

**Minutes of the Winneshiek County
Historic Preservation Commission
Meeting
January 7, 2006
8:30 A.M.
Vesterheim Education Center**

Present

Kevin Lee, Dave Stanley, Steve Johnson, Roger Bergan, Ferneva Bremicomb, Steve Klimesh

Steve Johnson opened the meeting by passing around the newly printed auto guide and indicated that they had been distributed to a number of retailers. The Commission is selling batches of 10 at four dollars a piece with a suggested retail price of five dollars a piece. Originally 2,000 copies were to be printed up but problems with the pressed reduced the final number 1,830 copies. Elizabeth has all the copies and has been distributing them. The Decorah Chamber of Commerce was interested in a 10 pack but wanted it fronted to them and said they would repay the Commission if they sold. Commission members came to a consensus that we would not sell the auto guide on consignment noting that \$40 did not seem like a great deal of money to invest in the community and encourage tourism.

Steve Johnson brought up the topic of signage for some of the historic sites identified in the auto guide. He noted that funding would be an issue but suggested that sponsors might be found for individual sites. He also noted that vandalism and maintenance are issues to consider.

Steve Klimesh though it might be wise to do a few a year and see how things went in regard to both vandalism and maintenance.

Roger pointed out that many of the properties are on private land and outlined some issues such as privacy, access, and property owner consultation.

Steve Johnson suggested that we should contact Smokestacks and Silos and see if grant money would be available for signs or at least matching funds. He also identified the four issues that need to be addressed if the Commission decide to pursue signage for some of the historic sites and properties. These issues include but are not limited to:

Private property
Maintenance
Vandalism
Funding

Steve Johnson indicated that he would contact Smokestacks and Silos to see if there might be funding available. The topic will be open to further discussion at the next Commission meeting.

Kevin brought up the ongoing problem with the Freeport Pioneer Cemetery and that Shirley Schermer, the Burials Program director at the Office of the State Archeologist recommended that a Phase I Archeological Survey be conducted to determine the cemetery boundaries and document its condition. Shirley also suggested establishing a 100-foot buffer zone around the cemetery.

Dave noted that a project of that nature could be costly, as much as six to eight thousand dollars depending upon level of effort and the nature of the scope of work. A CLG grant might be possible although the Commission has not had very encouraging comments from the CLG coordinator in the past.

Kevin noted that if the next grant cycle does not begin until August of '06 and funds are not released until '07 it might be too late even if the grant application was successful.

Dave said he would contact Shirley and see if she had any other suggestions and what potential options are available.

Dave noted that he would need some additional information from Commission members regarding the 2005 annual report and that he would e-mail members.

Kevin brought up the possibility of developing a 2007 calendar illustrating historic structures, pioneer cemeteries, and other historic sites in Winneshiek County. A general discussion supported the idea and Roger suggested that we contact banks in the county that might be willing to sponsor the calendars.

Steve Johnson mentioned that we needed to meet with the Board of Supervisors about the Commission's yearly allocation. He suggested we outline the costs for meeting expenses, workshops, office supplies, and possibly the cost of a historic calendar. Steve volunteered to attend the Board meeting and make our request.

Ferneva described how she and other members of the Winneshiek County Historical Society hosted a tour of the Old County Jail for Gordon Hunter, a Winneshiek County Supervisor. The group pointed out a number of shortcomings with the building and present storage facility for the historic archives.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 A.M.
Next meeting on February 11th.

