

Board Meeting Minutes May 16, 2005
STONE MOUNTAIN MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

May 16, 2005

A meeting of the Stone Mountain Memorial Association was held at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, May 16, 2005, at Confederate Hall, Stone Mountain Park, Stone Mountain, Georgia.

ASSOCIATION MEMBERS PRESENT

Tom Gilliland, Chairman

Greer Johnson, Vice Chair

Mark Baxter

Brent Brown

Bill Chappell

Mike Pentecost

Ray S. Smith, III

Joan Thomas

ASSOCIATION MEMBERS ABSENT

Brent Brown

OTHERS PRESENT

Curtis Branscome, C.E.O.

Bob Cowhig, Director of Planning & Construction

Gail Durham, Director of Finance

Jerry Spicer, Director of Administration & Public Safety

Other SMMA Staff

Ned Stancliff, VP HFEC

Gerald Rakestraw, General Manager, SDC Stone Mountain Park

Ray Lerer, Attorney General's Office

Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Tom Gilliland called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Noel Holcomb, seconded by Greer Johnson, and unanimously approved to waive the reading of the minutes of the April 18, 2005 meeting and to adopt the minutes as printed. A draft copy of the minutes was sent to each Board Member prior to the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Timmons of Tucker, Georgia informed the SMMA Board that he had recently led several hikes during the spring and they were well received by Park guests. He said the groups had seen native azaleas and trout lily as well as other various wildflowers.

Mr. Timmons requested that the staff personnel in charge of trail maintenance check into changing the Cherokee Trail markers from red to white.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Johnson stated that for the four months ended April 30, 2005 the total operating revenues were \$3.0 million and slightly better than budget. Total operating expenses were \$1.7 million and about \$60,000 less than budget.

Net operating income before depreciation is \$1.3 million compared to the budget of \$1.2 million or about \$150,000 better than budget. After depreciation expense, the excess of total expenses over revenues is \$155,000 which is about \$160,000 better than the budgeted loss of \$312,228.

Cash provided from operating activities in the first four months of operation was \$1.2 million. The investment and cash balance at the end of April remains strong at \$21.7 million.

Mr. Chappell moved that the finance committee report be accepted as presented. Mr. Smith seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

STONE MOUNTAIN PARK REPORT – HFEC

Gerald Rakestraw distributed a flyer about the Memorial Day Celebration which starts on Friday, May 27. There will be a special patriotic laser show for the full four day presentation. All military personnel will be recognized nightly. This marks the beginning of Stone Mountain Park's nightly laser shows that run throughout the summer. The summer Jim Fowler animal show begins Memorial Day week and will last through the middle part of August.

Miss Katie's restaurant is now serving breakfast and offers a southern breakfast menu. This has been well received by Park visitors.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE MASTER PLAN

Mr. Branscome introduced Robert Benson of Robert & Company to present an overview of the proposed amendment to the Master Plan. Mr. Branscome stated that in 1917 Chip Robert, a

graduate of Georgia Tech, formed an engineering and design company called Robert & Company. This firm consulted and did engineering work with Gustav Borglum in the 1920's. Borglum started the original carving on Stone Mountain. In the 1940's and 1950's Robert & Company did the master planning for the nonprofit organization that was attempting to form Stone Mountain Park. In the 1960's when the State of Georgia became involved with the Park, Robert & Company participated in the first state sponsored Master Plan for Stone Mountain Park. Today we have Robert Benson who helped lead the 1992 Master Plan and is going to present the Board with the overview of the amendment that is proposed.

Mr. Benson presented the highlights of the proposed amendment to the Master Plan. A summary of this amendment which was published in the legal organs of both DeKalb and Gwinnett counties is presented below.

The division of the Park into four districts (Natural, Park Center, Events, Recreation/Resort) is continued. It is clarified that "no development" in the Natural District means no commercial development and no development that promotes group activity. Support facilities such as restrooms, educational exhibits, trails and simple benches and shelters are permitted but must be designed to have minimal impact on the natural environment. On September 18, 2000, SMMA approved the "Stone Mountain Park Long Range Plan" submitted by HFEC. That approved plan is to be incorporated into the amended master plan as having already been evaluated and approved by SMMA.

All public works facilities are to be consolidated into one new building to be located in the area of the old prison site. The Children's Playground stays in the Natural District. Property acquired by SMMA is placed in a "reserved" category for future determination as to use. The 1992 plan provision for closing the road around the mountain is removed and the current configuration (one-way vehicular traffic plus dedicated bicycle/pedestrian lane) is endorsed. The main Park entrance will remain the east entrance from the Stone Mountain Freeway (Main Gate) and the North Gate will be modified to help it better function as a Park exit. Three specific transportation improvements are recommended to correct particular bottlenecks: correct the pedestrian/vehicular conflict at the Robert E. Lee/Old Hugh Howell Road intersection (tunnel or bridge), increase capacity of Old Hugh Howell Road as an exit by making both lanes into exit lanes, and improve the exiting capacity of the Main Gate by rearranging ticket booths and improving lane markings. Park-wide improvements include the construction of a parking lot in the Triangle Picnic area, construction of a new parking lot north of John B. Gordon Drive at its intersection with Jefferson Davis Drive and construction of a new connecting road from the intersection of old 78 Highway with Robert E. Lee Boulevard northward to intersect with the existing Service Drive.

Mr. Gilliland inquired if there had been any commercial development inquiries regarding the old airport property. Mr. Branscome stated that one group wanted to develop a soccer complex, but nothing tangible or contractual had been presented.

Mr. Branscome stated that the proposed amendment to the Master Plan had been advertised for public hearing on June 20, 2005. This is also the date for the next scheduled SMMA Board meeting. Mr. Branscome said that at a subsequent meeting following the public hearing, the SMMA Development Committee would make a recommendation to the Board on whether to

adopt the proposed amendment.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Branscome introduced Ray Lerer with the State Attorney General's office. Mr. Lerer is a Senior Assistant Attorney General and will be fulfilling the function as representative for SMMA until he can find a suitable replacement for Cindy Presto.

Mr. Lerer stated that he was representing SMMA during the process to adopt the 1992 Master Plan. He said that his office is in the process of hiring a replacement for Ms. Presto. Mr. Lerer is available to the Board if they have any questions or need assistance.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Tom Gilliland, Chairman

Submitted by

Gail Durham, Secretary