

MOKOMA CONSERVANCY

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Saturday Oct. 21, 2023, 9:00AM at the LMA Cottage

Phone in 605-3134436 Access Code 772248

Members Present: Tom Minnick - President, Mary Kay Kennedy – Vice President, Eileen Miller - Secretary, Steve Hough - Treasurer, Tom Myers – Asst. Treasurer, Dave Kitts, Mary Jo Saxe, John Deckard, Mark Heim, Mike Sneedman

Present by phone: Joe Lundy, David Rissmeyer, Tom Richey

Unable to attend: Tim Reighart, Teresa Amott

Guests: Gerry Mann, Diana Reighart, Doug McKenney

Call to Order: Tom Minnick at 9:01 AM

President's Comments

Thank you to outgoing board members Dave Rissmeyer and Mary Jo Saxe for all you've done during your time on the board and welcome to new 2024 board members Gerry Mann and Diana Reighart. Welcome Doug McKenney our new website creator – we look forward to your website presentation.

Thank you to our current board for all you've accomplished this past year. Things are going very well.

Judy O'Dell sent a \$1720 donation check for her Curley Visits Lake Mokoma book sales. She assumed all costs of creating, printing, and selling books as a fundraiser for the Conservancy. The Mokoma Conservancy is very appreciative of Judy's donation. There are some books still available for sale either at this meeting or by contacting Judy.

Spotted lantern fly has been detected in Laporte. Information about what to do and how to report this is on our website.

Tom discussed a couple of his 2024 plans for the Conservancy: 1) Host a successful Sizzler with a new chair, 2) establish a long-term plan which would be a vision of what we're doing going forward. For example, do we want to purchase more land, and if so, is it around the current Conservancy land or elsewhere?

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Eileen announced the August meeting minutes were distributed on September 12th. There were no questions or changes noted. Mary Kay made the motion to approve minutes, 2nd by Mark and passed without dissent.

Approval of Financials from Previous Meeting

Motion to approve financials from the August meeting made by Mark and seconded by Mary Jo Saxe. All members present approved.

Presentation of financial reports

Steve Hough reported that the cash basis report and an outstanding pledge report as of 10/20/2023 were sent out by email yesterday.

Monthly Statement:

- Cash on hand & Investments (very bottom of page) increased by \$46,338 year to date, increase \$4,482 from last meeting date 8/24/2023.
- A new donor category for Leadership donor - \$5,000
- Still receiving Buy the Farm pledge funds.
- Costs for the reporting period are primarily for website development and signage for the new property.
- One \$50,000 CD matures next week, looking at current interest rates to lock in for 180 days or longer to ladder time frame away from 2nd CD held to January 2024.

A pledge receivable report is also attached.

Steve reported we're in sound financial condition.

Committee Reports

Land:

John Deckard announced that there were 6 beavers removed from Found Lake. Thank you to Ray and Teresa for allowing beaver trapper access through their property. It took a month to trap them all. 2 mature and 4 smaller beavers. One beaver was 50#.

A new decal was installed on the back of the Elklick sign to indicate the contribution levels. Mary Kay, Teresa, and John have been working on this effort.

Donor Levels on the new sign are:

Adopt an Acre \$1000

Leadership \$5000

Heritage \$10,000

Legacy \$25,000

John is working on new plaques for donors and stated we're on our 3rd printing of plaques for adopt an acre.

Elklick trail signs need to be installed.

The Found Lake dock still needs work. Plan a work weekend for spring.

Activities:

Mary Kay Kennedy asked that if anyone has ideas for summer 2024 activities, please send them to Mary Kay. We need to firm up events/dates by February for publication. The BearWise presentation will be scheduled for the end of June. Would like to co-program with LMA to possibly use the pavilion. MK requested Tom Myers do a nature photography program maybe at the vernal pond. Mary Jo said she'd be happy to lead a hike again.

Memorial:

Finance:

Tom Minnick commented that the finance committee has been working as a collaborative team with Dave Kitts, Tom Richey, and Theres Amott - trying to piece something together for the 21st century. Membership levels need to be determined as one of the puzzle pieces on the website payment page. Tom Minnick questioned what the different levels mean. Discussion about terminology of donor vs member. We need to bring clarity to the individual membership vs family. He said our bylaws have the word member vs. donor.

