

PLA Monthly Regular

Board of Directors Meeting January 4, 2017

1/4/2017
7:00 PM
Farr
Center

OUR MISSION: *The Portage Lake Association is a group of volunteers who are dedicated to making the Portage Lake Area a great place in which to live, play and stay.*

Officers:

Julie Lapinski- President
Diane Bess -Vice President
Evie McNeil - Treasurer
Mary Jo McElroy- Secretary
Al Taylor – Past President

Board of Directors

Nikki Torrey, Al Garbrecht
Frank English, Jean Capper
Barb Wolverton, Jon Phillips
John Wemlinger, Wendell Brooks
Vicki Strevey, Shelli Johnson

Committee Heads

Jon Phillips, Tammy Messner
Marilyn Acker, Jeff Sternberger
Susan Halloran, Mary Reed
Steve Szilvagy, Bruce Peabody
Paul Mueller, Faye Backie,
Roz Jaffe, Pat Pomaranski
Margaret Panches, Mary Fairgrieve
Al Taylor, Diane Bess
Frank English, Susan Barnard
Jean Capper

Minutes

Order of Business	Person Responsible	Report, or <i>To Do</i> list	Action Plan
Call to Order, Introductions	Julie Lapinski	Lapinski called the meeting to order at 7 PM. Each person present introduced themselves with some commentary about their background and their responsibilities with the PLA. Attendees: Lapinski, Bess, McNeil, McElroy, Taylor, Garbrecht, English, Wolverton, Phillips, Wemlinger, Brooks, Strevey, Halloran, Reed, Backie, Jaffe, Pomaranski. Guests: Kevin Wolverton, Linda English	
Secretary's Report	Mary Jo McElroy/Faye Backie	Backie presented the November minutes. Taylor made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted; English seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by a vote of those present.	November 2016 minutes were accepted; Backie to get posted online.

Treasurer's Report	Evie McNeil	McNeil presented the Treasurer's report which was sent out earlier this week for review. There is \$43K in checking account and \$18K in savings account. Taylor noted that we budgeted to be \$5K to \$7K in expenses over income for 2016 even though some budgeted items were not used this past year. Extra expenses included closing the gap with income versus expenses for 2015 website. We did not spend budgeted money for website upgrade and expenses for 501 (c)(3) and those will show in our 2017 budget. Taylor explained that revenue from businesses using the website did not cover the expenses for the website in 2015, but did cover 2016. The PLA spends about \$70K per year in the community, with about \$64K in income, leaving a deficit of \$6K which will be taken from reserves. The PLA maintains maintain 50% to 75% of annual expenses in reserve. Backie moved to accept the treasurer's report; that was seconded by Frank English. The report was approved by those present. We are still awaiting a potential donation to cover cost of the fireworks. It was incidentally noted that an ad hoc group of three persons is working with an attorney to get 501 (c)(3) status moved forward.	November 2016 Treasurer's report was accepted. McNeil to send to CPA for 2016 tax returns. Committee to continue with planning for 501 (c) (3) status.
Membership	Faye Backie	Backie reported that she will be sending out notice for payment of dues at the end of January. Some members have already paid for 2017.	Backie to send out notice for payment of dues.
Fundraiser	Al Taylor/Diane Bess	Taylor reported that the annual fundraiser at the Little River Casino (which has had 150 to 225 participants each time) will not be held in 2017 because the Casino has changed their business model and perceived need for change. Other sources of revenue are Onekama Days Pig Roast and Beer tasting. Christmas in Onekama and our fundraiser events like fall festival, lights and banner décor, and Onekama promotion are consumers of our funds and not cost neutral. We usually are close to cost neutral on Concerts in the Park and Petunias and admin costs. Some events make money, some are self-sustaining, and others are community benefit only. A large raffle for the spring has been suggested. A committee of individuals has been discussing other ways to generate about \$12 to 15K in 2017.	Taylor and Bess to conduct fundraising committee meeting on Thursday, January 26th @ Farr Center from 9 am to 12 noon.
Petunia Parade	Jon Phillips//Tammy Messner	No report.	

