

**SANDHILLS JOURNEY SCENIC BYWAY**  
**Minutes from March 14, 2018**

**Location:** Studio K Art Gallery    Hostess: Karen Neppl

Prior to the 1:00 meeting start, the group met next door at the Chocolate Bar café and had a delicious lunch. Thank you, Karen for arranging that.

Members attending: Terri Licking-President, Thedford; Bill Burdett-Director, Cairo; Rick Maas, Broken Bow, Twila Phillips – Director, Mullen; Trish Beem, Grand Island; Charity Adams-Director, Cairo; Kevin Howard-Director, Alliance joined briefly by phone; and Brad Mellema, Grand Island joined the group briefly for an update on the birding conference.

President opened meeting at 1:00 CT.

**Agenda:** Charity motioned, Karen seconded to accept agenda without changes; motion carried

**Minutes** of February meeting, Rick moved, Charity seconded to accept minutes as read; motion carried

**Correspondence:** Get well cards were signed for Marlene VanDeist and Tom Witt.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer report was handed out for review. Beginning balance 1/1/2018 was \$8,753.76; Ending balance 1/31/2018 was \$12,475.14. With outstanding checks noted the checkbook balance is \$8,637.05. Kevin moved, and Karen seconded to accept the treasurer's report and put on file for audit; motion carried.

**Bills**

-Adams Acres – Birding conference facebook boosts - \$49.81

(Bill moved and Trish seconded that the coordinator and guides not be required to pay registration fees for the birding conference – motion carried)

-FRAT brochures - \$200.00

-Eakes – copier contract - \$291.99

Motion to pay the above bills given by Terri, seconded by Pat; motion carried

Audit – Terri will look for committee members willing to do an internal audit and will bring those names to the meeting next month.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Recap of Omaha Boat & Travel Show** – Bill, Trish, Linda and Brad helped at the booth. They reported good attendance at the show. They suggested that the display table needs to be decluttered and gave some ideas for a new display to attract more people to stop at the booth. Grand Island CVB might be interested in also having a booth at the show and could promote the Heartland Shooting Park. Bill can check to see if we can get a double booth to share with Grand Island CVB. Another idea was to have small tank that visitors could take a picture with to promote outdoor recreation. Suggested only having the SJSB brochures on display with those working the booth able to have their brochures on display the day they work. Extra brochures could be kept under the table for when specific requests are made.

**Polar Bear Tank Race** – Terri gave the report that 17 teams were in attendance with 7 racer teams. Commented by some in attendance that needed something to do the afternoon after the race. Again noted that we need community involvement beyond Mullen and Thedford for soups and bar cookies. This is a byway event with proceeds to benefit the entire byway. Need more participation from the byway.

**Marketing** – Twila reported the first half of the 2018 State Fair booth fee has been paid through the NET grant. Suggested a 5' tank with a river backdrop could also be used there but space might be a limiting factor. Suggested just

byway brochures – birding, SJSB, FRAT, map – on the table or in a rack. One idea was to use a pocket holder (sort of like a shoe rack – draped over one side with the extra brochures from other businesses/communities available in that.

KRVN sent a price quote for an advertising opportunity using the audio from the ads we had created last summer. They have a wide coverage area across much of the state and would do 36, 30 second ads for \$562.00. This would be over a month period. Trish moved and Karen seconded to accept this offer with the target for the ads mid May to mid June. Motion carried.

As part of the NE Tourism grant, the SJSB placed coop ads in several nationwide publications and the invoice for these ad placements is \$3,595. This will be reimbursed at the end of the grant period when all of the components have been completed. Charity moved and Trish seconded to play this invoice. Motion carried.

Insurance – Have an invoice from Arnold Insurance for \$538 for annual liability insurance. Charity moved and Karen 2<sup>nd</sup> to pay this invoice. Motion carried.

State Tourism leads – as part of the state tourism grant, we received leads from people who have indicated an interest in the SJSB via the state tourism website. State Tourism forwards the addresses of those people to us and we can choose what to do with those leads. We received nearly 1000 leads in the first few weeks. Postage for sending out information on that many leads will be considerable. It is .50 for one stamp which can mail one SJSB brochure, or approximately .80 with the second ounce stamp which would mail the SJSB brochure, birding brochure and map. Charity moved and Karen seconded to wait till after the deadline for the birding conference. If we need to cancel the birding conference, we could use some of that NET grant money to pay for postage to mail out these information request pieces. Motion carried.

