

Switzkill Farm Meeting Minutes

June 4, 2019

Attendance: Mark Hohengasser, Terry Schwendeman, Rich Ronconi, Nelson Kent, Martin Szinger, Dee Woessner and Anne Cook

Guests: Tom O'Malley, Lisa Carr, and Susan Doherty

Meeting was called to order to 7:03 p.m.

May 2019 minutes were discussed and approved.

Tom O'Malley noted that all three beaver dams blew out due to the heavy rains of late.

The pheasant barn has been inspected and the town supervisor is looking to set up a meeting with Mark Hohengasser and Karen Schimmer to discuss findings of the inspection.

The BKW STEAM leaders toured Switzkill farm and will fashion a program for the summer camp to be held at Switzkill Farm in July that will utilize the facility to it's fullest. The BKW Agricultural Program is also interested in touring SF to see how they can take advantage of what SF has to offer.

SVV reported that they have set up their program to ensure that all monies they raise at SF are used to benefit SF. They are also currently looking into a way to sponsor Knox residents that want to participate in the Town of Berne Youth Summer Program. Dee Woessner indicated that perhaps the Kiwanis Club might also be interested in sponsoring some children. Ted Kunker contacted Price Chopper Corporation to inquire about sponsorship of upcoming events. Price Chopper does not make monetary donations but will donate a very limited amount of food or condiments. Paperwork must be filed and they require 90 days notice prior to the event. The next planned event at SF is Boo Bash in October 19th, 2019. A request to Price Chopper will have to be completed by July 19.

Dee Woessner suggested that something like a dog training program could be held at SF or informing groups that are interested in hiking and the outdoors about the facility and trails might be great ways of promoting the property without having to “put on events.” Ann Cook will compose an introductory letter to send out. It was decided that Martin Szinger would create a Google doc where the SF Board members can create a list of potential contacts.

Martin Szinger will also create a Google doc the Board can use to create a three-year plan of goals for SF and one to create a wish list for signage at the park.

Two shields were ordered and should be arriving momentarily to modify SF outdoor lighting. If the shields prove to be effective, more will be ordered and installed to meet IDA dark sky compliance. Craig Angard will contact the IDA and HESO to update them on our current status.

Nelson Kent got a proposal for painting the Lodge exterior. The contractor that Nelson contacted will paint the exterior for \$100/day plus room and board. Nelson said he would provide room and board. The contractor would also be looking for volunteers to assist. Nelson also visited Passano Paints to get advice about painting the stained cedar siding and also get color samples. Paint runs \$28/gallon for standard colors and \$30/gallon for custom colors. Nelson estimated the cost of paint to be \$754 to complete the project. With labor the entire project would run about \$1400-\$1500, possibly less depending how many volunteers help. Painting would need to happen after the BKW STEAM camp.

Nelson Kent and Dee Woessner have created a preliminary landscaping plan. Installing riverstone around the lodge dripline would cost approximately \$200 for product and deliver. This does not include the labor to create a trench and distribution of the stone. Dee had contacted a nursery to get prices on landscape plants.

The water treatment system is ready to be installed at the Lodge. Leaking roofs at the lodge and retreat house still need to be addressed.

Karen Schimmer and Mark Hohengasser are hoping to meet with Sean Lyons to discuss projects at SF. External painting and landscaping will be some of the topics discussed. Nelson will prepare a summarized quote for painting to be provided to the Town Supervisor.

SF should prepare a display table to promote the facility at the Family Farm Day Event in September at Two Rock Ranch. The Hilltown Farm and Artisan tour is scheduled for the same day so there is the opportunity for great exposure. Perhaps a tour of SF could be scheduled at a specific time that day.

Martin Szinger has created a live demo version of the new proposed SF website. Martin will present the proposal for the new website to the town board.

The waterfall trail needs maintenance and improvement. Mark Hohengasser will schedule a work day and notify the board members accordingly.

Mark Hohengasser will print a large SF Park Map. Rich Ronconi will get it laminated. Ann Cook will provide plexiglass to mount the map under.

The next SF meeting will be July 2, 2019 at 7:00 at the Lodge.

The question was raised about budgeted funds for SF. If all funds are not used in a budget year, does the money carry over to the next year? If not, we should prepare a plan to utilize the funding available this year.

All old farm equipment that was located at the new Dollar General Store site has been moved to a secure location awaiting placement at the SF agricultural museum.