Farr Friends	Mary Fairgrieve	Fairgrieve sent an email report to Lapinski who reported for her. Farr Friends meets every Thursday from 2 to 4 pm for social events such as card and game playing, crafts, presentations by speakers, etc. A list of upcoming activities is included in the January newsletter. It has been suggested to try an evening event. Lapinski reported that there is an Evelyn Sorenson Memorial Fund (currently at \$405 income with \$169 in expenses) designated for Art-related programs.	Fairgrieve to submit information to be included in Welcome Bag
Concerts	Steve Szilvagy	Taylor reported for Szilvagy that arrangements are underway for 9 concerts this summer, bringing back some favorites to the park. The concerts netted \$1K in profit in 2016 through passing a bucket for contributions and directed donations. Use of boost in social media (Facebook) also increased attendance. A new banner will be purchased for 2017.	Szilvagy and committee to continue arranging for musicians and getting new banner.
Publicity	Faye Backie	Backie reported that publicity will begin soon for 2017 events. She will handle traditional marketing and public relations, while Al Taylor continues with social media. A list of 2017 events was emailed to the group earlier this week; changes were made and have been incorporated into the list of events.	
Lake Issues	Mary Reed	Reed reported that there is some role confusion among the various players involved in protection of Portage Lake. She will be meeting with the lake manager soon. Reduction in invasive species was seen in 2016.	
Facebook Pages	Al Taylor	Taylor reported some utilization statistics for our Facebook page: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7,561 “likes” • 7,300 followers • 69% users are female, 31% are male • 63% are 54 years of age or younger • Reached over 100,000 people in last 28 days Taylor noted that some businesses are using our Facebook page as a marketing tool. It is the most used Face Book page in Manistee County.	
Welcome Committee	Diane Bess, Julie Lapinski, Faye Backie	Lapinski reported that the Welcome Committee, formed two years ago, has been successful in providing excellent information to newcomers into the community including a tri-fold brochure about the PLA. However, this has not resulted in a lot of new volunteer help. Lapinski proposed that we appoint a volunteer coordinator to work with committee chairs about their respective needs. For that to occur, leadership needs committee data forms to be returned to Taylor to determine what the needs are.	Committee chairs to submit committee data forms to Taylor asap.

Christmas in Onekama	Pat Pomaranski, Jeff Sternberger, Frank English, Susan Barnard	Pomaranski reported that Christmas in Onekama went well this season. The PLA sold poinsettias, the National Honor Society made money with the chili cook-off, and Boy Scouts made money selling hotdogs. 43 vendors were involved for revenue over \$900 for booth space. There was discussion about coordination of efforts (i.e., a single letter to vendors) to solicit vendors for both the Fall Festival and Christmas in Onekama events.	Pomaranski and Halloran to discuss vendor solicitation in separate meeting and report back.
Website	Al Taylor	Taylor reported that the PLA received \$4600 in revenue from businesses advertising on the website (over 100 businesses at a cost of \$40 each). Website maintenance is done by MS Creative Services which charges \$50 per hour in 5 minute increments. They also maintain the servers including backups and recovery as needed. We are using the website more than ever as a business directory, for posting of newsletter, etc. It was suggested that we might also include information for vendors about opportunities with our events. Another idea is to use the website to enable users to print discount coupons for goods or services from vendors who advertise.	Taylor to get analysis of utilization statistics from MS Creative Services and present to the Board. Taylor to work with Sally Koon re: electronic coupons.
Old Business-Follow up			
Membership Fee	Faye Backie	The notion to changes the PLA dues structure was discussed in November. After further discussion, Al Garbrecht proposed that the annual dues for a family be increased from \$30 to \$35. Taylor seconded the motion, it was unanimously approved by those present.	Increase dues to \$35 per year; Backie to make changes to membership information.
Budget Process / Committee Data Sheet	Al Taylor	Taylor reported that he has received very few committee data sheets from committee leaders. The information is needed for 2017 budget planning. The bylaws indicate that we should be approving the budget by the February meeting each year.	Committee heads to submit committee data sheets asap to Taylor. Send your budget numbers ASAP to Taylor for 2017 as well
New Business			
Retreat 2017	Julie Lapinski	Lapinski and Taylor reported that a retreat will be held on Monday, January 16 to discuss the PLA's mission, vision, outcomes, fund raising, and budget for the future. All of them were encouraged to participate as able.	Lapinski and Taylor to facilitate retreat on January 16 from 9 am to 12 noon at Covenant Bible Camp.
Liability Insurance	Frank English	Frank English questioned about liability insurance for board members; he asked, "Could the PLA be sued?" He referred to an article from a water management publication that prompted his questions. He noted that the PLA does have insurance, but wonders if it is adequate protection for officers.	Lapinski will inquire about current liability insurance for the PLA.

