

West Virginia State Parks Foundation

Minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting

March 26, 2014

The meeting was convened at Chief Logan State Lodge, Logan, West Virginia at 12:40 pm. President Jim Michael welcomed park and foundation representatives and made introductions.

Secretary's report: Bob Hoke presented the minutes from the 2013 meeting in written form. Jim Michael asked for any corrections. There was a **motion to accept the minutes as presented**. The motion was seconded and approved.

Treasurer's report: Bob Hoke presented the 2013 financial report in written form. He said that there was relatively little financial activity in 2013 and that the Foundation is in good financial shape. He added that income is dependent on donations and that all donations go directly into restricted accounts for the various parks depending on the donor's wishes. The Foundation's administrative expenses are paid from the General Operating Fund and these expenses are minimal. There was a **motion to accept the financial report**. The motion was seconded and approved.

There were some questions about what the large \$166K Cashdollar bequest could be used for. Hoke said the intent Mr. Cashdollar's intent is to support trails, overlooks, and nature centers in the three parks mentioned in the bequest. He said any projects that are questionable would need to be discussed on a case by case basis before they are started.

Employee information video: Someone (sorry, I don't remember the person's name or their park) showed a pilot of a video to be shown to park employees to instill a sense of ownership and pride in the larger park system, not just their local facility. The video is currently a pilot, but it was very well done.

Parks report: Emily Fleming made the following comments about the state of the Park System:

- Emily introduced herself and the staff attending the meeting from the Park office. She complimented the foundations on their dedication to supporting their parks and said their work is greatly appreciated.
- The problems with the bonds to be sold to fund the Cacapon and Beech Fork projects were solved in the recent legislative session and those projects should be funded relatively soon.
- The Park System now gets a share of a rebate program for State purchases. The money goes into the System's operating fund and should provide

\$400-600K per year. An additional one-time payment of about \$1M will be put in the System's Park Improvement Fund.

- The method of allocating Lottery income has changed. Rather than being an automatic allocation, the legislature will have to approve the allocation each year. The system normally gets about \$5 in Lottery income each year so this change could have serious implications.
- The recent decision to increase the state's minimum wage means that labor costs will soon increase.
- The lodge improvements at Canaan Valley are finished and are getting lots of positive comments. The increased revenue flow should help the entire park system.
- The severe winter has been hard on many parks. Some business was lost and there will be additional maintenance work needed.
- Bob Beanblossom provided some additional information about the funding situation. The legislature provided \$2.8M and \$3.2M supplemental appropriations this year. He hopes they will provide a \$2.8M appropriation again next year. He added that the Park System is exempt from the blanket 7.5% budget cut being imposed this year.

Nominating Committee and Election: There was a discussion about the need for a new Secretary to replace Bob Hoke, who said he is stepping down. There were no immediate volunteers to the consensus was to form an ad hoc committee to search for a Secretary. Hoke said he would prepare the minutes of this meeting. There was then a motion to nominate the current officers for another term, but leave the Secretary position open for the time being. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The officers are:

President:	Jim Michael
Vice President:	Dan Hopkins
Secretary:	vacant
Treasurer:	Bob Hoke

(Foundation reports start on the next page)

Foundation Reports:

Cacapon: (Lin Dunham) The Foundation has completed a very successful year of project activities. The mountain top overlook signage project has been completed. The Old Inn interior heating, air conditioning and electrical improvements and Old Inn exterior renovations of log structure windows and roof are underway. \

The Old Inn interior electrical work is being done by park staff. The Foundation's \$30K Community Participation Grant is providing the funds.

The Old Inn exterior work is underway with purchasing of roofing materials, removal of wood covers on old logs and starting of log surface improvements. The Foundation's \$100K WV Department of Transportation Grant is providing the funds. When completed, the "Oldest Inn" in a West Virginia park will be renovated for the future.

The Foundation's annual Gala and Homecoming were very successful with over 1,000 people in attendance. These activities produced \$4K of income for the Foundation.

Plans are still in place for the Cacapon State Park Lodge Expansion Project dependent upon State government fiscal policy implementation. This project upgrades the Lodge and Restaurant to 21st century standards.

Our Foundation's Board of Directors meets monthly providing strong community based programs. We are very fortunate to have an active Board of Directors and Foundation members working in the Park's interest. Recently we appointed Stacy Dugan, Morgan County Commissioner, and Dale Robertson, retired businessman, with interest in park trails and forest enhancement.

Coopers Rock: (Gwen Jones) The Foundation is 25 years old and has over 250 community members. The primary focus is on trail maintenance, protecting rock climbing areas, and maintaining trail markers. They are also trying to preserve several historic CCC structures.

Kanawha State Forest Foundation: (Kevin Dials, Superintendent) The Foundation is continuing its program of guided hikes and other programs.

Laurel Lakes WMA: (Lola Lacky) The Foundation restarted in 2012 and received donations for playground equipment that has now been installed. They are now soliciting donations for electrical upgrades in the showers.

Little Beaver: (Dan Hopkins) The Park is doing well and Dan is trying to get more community involvement in its support.

