

**Friends of Grayson Highlands State Park
Minutes of Meeting June 20, 2011**

Present: Donna Neimi, Marceia Holland, David Collett, Moe & Harvey Thompson, Kevin Kelley, & Deana Blevins

Minutes of last meeting Approved

Treasurer's Report: Balance as of June 20, 2011 \$3654.45

Credits:

Membership	\$20.00
T-shirt sales	20.00
Mem. Day Refreshment Donations	105.82

Debits:

Tim Lewis (t-shirts)	\$288.00
Mark Roberts (life size pony for raffle)	648.37
Gardens of Blue Ridge (plants)	37.60
Audubon Workshop (plants)	26.76
Indoor Farms (plants)	45.26
Wal-Mart (water hose)	23.07
Lowes (plants, edging)	50.59
True Value (sprinkler, trowel, Organic weed killer)	41.99
Food City (4 sheet cakes – 75 th Anniversary Celebration)	174.28
US Postal Service (Annual Box Rental)	56.00

Total Credits: \$145.82

Total Debits:

\$ 1391.92

Approved as presented

Annual Budget Report for 2010-2011 presented

Budget for fiscal year July 2011-June 2012 presented

Old Business

- Friends provided refreshments (snacks & lemonade) during the Music entertainment on Sunday, May 29th and donations of \$105.82 were collected. Also, we sold one \$15 t-shirt, and were given \$20 for this.
- Rhonda finally received the **tax exempt status approval – retroactive to September 01, 2004.**
- Approximately 125 tickets for the life size pony were sold during the Wayne C. Festival.
- Rhonda purchased 4 sheet cakes from Food City for the 75th anniversary VA State Parks Birthday Celebration. The cost was \$174.28. Moe will send a thank you for the \$25 donation from Food City. The four cakes were served within 25 minutes. Donna said it was back breaking labor to cut and serve them this year & suggested handing out moon pies next time. Due to several other commitments, we had fewer volunteers available to help this year. It was suggested we enlist the help of more volunteers, but continue with the continuity of serving cakes with all the state parks as requested by Richmond office. This is the second time the Friends' group has assisted in this effort, once for the 70th and again for the 75th anniversary.
- The thank you for the two hose reel hangers for the wildflower gardens, made by Wilson Creek Welding was delivered.
- Joan picked up the t-shirts from Tim (cost \$288 for 36 t-shirts). Three were sold during the Wayne C. Festival.

Park Manager Time

The Wayne C. Festival went well. Forty percent of the crowd left after the thunderstorm. There were 841 cars, and 1600 paying the \$10 admission fee to attend the Wayne C. Festival. There were 2,154 visitors to the festival and 3,200 total visitors in the park on June 18th. There was no parking fee collected due to the Festival was held on the same day as the 75th Virginia State Parks Anniversary Celebration. A new merchandise tent will need to be purchased soon. The current one is wearing out. There were many negative comments about the food (“horrible food”) served during the festival. Rugby rescue squad applied to be the vendor; however a contract had already been given to others. The service was very slow, and the food over cooked and overpriced. Vendors need to be organized & know how to serve a large crowd. The target for merchandise for resale for FY11 is \$126,300 and we have acquired \$133,000 YTD. The total for the festival weekend in merchandise sales was \$7,000 and we are 7% ahead of the predicted target amount for the FY11. Harvey predicts it will be 12-15% above by the end of the year. Overflow is allowed to camp in the stable area, if available. Water table is holding for now, but may be out by the 3rd week of July-1st week in August if we do not have more rain. There have been lots of news media regarding the ponies at the park. The Richmond Times Dispatch, WCYB News channel, the 75th Anniversary Video and VA Lottery commercial to name a few. A number of staff, including Nathan Cox, Kelley Seavick, Evalyn Halsey, & Harvey have been positively recognized by visitors using the Your Comments Count cards. It is anticipated that the visitor comments cards may be switched to an online version sometime in the future. David Johnson, Director DCR, has been to every state park and sends a birthday card to each permanent state park staff. He visited on June 17th and was interviewed by WCYB News channel. There are two boxes of water bottles, Cliff bar samples and forms for drawing for prizes being offered to visitors during the 75th Anniversary Celebration.

New Business

- Marceia & Amy Atwood have been planning a Heritage Day to be held August 14th in the Homestead area. The park will be providing free hot dogs for all. There will be a scanner to copy old photos and document a history of the area. The event is an attempt at community outreach. Marceia suggested we combine the employee/volunteer recognition with this. However, due to staff & volunteers being busy with the Heritage event and not able to fully enjoy themselves;

it was determined to hold the recognition on a separate day. The date for the employee & volunteer recognition will be August 3rd at 12:00. Pizza and watermelon will be served. In future years, perhaps the Friends' group can sponsor the hot dogs for the Heritage day.

- The Youth Conservation Corps graduation celebration will be held August 13th. Moe will order fruit, vegetable, and cheese/meat trays for this event. A cake will also be provided by the Friends' group.
- Adventure Rangers and Junior Rangers programs are scheduled. In addition, canoe and musical/historical programs are planned.
- Aaron Parlier (Youth Ambassador) attended the Wayne Festival. Marceia said he has sent emails to Moe & Rhonda. Moe has not received any that she is aware & requested Marceia provide his email address so she can contact him with the correct email addresses. He is applying for a grant for the bouldering program at Grayson Highlands and would like to use the Friends' as the non-profit contact for any funds received. The money could be used to purchase crash pads that could be rented through the park. Aaron was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Moe will attempt to make contact once she has his email address.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 18, 2011 7:00 p.m. at the park office.