

BOARD MINUTES
A. W. PERRY HOMESTEAD MUSEUM
April 28, 2015

The A. W. Perry Homestead Museum Board met at the A. W. Perry Homestead Museum, 1509 N. Perry Rd, at 7:00 pm, Tuesday, April 28, 2015.

Present: Charles Thrasher, Doug Wedemeyer, Lisa Stavinoha, Phyllis Jabin, Glenda Palmer, Tom Williams, and Council Liaison Steve Babick.
Staff: Toyia Pointer, Curator

Absent: Paul Price, George Barnes, and Cynthia Isley.

- I. The January meeting minutes were reviewed. Williams motioned to approve and Thrasher seconded, minutes were approved unanimously with no changes. (Jabin entered meeting after vote.)
- II. Pointer gave an update on the Perry Society's Gravley Gazebo project. The Perry Society met in March at the Perry Homestead. They signed the agreement with the City to raise funds and construct the gazebo, and they also applied for a grant from the Civic League for the project. Representatives from Civic League did a site visit in March and John Roppolo and she attended their grant committee meeting and answered questions about the Perry Society's proposal. They requested \$3500 (total project cost is \$30,000), they should be notified if funding would be awarded by the end of April or beginning of May. Judy Scamardo is serving as the fundraising chair for the Perry Society. Thrasher said the Civic League had awarded the Perry Society funds before, for the Quilt project.
- III. Isley, Stavinoha, and Jabin had been working with the Curator on re-developing a long-range plan. Pointer distributed copies of the Parks and Recreation Department's Business Plan that refer to the Museum specifically and a copy of the operating budget. Funds are received from the City's general fund, hotel/motel tax fund, and a donation/revenue account. Thrasher asked about unexpected expenses, such as roof damage, etc. Pointer explained that those would usually be filed as a risk claim and the City, which is self-insured, would take funds needed for repairs from that fund and not one of the other regular accounts. The Facilities Department also does budgeting for major regular maintenance such as roof replacements, painting, etc. Then, a spreadsheet developed

by our long-range planning committee was distributed. That spreadsheet was organized into two main categories: Community Engagement & Partnership Activities, and Museum Stewardship & Management. Community Engagement included sub-categories of annual events, ongoing activities/programs, site utilization & site management, planned maintenance & expenses. Museum Stewardship & Management included strategic directives, planning activities, planning deliverables. The committee's goal is to begin this discussion now/April, continue at the July meeting, and then have a final draft available for approval in October. Jabin led the discussion through the Community Engagement & Partnership Activities section. The group went through the list offering feedback on items to continue doing, enhance, tweak, or re-evaluate offering.

Steve Babick discussed the Gravley Property that sits to the south of the Museum Property. Members of the Perry Society, Judy Scamardo and David Yarbrough, had recently attended a Council meeting and inquired about the possibility or status of trying to purchase this property. Council considered it in executive session at the last meeting and authorized an offer. He asked the group if there were specific activities that the additional land could be used for. The members said it was currently being used for the Christmas event, Mother's Day Concert, Texas History Alive, and the Vintage Base Ball Games. Pointer added that, for those unfamiliar with where the Museum's property ends, the Gravley property begins immediately on the south side of the white picket fence. Thrasher asked if the owners keep the property mowed. Pointer explained that the City has had a no cost lease on the property since the 1970s and our Parks and Recreation Department mows it when they mow the rest of the park. Besides the smaller area in front of the barn, the Gravley property is the only large open, flat area in the park for the type of activities listed. Palmer noted that more uses for the property could be developed in the future if it was acquired. Jabin added that it already feels like a part of the park and is currently being used as such. The Curator expressed the idea that even if there were no immediate plans or funding for enhancements on the additional property- if the land was not acquired now, looking long term over the next 10, 15, or even 20 years, there would be no room for future expansion, public restrooms, additional parking, etc. Continuing using it as additional event space or parking in the meantime would still be beneficial. Another thing that was talked about is that there isn't any infrastructure on that property, no

park lights, walkways, electrical, etc. It is only been maintained and hasn't been improved because it is not owned by the City.

Various programs were discussed. Babick talked about the Movies on the Lawn and wondered if that could be expanded to more contemporary films or expanding the offerings during that event. Pointer agreed and said they had been working on that and had plans in the fall to show *Back to the Future III* for example and are looking to add more food trucks or other types of entertainment. The idea of local theater groups or local school's theater departments using the site was also discussed. Scout programs were explained and staff is looking into increasing program offerings to Boy Scouts. The majority of current scout programs are offered to Girl Scouts. Campouts haven't been done because the site is not fenced off or secured overnight. Eagle Scout projects are common at the site. Spring Blooms is an event that seems like it will continue to grow and visitors to the park in general increased during the time the wildflowers were in bloom. Palmer recommended directional signage from the parking lot since the bluebonnets cannot be seen from that point. Pointer mentioned that one of the interpretive themes for the site is "philanthropy and community involvement", that theme could be introduced into some of our events. For example, have a food or toy drive in conjunction with another organization during the Christmas event. Or, having a community (Carrollton nonprofit organizations only) garage sale on the property. Teddy Bear Picnic could be made into a larger event. Opportunities for offsite programs at rec centers or libraries are also a possibility. Or, utilizing Recreation staff to organize local or day trips to other museums and special exhibits that tie into our current programming or themes. We often try to tie in modern trends and compare and contrast them with the history of our site, Homestead How-To programs are an example of this as well as the Ask and Expert programs on technology then and now. Thrasher asked what uses of technology like websites and social media accounts are we using to connect with younger generations. We do use social media frequently. IPADs for tours are something we might want to incorporate into site visits. There are a lot of trends in historic house museums in relation to more accessibility and connectivity at these type of sites.

The group consensus is that Photos with Santa, Vintage Base Ball, Scout Programs, Christmas, Spring Blooms, Mother's Day Concert should continue. Movies on the Lawn needs to be tweaked and re-evaluated to

reach larger audiences. Summer camps, Family Fun programs, Homestead How-Tos may not be regular programs due to the low number of people they serve or may not be needed annually.

IV. Information Sharing

Pointer shared the following:

- Spring Blooms went very well and the photos were gorgeous. Will post some online soon and will tweak it to be even more efficient next year, adding directional signage, designated roped off photograph areas.
- Mother's Day Concert is scheduled with the E Flat Porch Band on May 10. Lots of prizes were obtained from sponsors for the gift baskets for the Picnic Contest. This year the Keller Springs Shopping Center merchants contributed.
- Board member Cynthia Isley submitted her resignation due to health issues. New members will be appointed in November.

Meeting concluded at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Toyia Pointer, Curator/Staff Liaison

Lisa Stavinoha, Chairman