Car Show	Frank English	Frank English will chair the car show for Onekama Days since the Lions Club relinquished it. He distributed a flyer for the car show which he needs to distribute to 550 persons in March (cost \$171). Costs for the car show also include trophies, door prizes, printing flyers, etc. which totals about \$1200 to 1300 in expenses. Costs are offset by a registration fee of \$15 per vehicle. Backie moved to approve the car show and its expenses for 2017; Wolverton seconded. It was approved by vote of those present.	English to chair car show event as part of Onekama Days.
Economy of Manistee County	Al Taylor	Taylor distributed two documents with information about the economic realities of Manistee County. His intention was to increase awareness of facts such as the federal poverty level throughout the county so that members can make better decisions about how the PLA can contribute to the well-being of the populace.	Members to read in anticipation of discussion at the January 16 retreat.
Finances / Budget / Fundraising	Al Taylor	Taylor broached the topic of how we might collaborate with Onekama Consolidated Schools in other ways to better the community. Taylor noted that OCS is the best school in the county; test scores have risen and most graduates go on to college or vocational school. The PLA assists with trips and fund raising events involving the children at the school.	Taylor to approach Kevin Hughes about ways to increase collaboration.
Fall Festival	Jeff Sternberger / Susan Halloran	Halloran reported that her committee is looking for new ideas for the Fall Festival. She is looking for ways to increase kids' games. Another idea is to sponsor a "scarecrow" run. Halloran identified that there are issues with electrical power at the village park. Taylor mentioned that he and Jaffe are working on a joint proposal (PLA with Lions Club) to remedy the situation.	Taylor and Jaffe to prepare proposal for improvements in electrical supply at the village park.
Winter Fest	TBD	In the past, a "Cabin Fever Reliever" event was sponsored in February to get people out of the house during the snowy and colder weather. The event included dancing with a band; it was held at the fairgrounds. A suggestion has been made to consider some type of winter fund raising event for 2018. It is too late for 2017.	Committee to consider a winter fund raiser at January 26 meeting.
Onekama Days	Al Taylor, Steve Szilvagy, Bruce Peabody, Frank English, Paul Mueller	Taylor and Jaffe are co-chairing planning for Onekama Days this year. Meetings will begin this month. One notion is to increase the number of events for children.	Taylor and Jaffe to chair meeting at M22 Grill on Jan. 21 at 9 am.
Banners and Christmas Decorations (part of Christmas in Onekama)	TBD	We have a need to identify someone to coordinate activities with the company that supplies the banners and Christmas decorations for the village. Potentially, this may need to be a paid position.	

Newsletter	Jean Capper	Expenses for the newsletter are about \$600 over budget for the year due to increased volume and printing costs. We will need to increase the budget for 2017 for the newsletter.	Capper to send newsletter through appropriate communication channels this week.
Public Comment	This public comment is for any of the special agenda items that are covered	Linda English suggested that one fund raising event might be a “beautiful babies contest” as done in the past. Parents are encouraged to supply photos of their children up to 24 months of age. Photos are posted in one common location (e.g., somewhere along Main Street in Onekama). Anyone can vote for their favorite by donating a quarter per vote. Children with the most votes won savings bonds in the past. There is little cost to this, most people really like it, so it’s an idea to consider for fund raising.	Fund raising committee to consider.
Incidental information about kayak ramp	Al Taylor	All Taylor reported that the Township has received grant funding from the Land Trust Fund for about \$75K to place a universally-accessible kayak ramp at the DNR boat launch. The PLA and the Portage Lake Watershed Forever have each pledged \$5000 for this project. Great news!!	
Adjournment	Julie Lapinski	The meeting was adjourned by Julie Lapinski at 9 pm.	