We also have a watchable wildlife grant that provides some money for promotion. Karen moved and Trish seconded to allow Charity another \$150 for social media boosts to promote the birding conference. Motion carried.

**Wings Over 2 – Charity and Brad** - Charity has sent out press releases to regional, state and local newspapers. The event has been heavily promoted through social media. KRVN radio interviews are scheduled and Brad will see if Jane Goodall (who he will be meeting with soon) will give a short quote to help promote the event. Charity will do another post promoting Bill Frakes and Jon with Pure Nebraska may also attend and do a story. Twila moved and Bill seconded to waive Jon's registration fees in exchange for a story on Pure Nebraska. Motion carried. Registration deadline is April 1<sup>st</sup> so we will know how many are registered and if the event needs to be canceled. The goal is to have at least 8 registrations.

Another idea for use of the extra NET funds if the birding conference does not materialize is "Wings on the Wall". Charity and Karen explained the idea. Wings in various forms would be painted on walls in communities along the byway. The wings will be very large and outspread but would not have a body. Visitors traveling the byway would stop and take their picture in between the wings as a keepsake of their travels. Karen had a flyer and information on other parts of the country that are doing this. All agreed this is a neat idea but might not fit into criteria for the NET grant.

Before Brad had to leave for another meeting he said he can look into video conferencing options for our byway meeting.

Bill moved and Charity seconded to extend the byway meeting beyond the 2 hour limit set by Terri. Motion carried.

**Great Plains Symposium** – Terri and possibly Twila are planning to attend. The Byway has one paid registration with our sponsorship. Terri would also like to attend the Byway Leadership Training held the day before the Symposium. The cost is \$50 for that event. Rick moved and Kevin seconded to have the Byway pay Terri's registration for the Leadership Training. Motion carried.

**Follow the Rails** – Bill gave a report on FRAT. He said interest was good in Omaha and he had names from the state fair last summer that he will contact. The flyers from the state fair were updated with this year's information and handed out at Omaha. One idea was to offer a refund or discount if reserved by a certain date. Bill had a budget prepared

based on 22 people occupancy showing a profit for 3 day, 2 night event using a full 23 passenger coach. He has two coaches currently reserved. Much discussion on privatizing the event and allowing Bill to set his own schedule, charge his own fees and make his own profit. It could still be done in conjunction with our October Arts and Humanities celebration along the byway. Twila moved to allow Bill to privatize FRAT, Karen 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried. The SJSB will promote as we can with minimal funds being put into the project.

Along those lines, Charity and Karen had another idea for the SJSB arts and humanities month. It is called 'trptych' and the idea is that visitors to the byway would paint a series of three paintings at three locations. The set would be purchased at the first location and when all three are completed it makes a three set canvas display. The canvasses would be pre-prepared with the painting already drew out. This could be done in an east section (Grand Island, Cairo, and maybe Ansley), middle section (Broken Bow, Dunning, Thedford) and west section (Alliance, Ashby, Mullen). Locations could be adjusted as needed, but that way visitors would not need to travel the entire byway. It would be a fun interactive event showcasing studios in those host communities. Bill moved to proceed with the triptych idea on October 13<sup>th</sup>. Charity seconded and motion carried. Coordinators will be Karen and Charity.

**Scholarships** – The letter to guidance counselors and application have been sent to all schools along the Bwyay. Applications must be postmarked by April 6<sup>th</sup>. On April 11<sup>th</sup> we will meet at 10:00 CT to review the scholarships at the Barn prior to the start of the regular meeting.

**Annual meeting** – Charity moved to reconsider the two year commitment and to adopt new guidelines. Twila seconded, and motion carried. More discussion next month.

**Bylaws, RC&D Contract, and Junk Jaunt** project were all tabled till next month due to time constraints.

**TRAN** – It was noted that TRAN is not a byway event and there will be a coordinators meeting in Alda on April 8<sup>th</sup>.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**HEAR Nebraska** – June 8-9 – A Broken Bow event with events on Friday at the Barn and Saturday events on the square and possibly Sunday a cowboy church event at the fairgrounds. It is an Arts and Humanities themed weekend and the HEAR Nebraska provides the bands/concert as part of the Good Living tour and the communities provides other events.

**SJSB Visitor Center Upstairs displays** – There was an article in the newsletter requesting photos from the past to be used in the upstairs display area.

Rick moved to adjourn at 4:10 p.m. CT. Karen 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried.

Next meeting will be April 11<sup>th</sup> at the barn in Broken Bow.

Respectfully submitted,

Twila Phillips, secretary