

Friends of Pine Grove Furnace Board Meeting

Minutes for May 19th, 2018

Board in attendance: A. Weltman (Chair), M. Soderberg (Vice-Chair), J. Burleigh (Treasurer), R. Shaw;
M. Kutzmonich (*ex officio* Park Manager)

● Park Manager's comments

- New key system has been installed park-wide, reduces hassles for staff and improves security
- ADA-compliant paved walkway has been installed from Furnace Stack Pavilion to bathrooms, and from there to Biker-Hiker Trail.
- Manager continues working with DCNR Regional re: administrative issues to install a new hiking bridge (hopefully suspension) to connect Koppenhaver Trail to the western trailhead of Mountain Creek Trail. Progress is made, slowly. DCNR will handle all permits. Vice-chair will review with a possible local specialty contractor. Based on experience with prior bridge, we may end up submitting a grant application to CVVB at start of 2019 and expect to install bridge late in 2019 or start of 2020.
- Brief discussion of brick repairs at base of old furnace stack – one mason proposed a \$25,000 fix, more expensive than expected, which included addressing water infiltration at the rear of the area. Manager will discuss further with Regional office.
- Board and Manager approved moving forward with “EZ Dock” kayak system at Laurel Lake next to the park’s boat storage shed, to stabilize kayaks/canoes for visitors with limited mobility getting in and out of small vessels. This is not a fully ADA setup but many people will probably find it helpful. Board voted unanimously on budget up to \$6500 – this is already included in our annual budget estimates. Chairman will request invoice from company; hopefully we will have the kit before much later this summer. Maintenance can install.
- Thanks to Friends for buying hanging plants for the porch in front of the park office. They look great.
- Welcome to a third Ranger 1 to assist with the front office area, and other tasks at our busy park.

● Chair/Vice-Chair comments

- Further discussion of using memorial gifts to improve Mansion deck furniture. We have \$1300 in the fund, and Vice-chair will use to get Adirondack chairs, a bench, and small table. Best source may be Stauffers of Kissel Hill, in Camp Hill.
- Keystone Trails Assoc. renewal is due, only \$50/year. Worth renewing, as we borrow pop-ups etc.
- Discussion of purchasing a 10 by 10 foot folding pop-up tent to keep in Friends storage area. We borrow several pop-ups from several places during major events; having one readily on hand for various Friends events would be convenient. Board agreed to purchase green tent via Amazon for approx. \$175. Chair will order it.
- Discussion of purchasing a thermal laminator to keep in Friends storage area. We spend money at Staples constantly to laminate our newsletter for kiosks, as well as signs for Iron Run and Fall Fest. A small laminator will pay for itself in a year and a half or less. Board agreed to purchase via Amazon for approx. \$100 total, including a substantial supply of plastic sleeves.
- Friends staffed the Mansion’s fundraiser race water station at Laurel Boat Ramp on April 29.
- PPF requested our help to staff a “Field & Stream non-profit day” table on Saturday April 14 on the West Shore. Chair and Treasurer covered the event; foot traffic was very slow.
- Annual “Walk With Me” Adams County wellness event in Gettysburg was May 5. Chair and Treasurer handled the table; foot traffic was decent despite a little rain. This annual event is a nice way to meet Franklin Countians, promote our park and group, and sell a small number of items.
- Franklin County government’s Wellness Coordinator requested a presentation for county employees promoting our park; Vice-chair can handle this in July for “National Picnic Month.”
- Time for another Friends newsletter, Rob will take the lead using some content supplied by Mary.
- CVVB asked us to contribute to a blog in June promoting the park and South Mtn more generally. Chair and others will help. Material from new newsletter or Facebook can probably be recycled!
- Mansion summer camp is July 8-13, they still have a few spots open for young teens.
- Discussion of several guided hikes this summer, Rob will schedule and work with our EE.

- Treasurer
 - Balance \$83,351 [full report is available upon request]. This does not include some very recently received sales money. We are doing well at raising money; let's spend it on many worthwhile projects and activities around our park! Although the balance is high right now, and more income is expected, several big projects are pending (and in our budget estimates) including the new hiking bridge, plus campground exit/entrance work as discussed in previous meetings.
- Budget
 - No major updates
 - We are budgeted to continue to support EE outdoor programming such as camping, and to buy grillables for the usual pot-luck lunches after volunteer mornings such as Earth Day.
- Membership
 - We held a dedicated session at the end of the annual Earth Day volunteer morning + lunch on Saturday April 21 to promote Friends groups here and elsewhere. Attendance was poor. It may be better to resume our usual approach of speaking briefly during the lunch while people are still around.
 - Annual mailing for membership renewals was very successful and renewals have been brisk.
- Merchandise
 - Pre-printed envelopes for public sales use in the park office continue to work well.
 - Purple Lizard's new maps of Michaux S.F. are selling briskly and will be useful as Iron Run prizes. We purchased more maps to be well-stocked for the summer season.
 - Certain hat colors are selling well and need to be restocked.
 - Discussed changing vendor for some clothing items to a local company that also handles our race shirts. There are advantages to using a local company for example by reducing shipping costs, and facilitation of correcting mistakes, even if cost is not quite as cheap as items from half way across the country or the globe. We will use Moore Graphics in Mechanicsburg when appropriate if pricing is reasonable vs. current remote vendors.
- Social Media and other advertising/branding
 - Thanks to Board member Rob for handling the quarterly newsletter.
 - Thanks to our Vice-chair for handling our very active page, assisted by the Chair and by park EE
 - www.PineGroveFriends.org would benefit from updated photos; Webmaster can get off Facebook, also our gratitude to Board member and professional photographer Crystal for offering images too. We now use Google Analytics to monitor website activity and trends. Thanks to our Treasurer for also being Webmaster!
- Iron Run 2018
 - Preps and planning going well.
 - Online sign-ups via RunReg.com are about average for this annual event: half-marathon is slightly ahead of last year at this point before the race, while 5k is lower by the same number. Poor weather may be discouraging 5k registrations now, but once weather improves we may see a surge in 5k registrations including "same-day." Distance runners need time to train so they need to plan ahead and are less deterred by current bad weather.
 - Acting upon a suggestion from our timer last year and from race participants and supporters, we will give a free "participation award" to young racers in 2018. We have ordered adequate "rescue whistles" ("not a toy!") for all registered Iron Run and Charcoal Challenge participants aged less than 20 years.
 - We will have live music for \$200. This local musician typically plays for free at Fall Fest. This was another suggestion from last year.

- Fall Furnace Fest planning

- Board again discussed a Native American educational group from the Pittsburgh area to attend our festival, for a \$250 fee plus motel room. They will sell jewelry while conducting public programs including storytelling and playing flute music, and activities for children. Board agreed to this experiment.
- More clothing donations are needed for the busy scarecrow-making activity.
- With resignation of our usual MC announcer & Hairy Hand actor, a replacement is needed (Steve is not available during Fall Fest 2018).

- Firewood

- Additional splitting is needed as always.
- Chair installed new air filters and hydraulic fluid filters on the Friends' 27-ton splitter, a tool that has been an excellent investment and should be maintained regularly. Engine oil should be changed at end of this season, and hydraulic fluid changed before next year's busy season.

Major Events in 2018

Iron Run half-marathon & Charcoal Challenge 5k run/walk, Saturday June 9

National Public Lands Day, Saturday September 29

Fall Furnace Fest, weekend of October 20-21

Next Board Meeting in August, date TBA