FRIENDS OF SMITH MOUNTAIN LAKE STATE PARK, INC.

 Meeting Minutes---March 21,2022

WEBSITE: smlspfriends.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS: Adopt-a-Highway Thursday March 24th at 9:00am Easter Extravaganza, April 16th at 11:30 Earth Day, March 23rd, 1:00-3:00pm Mother’s Day, May 7th at12:0 FRIENDS MEETING ...MONDAY, APRIL 18TH AT 9:30 AM

President, Doug Kuhn opened the meeting and greeted everyone, saying that it had been since November that we’ve had a meeting. The minutes of the November meeting were approved. There were 21 members and 3 Park staff in attendance.

 At the November meeting, Doug asked that anyone who was interested in filling Patti Gerhart’s place on the Board to let him know. Alison Baird came forward saying she was interested. At today’s meeting a nomination was made and seconded for Alison to become the Board member. She was then elected unanimously.

Doug asked our new members present to introduce themselves. Renata Scruggs and Martha Kuon are our new members.

Susan gave her treasurer’s report

Diana reported that since we hadn’t met since November she wanted to update us. We had a Christmas party with lots of good food and fun. Also, in the past we have decorated a Christmas tree to promote the Park, first at the Bedford Welcome Center and then at Mariner’s Landing. This past Christmas, Beverly Pickering and Greg and Diana Brennan put up our tree at the Elks Home in Bedford. We were told that the tree was one of the favorites and everyone who saw it, loved it.

Lorraine Judd on Ray Judd’s Music in the Park explained that she has an introduction letter to present to sponsors and has a list of sponsors that she has already contacted, but she was looking for more help in getting the sponsors. Our first MITP is Saturday, May 28th. The band is Two Young, Two Old. We have been able to advertise our Friends events on a billboard across from the Whitehouse Store. The board on which we put our banners needs to be replaced and Mr. Johnson, the owner is going to do that at his expense.

Park Manager, Brian Heft, told us hat the Park would be having a prescribed burn today at the beach as long as the weather was cooperative. The Park is hiring for many positions. He also announced that Jim and Patti Gerhart were named “Volunteers of the Year” for Virginia State Parks. Congratulations, Jim and Patti!!!

Chief Ranger, Travis Wyman, announced that we will be having the YCC again this year who will help with projects around the Park, especially the “bench project.” Next meeting we will have a virtual presentation by the State on our “Loyalty Points” and how that all works.

Park Interpreter, Jet Lawler, has many programs planned for this summer and will need lots of help to pull this off. She has school groups on April 6, 9:00—1:00 and April 13, 9:00—1:30. On April 19, 9:00-1:30, May 3, 9:00—12:30 and May 4, 9:00—1:30. On April 19, May 3rd and 4th these school groups will also include the boat, so she will need a boat captain and PFD crew. Her Easter Extravaganza will be April 16th from 1:00pm—3:30pm. She will need candy donations (you can drop off at the VC) candy should be the mini’s, individually wrapped (no loose candy) that will be stuffed into her plastic eggs that will be hidden outside. On April 12th, the people who signed up will gather to stuff the eggs from 1:00pm—2:00pm. There will be hay wagon rides, tractor driver will be Greg Brennan. April 23rd is Earth Day from 1:00pm—3:00pm. May 7th is the “Mother’s Day Event” starting at 12:00pm with refreshments and followed by the “Wildflower Walk.” On May 21st is “Kids to Parks Day.”

Bing Higgins, in Matt Doyle’s absence spoke on the upcoming boat tours. He has 4 definite captains with a possibility of 2 more. Boat tours for the public will begin in June thru September. He asked the Park staff to please bring the boat to the dock cleaned up and ready to go…wipe down seats, get down spider webs, etc. Also, Captains should arrive by 9:00am. Doreen thanks all who volunteered to do PFD’s and will be in touch with you for your assignments.

Dick Hendrix, landscape chairman, It’s time to dig up mugwort. He would love to get a professional to help with the “butterfly garden.” Ann Marie Smith told of a program this Saturday, March 26th, at Bethlehem Methodist Church at 2:00pm about gardening and a flier will be attached to these minutes. Dick also has sign up sheets for blue bird monitoring. He will begin the program this Friday, March 25th. If you would like training meet at the VC at 10:00am. Monitoring takes about an hour and is done from Friday thru Monday…you pick a day that suits you. The data collected from our monitoring goes to the Virginia Blue Bird Society.

The positions for the Osprey Race have mostly been filled. Nancy Galvan is the Chairperson/Coordinator, Doug Kuhn will be the Course Marshall coordinator, Beverly Pickering will handle the sponsors, Diana Brennan and Beverly Pickering will order the shirts. Carla Esarey will do publicity, Diana Brennan is still doing reservations, and Susan Eldridge is taking care of the money. The date is tentatively set for October 22, 2022. Hope I didn’t miss anyone.

Doug reported on the “bench project.” Everything has been transferred to the map and given to the Park. Travis and the YCC will then replace or repair the benches.

Diana expressed the need for more tractor drivers….ladies can drive too. We currently have 2 drivers.

Since Jim Gerhart has moved away, the “tobacco barn project” is a “no go” basically because of the cost of the project, contact people for Jim, not getting back to him, and the lack of interest by the members.

Doug presented the idea for a major project, that being a scholarship of $3,000. We would look for someone in a graduate program. Dick Hendrix is contacting Lynchburg University and Ferrum College, both have natural science programs. Brian Heft has offered to provide a summer internship for the individual. The Board was unanimous in accepting this as a major project and will be voted on at the next Friends meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Brennan, Secretary