MSR&LHA (Cass): (Bob Hoke) The Association had an excellent year in 2014. Significant accomplishments at the Cass Scenic Railroad State Park included:

- Spent \$28K to pave walkways at the Cass's Whitaker Station logging camp exhibit. They are now ADA compliant. Benny McCune, Assistant Superintendent at Cass, said the walkways, along with changes being made to the train cars, will make Cass a much more desirable destination for folks with handicaps and their families.
- Spent \$750 for historically correct marker lights for a Park locomotive.
- Produced a 64-page full color edition of the Association's quarterly publication to commemorate the Park's 50th anniversary. It was sold to Park visitors.
- Continued restoration work on the Park's historic Climax geared steam locomotive.

North Bend State Park Foundation: (Stephen Worden, submitted in absentia) This past year has once again been a busy time for our Foundation. Fundraising has been very successful and we have an optimistic project list to accomplish this year.

The foundation identified two projects for the park in the year 2013. We focused on raising the money for trees at the Cokeley Campground and to purchase two solar dusk to dawn lights for the Cokeley Marina. The money was raised through grants from the West Virginia DNR 50/50 grant program, the Little Kanawha R. C. and D., and from our annual mountain bike race. We were also fortunate to receive many donations from individuals.

We purchased 71 trees of numerous varieties, both deciduous and evergreen species. The trees were planted, staked and mulched in January, 2014, as the park wanted to wait until they were dormant. This also allowed for minimal damage from the deer. The solar lights were delivered and are to be installed this spring. This will allow fishermen to handle their equipment in a safer manner after dark.

For 2014, we have decided to identify all trails within the park and to have signage made for each trail and trail intersection.

North Bend Rails to Trails Foundation: (mark Abbott):

- Mowing the North Bend Rail Trail State Park got easier for the trail maintenance crew when the Foundation purchased a \$4,000 trailer with donations to help them transport mowing tractors along the trail.
- The Petroleum rest stop in Ritchie County got concrete for the shelter floor and a handicapped access ramp to the toilet.
- Tunnels along the trail needed trees cleared above the portals. The Citizens Conservation Corps performed most of the work; however, several larger trees had to be removed by professionals. Asplundh Tree Service was the successful low bidder and saved the Foundation more than \$4,700 over other bidders.
- The Foundation donated \$1,000 to the Ellenboro rail trail upgrade project.
- The town of Cairo needed Foundation help with some asphalt sealing along the shared downtown street and the trail.
- A \$1,500 donation was received from Pratt-Whitney via the WV Rail Trail Council. The funds were used to repair the number #2 tunnel in Harrison County.
- Several tons of litter was cleaned along the trail in Wood County in the spring. Forty-five youth group members from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in West Virginia and Ohio removed more than 50 tires and 8 truckloads of litter.
- The North Bend Rail Trail State Park was recognized in 2013 by the West Virginia State Journal in its “55 Good Things About West Virginia” articles. It cited the “global draw” attracting tourists and trail enthusiasts from around the USA and the world.
- The Foundation recently received a \$410K grant for major trail improvements.

Pipestem: (Dave Caplinger, Superintendent) The Foundation is active and has funded three projects: Aerating fountains for the golf course ponds, obtaining a grant to construct a new restroom facility at the mini golf course, and installing outside rest enclosures at the lodge for the employees to use for smoke breaks and to wait for rides. The Foundation also purchased fish for the Trout Wrangler event.

Stonewall Jackson: (Superintendent Sam English) The Foundation used their connections to bring the National Guard to the Park to help construct some

trails. They obtained sponsorship for a summer entertainment series. A collection of mounted animals was donated and the Foundation is looking for funds to properly display and interpret them. They will be sponsoring an environment camp this year.

Valley Falls: (Ron Fawcett) The Foundation has received its 501(c)(3) status from the IRS. They are still getting their operation organized, but they have already purchased a trailer and generator to be used at weddings and other events.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Robert B. Hoke

Robert B. Hoke, Secretary

Meeting Attendees:

Chris Hansroth	Berkeley Springs State Park
Matthew Baker	Blennerhassett Island
Miles Evenson	Blennerhassett Island
Lin Dunham	Cacapon SP Foundation
James Michael	Cacapon SP Foundation
Thomas Ambrose	Cacapon State Park
Benny McCune	Cass Scenic RR State Park
Gwen Jones	Coopers Rock Foundation
Pat Saffer	Coopers Rock State Forest
Adam McKeown	Coopers Rock State Forest
Ken McClintic	Holly River State Park
Joshua Hinchman	Holly River State Park
Kevin Dials	Kanawha State Forest
Ernest Adkins	Kanawha State Forest
Rob Gilligan	Laurel Lakes WMA
Woodrow Moore	Laurel Lakes WMA
Raymond Dawson	Little Beaver SP
Bob Hoke	MSR&LHA (Cass)
Kathy Abbott	North Bend RT Foundation
Mark Abbott	North Bend RT Foundation
Kathy Metz	North Bend State Park
Stephen Jones	North Bend State Park
Clisby Jennelle	Parks office
Emily Fleming	Parks office
Bob Beanblossom	Parks office
Kim Hawkins	Pipestem State Park
Dave Caplinger	Pipestem State Park
Nathan Hanshaw	Pipestem State Park
Kevin Wolfe	Pricketts Fort State Park
Sam Morris	Tomlinson Run State Park
Tara Sheets	Twin Falls State Park
James Browning	Tygart Lake State Park
Ron Fawcett	Valley Falls State Park

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