

FREEDOM PARK

Freedom Park Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 19, 2019 at Lowell Town Hall
Start Time: 6:00 pm

Board Members

Heidi Laub
Chairman
West Creek Township

Alice Dahl
Vice Chairman
Cedar Creek Township

Dorothy Eich
Secretary
Park Advisory Board

Lowell Town Council
Edgar Corns

Mindi Arnold-Buchler
Director of Parks

CALL TO ORDER FOLLOWED BY PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

Freedom Park Committee members present: Heidi Laub, Alice Dahl, Dorothy Eich. Also present, Parks Director, Mindi Arnold-Buchler, Recreation Director Jackie Bergstrom, Public Works Director, Kevin Gray.

Guest: Noah Katterman, Eagle Scout. Nolan Katterman, Eagle Scout parent.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Chairman: Alice Dahl made a motion to nominate Heidi Laub as Chairman. Heidi accepted the nomination. Alice motioned to accept Heidi as Chairman. Dorothy Eich seconded that motion.

Vice Chairman: Heidi motioned to nominate Alice Dahl as Vice Chairman. Alice accepted the nomination. Heidi motioned to accept Alice Dahl as Vice Chairman. Dorothy Eich seconded that motion.

Secretary: Alice Dahl motioned to nominate and accept Dorothy Eich as Secretary. Dorothy Eich accepted. Heidi seconded that motion.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion to approve November 2018 Freedom Park Committee Meeting minutes was made by Alice Dahl. Heidi Laub seconded. The motion carried 3/0.

REVIEW OF FREEDOM PARK CLAIMS:

After review of the December 2018 through February 2019 claims, Alice Dahl motioned to accept these claims. Heidi Laub seconded this motion. The motion carried 3/0.

OLD BUSINESS:

Bark Park Memberships

Parks Director Mindi Arnold-Buchler reported that the bark park currently has 50 members and collected \$2,200 in fees. Mindi also stated that memberships begin to increase with warmer weather and then in July when memberships become half off for the remainder of the year. Heidi Laub mentioned to the committee that they may want to re-consider this policy as the dog park is Freedom Park's main source of revenue. Discussion followed. Mindi reported that dog park memberships are averaging over 100 members a year. She also assured Heidi that if the board wanted to review the option of not offering half off, they could reconsider this option in the future. The committee agreed that they would like to look into the benefits of this in the future.

Recycle Center at Freedom Park

Mindi reported that Solid Waste Management has been working with the Town of Lowell about the Recycle Center located at Freedom Park. She stated that the center is scheduled to temporarily close on April 1, 2019 for renovation and re-education purposes. Mindi asked Kevin Gray to report on the gate closure option at the entrance of the park. Kevin stated that the town will be manufacturing a gate that will be installed at the entrance of Freedom Park. He stated not only will it help with the illegal dumping at the recycle center; it will also be an effective security measure for the park. Kevin stated due to Freedom Parks isolated location it would be wise to close access to the park at dusk. Alice and Heidi were supportive of the park closure at dusk. Mindi stated that due to the misuse of the recycle center and typical high winds at Freedom Park, the east side of the park has been littered with a lot of trash. She also reported that she has organized a litter lift with local Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops for April 6th at 8am.

Gazebo Rental

The gazebo has been rented for an August 10th wedding that will have approximately 200 guests. Mindi reported that the family booking the gazebo had concerns about parking. Mindi suggested that they try and utilize the parking areas toward the front of the park and designate a few vehicles to transport the guests to the ceremony site. The family thought this would be an appropriate solution for the event.

Oktoberfest at Freedom Park

Lowell Volunteer Fire Department has asked to be placed on the April agenda. LVFD would like to ask permission to use Freedom Park again this year as the host site for their Oktoberfest event with a tentative date of Sept 13th-Sept 15th.

Community Service Help

Mario Cardenas of Ball State's Academic Program volunteered time for his service requirement for graduation. Mario helped by picking up fallen branches and garbage around the park office. Mario also assisted with other duties around the office.

