

MINUTES
ATHABASCA HERITAGE SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Monday, November 15, 2004

- 1.0 The meeting was called to order at 7:12PM by Christine Nelson who welcomed Iola Bartja, the guest speaker, and initiated the self-introduction of all attendees.

In attendance were: Peggy Baker, Iola Bartja, Severna Bosik, Bertha Clark Jones, Lori-Ann Claerhout, Mike Gismondi, Greg Johnson, Marguerite Koole, Richard Loken, Jerry MacLean, Mark Neaves, Christine Nelson, Marilyn Peruniak, Frank Ponto, Ann Stiles, Agnes Wurfel

- 2.0 **Agenda:** The agenda was amended to include three additional reports: item 6.7 will be The Heritage Trail, item 6.8 will be Billy Loutit competitive events, and item 6.9 will be the West Athabasca School. The agenda was adopted as amended.

Moved by Mike Gismondi, Seconded by Bertha Clark Jones, Carried.

- 3.0 **Minutes:** The minutes were adopted as distributed.

Moved by Marilyn Peruniak, Seconded by Ann Stiles, Carried.

- 4.0 **Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer's Report was accidentally omitted from the agenda and this oversight was not noticed until the Annual Committee Reports were being presented so the Treasurer's Report was presented after the Promotion and Advertising Report.

The treasurer distributed printed copies of the financial reports for fiscal year 2004 which ended on September 30, 2004. There were five reports which included: the Auditor's Report for 2004, the 2004 Balance Sheet, and the report for the Society's three accounts: the Operating Account, the Harrison Prints Account, and the Site Account.

The balance sheet has two empty line items on the Assets side: one labeled ``Stuff`` for items that the Society has for sale and another for the unfinished scow that is on display at the riverfront. Jerry Maclean suggests that the ``stuff`` should be valued at something between \$500.00 and \$1,000.00 but no value was suggested for the scow. The Society also owns 102 Harrison prints which were not listed on the balance sheet.

The financial reports were adopted as distributed.

Moved by Severna Bosik, Seconded by Agnes Wurfel, Carried.

- 5.0 **Old Business**

- 5.1 **Multiplex Report and AHS Donation:** Mark Neaves reported that the multiplex project has received a \$2,000,000.00 Centennial Legacies Grant and there is a chance of getting a \$500,000.00 Community Facilities Enhancement Programme (CFEP) grant. Funding for the multiplex project is now at \$8.5 million with a target of \$11.5 million, public fundraising will start in the near future.

Mark suggested that the Athabasca Heritage Society apply for a casino event to help fund our contribution to the multiplex project. This led to a discussion of the logistics of managing a casino event and speculation about using the proceeds from a casino event for more than one purpose.

Be it resolved that Athabasca Heritage Society apply for a casino event to be held in one of the casinos in Fort McMurray or St Albert. This event would require the commitment of eight volunteers per day for two days for a total of 16 volunteers.

Moved by Mike Gismondi, Seconded by Mark Neaves, Carried with 15 in favour and one opposed.

Merilyn Peruniak requested that she be recorded as voting against the motion.

The casino project will be placed on the agenda for the next monthly meeting of the Athabasca Heritage Society.

The Athabasca Heritage Society is committed to donate \$10,000.00 from the site account plus the riverfront site itself to the multiplex project. It seems to be an appropriate time for the Society to formally present its donation to the ARMS Committee, the ARMS Committee should be contacted and a time chosen for the presentation that will best provide publicity for both the Society and the ARMS Committee.

Mike Gismondi recommends that we donate more than \$10,000.00 to the project if possible.

6.0 **Committee reports**

6.1 **Promotion and Advertising:** There was no formal report because Vicky Busch has recently left and nobody has stepped forward to oversee the fundraising and publicity activities.

6.2 **Heritage Site and Sign Report:** Mike Gismondi distributed a printed report on the signage and riverfront committees. Only information that is not in the printed report is being reported here.

All the large signs except for two have been put up around town. The signs that have not been put up will go on the Bank of Nova Scotia and on Macleods True Value Hardware. The heritage signage (exclusive of the water front signs which are now owned by the Town of Athabasca) have a total value of about \$25,000.00 and are not insured for loss or damage.

Mike brought along drawings of the latest riverfront development proposal and expressed his enthusiasm for the present plan. Some Society members expressed a need for a long term mechanism which will ensure that the riverfront property

will continue to be used in a manner that conforms to the Society's wishes. The matter of appropriate use of the land after it is donated to the Multiplex Project will have to be given further scrutiny before the donation is completed.

- 6.3 **Quilt Committee:** Ann Stiles reported that the Heritage Quilts are still on display in the United Church where they were set up for the Magnificent River Rats Festival. The quilt committee is in need of new places where they can put the quilts on display.