New proposed annual membership levels discussed:

Patron \$50 - Reasons to support moving to a \$50 annual membership (instead of \$35) were discussed: we still need to raise funds; we've doubled the size of the land; another local conservancy (EMC) has a \$75 annual membership. Most of the board agreed to a \$50 individual membership fee. One board member believes we still need a \$35.00 level. There was a suggestion that maybe \$35.00 is a non-voting member called donor.

Guardian \$100 - Family level is gone. Propose calling this level Household and it has 1 vote.

Conservationist \$250 - Conservationist is also a household membership and has 1 vote. If you pay the conservationist rate for 4 years, you would be able to adopt an acre.

The current Lifetime Membership level would be discontinued, and those current lifetime members would be grandfathered in.

Steve Hough: Different levels would be a check the box on payment card, and we could publish the list of donors in a newsletter.

Questions posed:

Can adopt an acre be split into multiple payments – 4 years max. If they send a check. Would that be confusing on the website? Maybe make membership 200 so it's not confused with 4 payment 250 for adopt an acre.

Can the larger levels be paid over time?

Finance will go back and discuss how to recobble this document. They will look at possibly moving adopt an acre to a different page on the website, so it's not confused with membership.

It was noted that deferred gifts don't get recognized with plaque until payments are complete.

Mary Kay presented to the finance committee a draft form to track volunteer hours and expenses for tax purposes. It was suggested that we add a "Do I want to be reimbursed?" line to the form.

Fundraising Committee:

Tom Minnick reported that the Sizzler will move under fundraising committee. There are things being worked on in the background – will send information out later.

Strategic Planning Committee:

Dave Kitts discussed the progression of the creation of the new website and stated our new web designer, Doug, had been able to talk with Jack Igoe during the transition. Thank you to everyone for providing pictures for the board section of the new website.

Web site presentation:

Doug McKenney talked about how the website transition from old to new will happen. From there he showed the new website from tab to tab including:

Main page is on auto scroll of photos and what is on home page.

Current history is wordy. New history section is set up with bullet points by year.

Can create a dropdown menu with board minutes, maybe a link to a 990 form for people to access to prove you're a charitable organization. It could be located under both donate and about tabs.

The activities calendar information would be inputted by Doug. He can also add flyers. We would use Dave Kitts as the person to funnel information to Doug. This new website calendar could link to Eventbrite.

Maps – Diana used ArcGIS for map changes – you can highlight each different trail and info about it. Dave Kitts commented that this is the beauty of the two people working together and brainstorming about what can be done and how to get there. We may need to invest in a printable version of the map. Mike said he thinks that the map as it is on the website can be printed.

The support page is still being built out. We will have a page that has join, donate (contribute?), and participate tabs.

Payment page not built out yet.

The membership page will have a payment method and ask for address/phone number/email address for our records.

This is where PayPal will show up.

There was a suggestion to create a drop down for memorial and adopt an acre.

Timing of go live: if we had the contribution section and PayPal and membership information, we could go live by the end of the year. Otherwise, we will put up the new website but have *Under Construction* for areas still being worked on.

The annual letter will go out via snail mail. Could send a duplicate via Mailchimp.

There seem to be a couple possible glitches in what can be seen on a computer vs. phone vs. tablet. For example, the history section was not showing up on one person's tablet while something else wasn't showing up on someone else's phone. Doug said he will investigate that.

Old Business:

Conklin Ridge Road issue update:

Judy O'Dell has done extensive work on her end with lawyers, Laporte, etc. Bottom line is the Mokoma Conservancy does not own the section of Conklin Ridge Road in question, the Borough does.

New Business:

Nothing presented.

Meeting Dates:

Our next board meeting will be held in February 2024 - date TBA. This meeting will hopefully be by Zoom. There was a request not to schedule the meeting weekend of February 22nd.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by Mark Heim, seconded by Mary Kay, and passed by all at 10:32AM

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Miller, Mokoma Conservancy Secretary