Mountain Creek on Mountain Creek Trail (\$5000 for materials): any new foot bridges need to meet technical requirements that drive up the cost, even if all labor is provided. Park may be able to find alternate funding source for this; discussed not paying for such a bridge with Friends funds at this time.
- 7. [Lower priority/not Friends budget this year] Storage units within park office to better organize merchandise and recreational/educational gear (\$1000).

The above costs are rounded estimates. Board members made note that funding agreed upon items 1-5 this year, plus other activities (Fall Furnace Fest; also calendar and patches described below) adds up to more than half our current balance. This seems like a reasonable use of money: the goal is not simply to accrue dollars for the sake of having a large balance, but rather to spend it to fulfill our goals and mission statement. We do need to have enough on hand for known upcoming events, but at this time we do not have a planned "capital fund" budget for any particular major purpose. If there is a goal to aim for, we should discuss it and can plan to set money aside in the future.

Two other items mentioned, not on original list from park, will need to check prices:

- 8. Bike Racks near the beaches: so visitors can easily lock up their bicycles.
- 9. Better *permanent* signage within the park. For example, pointing towards each lake, furnace stack, etc. for people walking in park. Simple map reading is a lost skill, and printed maps may not be available. Discussed that some of us regularly encounter people walking or biking in the park who have no idea which way to go!

• **100th Anniversary of State Ownership of Pine Grove** -- A. Weltman and J. Zimmerman

- Fundraiser calendar (16 months, late 2012 through 2013, focused on post-industrial uses)
Calendar drafted by Park Extern this summer. Sent to printer and invoice submitted for 200 calendars = \$1008, or \$5.04 per calendar. Plan to sell calendars at \$10 each at Fall Furnace Fest 2012 and all through 2013. We should make an effort to market these to persons who might be especially interested, for example local cabin owners via Michaux Forest Association.
- Banner along main road: at previous meeting had discussed phone-pole “flag” banners for several sites along Route 233, but little enthusiasm was expressed. We discussed instead putting a single banner at park office (visible from the road) saying “Pine Grove Furnace State Park 100th Anniversary 1913-2013.” Size 10 feet by 2 feet, tied to porch railing. Such banners are sold online and at local printers, and they are not expensive – A. Weltman to check prices online.
- Embroidered patches: A. Weltman checked with A.T. Museum, which last year ordered patches of their own, and is probably doing a different design again this year. They suggested an online vendor and said a reasonable price break is obtained at 300 patches. The cost works out to close to \$1 per patch, depending on design. A. Weltman will take a recent photo of the furnace stack and rough-draft a patch with wording similar to the banner discussed above. If we sell these for \$3 to \$5 each (according to the A.T. Museum folks, that’s a plausible price range) we would “break even” after only 100 patches were sold.

• **Other items discussed:**

- D. Velozo (Secretary) has resigned from the Board while emphasizing she will continue to participate as a general volunteer in activities especially Fall Furnace Fest. So, we urgently need a replacement Secretary for Board meetings, and more generally should consider who might be invited to join the Board. Any suggestions? One person mentioned, A. Weltman will broach the subject with them. It was again noted in passing that we do not have a formal process for approving new Board members.
- Donation of \$500 to Robert Jumper who provides his time and timing equipment for the Iron Run half-marathon + Charcoal Challenge 5k race. Without his volunteering his technical support, we would not be able to have such a successful event which is our major fundraiser each year.
- Any T-shirts leftover from the 2012 Iron Run can be sold along with regular our merchandise, for \$7 each until they are all gone.

These minutes respectfully submitted
by Andre Weltman, Vice-Chair.