Brick Walk

Replacing the mulch with river rock was discussed. Mindi advised the committee that they have \$1,166 in Park Gift for the brick walk. She suggested they utilize these funds to offset budgetary costs for this project. Mindi presented two quotes to the committee. Touch of Grass and C& M Landscaping were presented to the committee for review. Touch of Grass had a quote of \$1,760 and C&M Lawn Service's quote came in at \$2,396. Discussion followed about the quotes amongst the committee. Heidi asked Mindi to reach out to Touch of Grass to see if they could include the border around the bricks since their quote did not include this. Mindi agreed to do so and she suggested that Kevin Gray speak to the committee about his professional ideas about this problem area around the brick walk. Kevin stated that he would be willing to do the work himself. He would ask for the cost of materials which he felt would be around \$1,000. Alice stated she would like to go with the town on this project. Kevin clarified that it would not be the Town of Lowell completing this project, it would be a donation of his time. Once Kevin clarified that he will be donating his time, Alice thanked him for offering his services and stated she would like for him to complete the work. Discussion followed about the type of border separating the edge of the rock and the surrounding grass. Kevin stated he felt the natural border would be effective as long as maintenance was performed on a regular basis. Alice suggested that Kevin try reaching out to Lowell High School's landscaping club for additional help. Kevin stated he may have some community service workers to utilize. Heidi stated that Kevin could spend \$1,100 out of Park Gift to complete this project. Kevin responded that he will call the committee when he had a total together and the board can let him know if they would like to proceed. The committee agreed to do so.

Gravel for Freedom Park

Kevin spoke about the re-grading of the road. He found a grater box in the barn and stated that with regular maintenance, the pot holes will not be such an issue. As far as gravel, Kevin felt we could try and grade the drives before making a decision to add gravel. He stated that maintenance can make major improvements using some equipment before Freedom purchases approximately 15 loads at an estimate of \$350 a load. Alice stated that Don Huseman would work the roadway from time to time with his equipment. Discussion followed. Alice asked if Freedom had any money for stone. Mindi stated that the budget has the line item for maintenance and \$1,074.00 in park gift in Freedom Park Improvements. Alice asked Kevin if he felt we needed stone at this time. Kevin stated that we should continue to work the road and possibly add gravel next to the recycle center and possibly by the maintenance barn. The committee agreed to work with what we have before making a purchase of gravel.

Skate Park Signage

The signage needs an update with the bmx bike policy change. A quote by Mitch Zakulla for \$228 was presented to the committee. Mindi asked the board to review the rules stated on the original sign. Discussion followed. Alice made a motion to accept the purchase of the sign using \$100 from Park Gift Skate Park and the remainder from Park Maintenance. Dorothy Eich seconded. Motion carried 3/0.

Boy Scout Troop #697

Noah Katterman presented his Eagle Scout project of a fire pit to the committee. Noah presented two different options for the committee to review. Discussion followed about the type, placement and scope of this project. The board decided to accept the brick style fire pit and agreed that placement would be best in an area next to the trail on the northeast side of the dog park. Heidi motioned to accept the Eagle Scout project. Alice seconded that motion. Motion carried 3/0. Alice thanked Noah for this project.

NEW BUSINESS

Mindi suggested that the committee members take a tour through Freedom Park in an effort to have everyone on the same page as far as projects they want to complete. Mindi provided an example of a blank evaluation form that the committee could use as a guide while thinking about future projects and budgeting of those projects. Discussion followed about future ideas and projects that the board would like to see happen. Project ideas included skating rinks, jumping pillows and an iceless rink. Heidi suggested that the committee make a 5 year plan. At this time questions concerning the budget, the revenue share of programs, maintenance and use of buildings at Freedom Park. Mindi answered these questions as best as she could as they were addressed. Mindi also stated that Freedom Park and the Town of Lowell agreements may not have always been written down and officially signed off on. And this may be the reason why everyone may not be on the same page. After more discussion of past, present and future concerns about Freedom Park and agreements with the Town of Lowell, Kevin Gray addressed the committee. Kevin stated that Mindi or he were unable to make any decisions about these concerns. Kevin suggested that he ask the Town Manager to set a meeting with the Town Council and Freedom Park Committee to address their concerns. The Freedom Committee agreed that a meeting should be scheduled as Kevin suggested.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE

Dorothy Eich presented the committee with a check for \$1,000 from Lowell Woman's Club. This was a donation to Freedom Park from Barktoberfest 2018. Dorothy asked that the check not be used for maintenance in the dog park. She would like the donation to go toward an amenity for the dog park. Dorothy also asked for the committee to grant permission to host 2019's Barktoberfest on October 5th with a rain date of October 6th and if the board would donate 2 free bark park passes for the raffle. Heidi approved Dorothy's request for use of the park and the donated passes and Alice seconded that motion.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Freedom Park Committee is set for 6pm on April 16th at Lowell Town Hall.

Heidi motioned to adjourn this meeting at 8:08pm. Dorothy seconded that motion. The motion carried 3/0.