FRIENDS OF SMITH MOUNTAIN LAKE STATE PARK, INC.

 Meeting Minutes---February 20, 2023

WEBSITE: smlspfriends.com

Attendance: 24 members, 2 perspective members, 3 Park staff, 2 Master Naturalists

President, Nancy Galvan, opened the meeting and asked for a vote on the minutes of the Jan. meeting. The minutes were approved.

Vice President, Alison Baird, introduced 2 perspective new members, Bill and Valerie Rauh.

Treasurer, Susan Eldridge, reported our income as $670.14, expenses were $536.00, and net income was $134.14. Treasurer’s report was approved as read.

Chief Ranger, Travis, reported that the running gear on the hay wagon has rusted and unsafe. He presented a request to the Friends for $2950.00 to purchase the new running gear, which includes 4 new tires. The wagon is needed for several programs within the Park. A motion was made and seconded that we give the money to the Park to have the wagon repaired. He also reported that he is having signs for the trails made. In 2015 the Friends helped to plant 300+ chestnut trees and the cages and baskets are still on them. On Feb. 27 Travis and many volunteers will meet for the removal of these baskets and cages. Volunteers should meet at the Visitors Center and get directions to the Chestnut trees. Details will follow in an email.

Interpreter, Jet, discussed having the Discovery Center open more for visitors and is looking for volunteers to be greeters. She would like to start this in March on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays with 4 hour shifts. If you can help, please let her know. Also, Doreen is not able to be the PFD coordinator this year, so Jet is looking for someone to volunteer for this job which basically is lining up 2-3 people each Tuesday and Thursday to hand out the PFD’s , shove the boat off, and on the boat returning, help to tie it up and then retrieve the PFD’s. As coordinator, you would do the scheduling and I’m sure Doreen would answer any questions you might have. Depending on the Captains, there may be moonlight and sunset tours. School groups will use the boat in April and in the Fall with the general population starting tours in May. She also reported that Bill Pecoraro, a Friend, who has always put up the Purple Martin nests would be doing that today. He said that he expects some of his older colony birds to arrive this week, with younger colonies to arrive when it’s warmer.

Lorraine Judd, Music in the Park coordinator, reported that she has the “Cloggers” all lined up and 3 of the 4 bands ready to go. She emphasized the need for sponsors at $50. If you know of a business that could be a sponsor, please ask them.

Matt Doyle, Boat Captain coordinator reported that all the captains are lined up and that he has found an anchor to replace the one that was lost. It was donated by Barry Baird.

Dick Hendrix reported that he has checked all the blue bird houses and they are in good shape. Monitoring will start last weekend in March and if you’re interested in being a monitor let him know.

Martha Kuon reported that all the trails are in good shape with the exception of 5 Oaks that needs to be finished. She wondered about numbering the benches…would it be helpful or not? This would be for emergency purposes to help the Rangers locate someone.

Carla Esarey, Playground coordinator, visited a Park in Daleville, and came away with ideas that were helpful and others not so much. This Park had ramps instead of steps, a solid surface for wheel chairs, etc. She will meet with the Board to discuss findings. The committee’s short term plans include a new barrier, new swings, demolition of old swings and carting to the dump. She and Meagan both have leads on sponsorships for this project.

Charlie Walker is following up with Larry Jackson on pictures of the Dam and it’s construction for our DC for educational purposes.

Master Naturalists, Bob Rasmussen and Nancy McIntyre presented a short program on what their program is all about. Basically, it’s to help us conserve and manage natural resources and public lands. They need more volunteers. They clean up trails, they check streams for water quality by collecting aquatic insects, they collect data on bugs, etc. They will be starting a new basic training class in March which is 40 hours and offered by a local chapter. You can visit Virginia Master Naturalist.org to find current chapter locations and contacts.

Shearer Rumsey is not able to continue as the coordinator for the Lecturer’s Series, but is willing to help anyone who might volunteer to do this. Catherine Eubank graciously accepted as she has many contacts and she will be in touch with Shearer.

Diana announced that she is looking for tractor drivers. They are needed for Tuesday evenings starting in June and going thru August for the “Batty Wagon” and also for 3 additional programs during the day.

Janis Erickson, “Children’s Corner” is looking for more books, so if you can donate some, mostly on nature, take them to a meeting or leave at the Visitor’s Center for Janis.

Meeting adjourned.

Thanks to all who brought refreshments.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Brennan, Secretary