A third quilt is under construction, all the pieces have been made but the quilt has not yet been assembled. Peggy Baker suggested unveiling the new quilt at the celebration of the West Athabasca School historical site designation. Agnes Wurfel liked that idea and said that such a celebration will take place in the winter or spring.

- 6.4 **River Rats Festival:** Merilyn Peruniak provided the secretary with a written copy of her verbal report which has been transcribed and attached to this document. A short summary is that the 2004 Magnificent River Rats Festival was quite successful and that the River Rats Festival committee has already reorganized and started planning for the 2005 show which will return to a two day format.

Merilyn is stepping down after doing a tremendous job over the past years. Merilyn said that the credit goes to the committee of Society members who have worked with her. Whatever, Merilyn Peruniak and the Society members who worked with her have done a tremendous job of managing the Society's contribution to the annual Magnificent River Rats Festival.

The River Rats Festival pictorial display which Merilyn made for the Communities in Bloom pot luck supper was on display at the AGM.

- 6.5 **Membership:** An informal membership committee was formed in February 2004 to update the membership list. The committee returned with two lists: a short list of active members and a long list that includes any and all interested parties. No further reviews of the Society's contact lists are planned but the accuracy of the contact lists are always important.

The Athabasca Heritage Society now has 19 life time members.

- 6.6 **Nominating Committee - confirmation of election of Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Member(s) at large:** Christine Nelson announced that she is too busy to continue on as chair so she is stepping down. Christine suggested that the next chair should hold regular executive meetings and then announced the call for nominations.

Christine nominated Jerry Maclean (the incumbent vice-chair) as chair, seconded by Lori-Ann Claerhout. Jerry Maclean nominated Mike Gismondi as vice-chair, seconded by Bertha Clark Jones. Severna Bosik agreed to stay on as treasurer and Richard Loken agreed to stay on as secretary.

Mike Gismondi nominated Rod and Maxine Winder as members-at-large. Jerry Maclean nominated Mark Neaves as member-at-large. All nominees were elected by acclamation so the construction of the railroad was complete.

- 6.7 **Heritage Trail:** Frank Ponto was present to report on Travel Alberta's efforts to promote the Heritage trail and to inquire about the Society's interest in purchasing some Heritage Trail promotional inserts and/or Heritage Trail promotional post cards. The promotional inserts sell for \$195.00 for 1,000 copies and the post cards sell for \$75.00 for 1,000 copies. There was some discussion among those present about the relative merits of the two offerings and then it was decided that Christine Nelson, Mike Gismondi, and Lori-Ann Claerhout would meet with Frank Ponto on Tuesday, November 16 to make a decision about purchasing Heritage Trail promotional material.

Frank also reported that Travel Alberta has produced a short promotional video from material that they recorded at the 2004 River Rats Festival. The completed video is about five or six minutes long and is available on VHS.

- 6.8 **Billy Loutit Athletic Events:** Lori-Ann Claerhout reported that this is the second year for the Billy Loutit events and both events were quite successful. There were 15 participants registered for the winter Billy Loutit Biathlon and 68 participants registered for the summer Billy Loutit Triathlon. There were 33 of Billy Loutit's relatives, including two of his daughters, present at the Billy Loutit Triathlon held last summer. The two events are just breaking even at the present attendance levels and money will probably be needed to carry the events through the next couple years.

The upcoming Billy Loutit Biathlon will be held on Saturday, February 26 at the Athabasca Ski Chalet.

- 6.9 **West Athabasca School:** Agnes Wurfel reported that the historic designation for the West Athabasca School is now a certainty and the committee is turning its attention to the restoration of the building and fundraising to pay for restoration and upkeep.

David Kwiatkowski, director of maintenance from the Aspen View maintenance shop, estimates that it will cost \$141,000.00 to restore the West Athabasca School and Tom Ward suggested that the building be restored over a fifteen year period and that a \$25,000.00 grant be applied for every five years for a total grant of \$75,000.00.

The members of the West Athabasca School Committee generally agreed that a practical plan would be to restore the roof and do whatever is necessary to make the building usable so that they can start using the building as a museum. If they then joined Museums Alberta, an advisory organization, in six months time they would be eligible for a grant of \$1,500.00 to get the fledgling museum going. The grant is a simple donation with no strings attached. The school could thus be put

to use during the extended time that the building is being restored.

Agnes reported that she and the West Athabasca School Committee would be meeting on Tuesday November 16 and their major topic would be fund raising.

7.0 **Adjournment**

The meeting was followed by an informative presentation by Iola Bartja of the Amber Valley Community Association and their work to preserve the history of Amber Valley.