

BLEEDING KANSAS NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Meeting Minutes for July 10, 2003

Ward-Meade House, Topeka, KS

Attendees:

Virgil Dean
Debbie Burke
LaTonya Miller
George Cooper ?
Delbert Felts
Susy Ross
Dave Evans
Paul Bahnmaier
Steve Adams

Kerry Altenbernd
Scott Allegrucci
Gwen Martin
Emma Crites
Nadine Dishman
Jackie Clark
Diane Niehoff
Sharole Prahll
Sid Meeker

Ron Harris
Rick Dykstra
Chris Meinhardt
Judy Billings
Debbie White
Martha Parker
Eileen Robertson
Chris Bauman

Judy Billings called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and welcomed everyone present. She acknowledged Ward Meade and Friends of the Free State Capitol for hosting the meeting, and those present introduced themselves. Furthermore, she introduced members of the NHA Steering Committee and encouraged others to offer suggestions or join.

Corrections were made to the June NHA Meeting minutes, and a motion was moved and properly seconded for the approval of the July 10 meeting agenda. Clarification was made on the importance of taking accurate meeting minutes, but not necessarily word for word. Judy explained the need for the meeting minutes in that many who are not able to physically attend the NHA meetings rely on the minutes in order to be updated on the NHA process. Leavenworth County was added to the previous list of counties included in the NHA at the June NHA meeting. Other corrections were made to the June meeting minutes, and a motion was made and properly seconded for the approval of the June NHA minutes.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion began about the need for a feasibility/suitability study for legislation purposes. Judy stated that our focus should be Bleeding Kansas because it is unique to the national story. Much information has to be documented with several agencies involved. Legislation and the feasibility study are two important criteria. The NPS established the guidelines for both. Judy explained to the group that documentation and the different criteria are needed from the various sites to be included in the feasibility study. She stated that the goal of this process is to educate future generations, and achieving designation in 2004 was the goal. Two different options for achieving designation were presented: the slow track, which included working more closely with the NPS could take about 18-20 months. Taking the fast track would mean the committee hiring someone to work with the NPS and the group to put all the criteria information together. Legislation would have to be pushed through late fall to fulfill the 2004 deadline. Judy stated she has contacted two people who are prospects for preparing the feasibility study. She stated she had received the first proposal and was waiting on the second. The estimated cost for completing the feasibility study is averaged between \$50,000-150,000. She hoped by the August NHA meeting, more information would be available to share with the group on the status of the proposals.

A group participant asked the question of limitations on raising money to complete the study. Judy responded that as far as she knew, there were no limitations on raising money. The research for the study should be completed by the NHA committee members and that all

that was needed was enough information on the sites to meet the established guidelines and achieve designation. The goal is to have the feasibility study completed by December 1, 2003 and to have a draft available for review by November 2003. Judy reemphasized that the legislation would be written separately. She also announced the fact that the Congressional delegation is excited about the NHA project and is anxiously awaiting more information. It was stated that the group is still in the process of deciding on boundaries of the NHA and that it must include places that are crucial to the Bleeding Kansas story.

Judy Billings received recognition from the group on the hard work and enthusiasm she has put forth in bringing this project together. She further stated that there would be no exclusivity in the NHA. Steve Adams commented that a site must meet the criteria in order to be eligible for matching funds and designation as part of the NHA. Judy followed up by saying after the feasibility study is completed and legislation written, the next step would be to develop a management plan. She concluded with this... "Acting like an NHA is more important than achieving designation itself!" Designation is just a means to working together.

Debbie White announced that the site criteria and the story of each site must be submitted by the **September 11** meeting and to her electronically: visinfo@visitlawrence.com. This date is the hard deadline for submitting information, and the more information submitted the better.

Kerry stated the need for the NHA to develop a website in order to better disseminate information to those interested parties. One suggestion was made to attach some additional web pages to the current TKHA website and to secure the web domain name. Judy stated that anyone present was more than welcome to join the website committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Judy gave a brief history of the development of TKHA and discussed the need to ~~merge~~ coordinate TKHA and NHA meetings. She asked the group to begin thinking about representatives in their individual communities that would serve on an NHA Advisory Board. She confirmed that Judge Tacha, Lawrence, had volunteered to chair the board. The advisory board members should broadly represent the region with diverse interests. She asked those present to email her the name, contact information and reasons why the person should serve as a board member. She asked that these names be sent to her no later than **August 14**. She reiterated that designation only gives credibility and that the work is just beginning.

Debbie White read aloud the proposed Vision and Mission statements and goals for the NHA. Group members made suggestions for changes and improvements to the statements. The steering committee decided to meet again to revamp the statements, and the statements will be emailed to the group with the changes prior to the August NHA meeting. The group then discussed upcoming meeting locations for the next six months, and group members made announcements.

Judy announced the next two meetings were August 14 and September 11 at St. Joseph's Hall in Humboldt, KS and adjourned the meeting at 12:10 p.m.

LaTonya N. Miller