

Thompson's Mills Preservation Society Board Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM.

Present were: Spencer Lewis, President; Anita Lewis, Secretary; Carl Browning, & Don Ware, Board Members; Carolee St. Clair & Bob McCormack, TMPS general members; and Don Lyon, guest of Don Ware. Absent were: Ron VanOrden, Treasurer; Larry Thompson & Jim Ballard, Board Members. They all had contacted the President and Secretary to let them know they were unable to attend.

(Vote on the September 2016 Meeting minutes draft as published was overlooked and will be done at the January 2017 Board Meeting)

The Treasurer's report was postponed due to the absence of the Treasurer.

The first speaker was Don Lyon. He has experience with cider pressing events for the Calapooya Food Alliance. He has also been in contact with Tom Parsons, Head Ranger at Thompson's Mills State Heritage Site regarding the feasibility of holding similar events at Thompson's Mills. Tom had his supervisors look into ways to have a cider pressing event at the Mill and comply with OPRD regulations. They found a park in the system that had staged a similar event under a rule that could be applied to Thompson's Mills. Don outlined some of the logistics of staging such events including health department compliance, container sources, legal requirements of the Heritage Site, how the proceeds are generated, and how the proceeds would be allocated. He spoke also of how, for health reasons, the apples are harvested only from the trees before washing them with a mild bleach solution. Nothing is picked off the ground. Don described the cider pressing events as a very family friendly activity and a lot of fun.

Carl Browning pointed out that if we wanted to acquire a **new** cider press for the 2017 season it will need to be ordered soon – that it is not an off the shelf item.

Bob McCormack had a question about whether a four hour cider pressing event justified the expense of purchasing a cider press and whether an old fashioned, less expensive, hand operated unit would serve just as well. Don Lyon stated usually multiple events are held during the season and that Tom Parsons wanted a reliability factor considered in our purchase. Don further explained that the Calapooya Food Alliance (CFA) provides volunteers who tend the orchard at Oregon Country Farms, do the picking, and assist at events that we need to do some coordinating with them. For this the bulk of the revenue would go to the CFA. What the Society would get out of this is publicity, more visitors to the Mill and the opportunity to sell store merchandise from the Society inventory. Don envisioned people coming from Corvallis, Albany, and Eugene to enjoy this traditional activity. Cider making can easily run from August through November.

It was decided to continue and ask Tom to finish clearing it with OPRD.

Don Ware moved to have Don Lyon appointed to the TMPS board. His motion was seconded and the Board voted unanimously for approval. Don Lyon was already a dues paying member of the TMPS.

Further discussion was had about the logistics of conducting apple pressing events.

Don Ware reported on his contact with the Ford Family Foundation concerning the fire suppression system. They may be willing to assist us with the grant process, and perhaps a grant to fund the quest for the major grant. Don will look into possibly having a member of the Ford Family Foundation come speak to the Board.

The President relayed the information about grant seeking that he had been able to gather, including a printout of the Collins Foundation grant application checklist, (2 pages long) which gives a good example of what grantors may want from their applicants. Issues the President covered included; finding grantors who are a good fit for the type of grant we would be seeking, the need to customize our grant requests to appeal to the tastes of the grantors we would be approaching, and the fact that successful grant seeking can be a prolonged process.

A report on the school tour promotions was on the agenda, but Jim Ballard was unable to attend the meeting, so a more in depth report was not possible. However it was stated that whatever he is doing is working – school tours are becoming more frequent. Carolee St. Clair, who is currently volunteering at the Mill, said they had upcoming two tours of 60 kids each. The reason the tours were so close together was that one tour had been postponed due to insufficient staff to man all the stations for large groups. Bob McCormack stated that he could make himself available on short notice to assist with the tours and inquired about what he needed to do. After a brief discussion it was suggested that the quickest way into the volunteer system was to first see Ranger Tom Parsons.

Carolee St. Clair spoke about noticing a blue flash when she turned on the lights when opening the mill. She had mentioned it to Tom Parsons who later on said he had finally seen it, too. Carolee said that on one of the tours she had met someone who had just finished training on a thermal imaging machine – she wondered if that could be useful for inspecting the mill. The President had on hand a Park Ranger to-do-list for this winter, which included renting a thermal camera to locate hot spots in the mill structure. So it appears that issue will be attended to.

Don Ware said he has another person who has expressed interest in serving on the board, Patty Linn, who actually wrote an article about the Mill for the Brownsville Times following an interview with Park Ranger Tom Parsons. The Board asked Don to invite her to the next meeting.

The President turned the Boards attention to setting a time for the Annual Meeting, since the by-laws call for the Annual Meeting to be held within the first two months of the calendar year. It was moved, seconded and approved to schedule the Annual Meeting on February 25, 2017. The planned time is 1:00 PM in the lower level of Halsey City Hall. Don Ware volunteered to look into booking that date.

The next meeting of the Board is January 17, 2017 at 6:00 PM at the Shedd Fire Station.

Bob McCormack inquired if funds had been budgeted for a mill tour cheat sheet at the last Annual Meeting. They had been. However, the President could not recall who was to follow up with the rangers for their approval. Bob also inquired about the fencing project – whether the materials have been purchased and when the fence would be erected. It was confirmed that the Materials were on site but, at this point, no construction date has been set. That project's move forward is dependent on timing for the rangers and the availability of volunteer labor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM

Submitted by Anita Lewis, Secretary, Thompson's Mills Preservation Society