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4-14-1993

Minutes Tractor Test and Power Museum April 14th, 1993

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AGRICULTURAL TRACTOR TEST & POWER MUSEUM
BIOLOGICAL SYSTEMS ENGINEERING IANR-UNL
APRIL 14, 1993 - 1:30 PM.

Chairman Richard Maresh called the meeting to order with the following present:
Maresh, Walters, Hoffman, Leviticus, Kleis, Ellington, Tooker, Splinter, Fenster.
Election of Officers:
Bill Splinter - Chairman
Glenn Hoffman - Secretary

Hoffman read a letter sent to Vice Chancellor Omtvedt & Vice Chancellor Splinter on Febr. 10, 1993 in regard to Agricultural Tractor Test & Power Museum Committee.
Also read a response letter from Vanderholm, IANR Facilities Director about the old Tractor Test Building. The letter indicated that the consensus of the Administration was that the old Tractor Test Building on East Campus is not in the best interest of the University or IANR, and that alternate plans should be made by the Museum Committee.
The letter also indicated that they hope the Museum Committee will be able to make some progress on developing a museum plan including provision for the needed funding for facilities to house the displays, plans for managing museum displays and a personnel operating plan.

Need sanction of UNL for TTC.
Will need support of "Friends of the Tractor Testing" -various groups through out the state. One group at Crawford.
Discussed issues expressed about parking--not a serious problem.
Kleis said the Tractor Testing Bldg. should be listed as a Historic Site.
UNL staff - 55 and under are not interested in history & heritage.
Montana Collection of Equipment Literature:
Ted Worrell--Loma, Montana - passed away-son to keep the literature collection.
Have 2 sets of tractor testing reports--one in Conservation Survey Bldg. and one in Tractcr Test Lab.

Is the Tractor Testing Bldg. or contents or both important?
Tractor Test Lab is 75 x 81 feet. (6075 sq.ft.)
Has any one visited with Sen. Warner about Tractor Testing Lab. His fathe was State Senator and Co-sponsor of bill for Tractor Testing Bldg.

New buildings be constructed__Beadle Center on Vine Street.
Conservation & Survey Bldg. north of Tractor Test.

Tooker presented an "Outline for Tractor Testing/Farm Machinery Museum at IANR - UNL." Developed by the committee composed of Ellington, Kleis & Larson. He pointed out the "highlights" of the outline and encouraged everyone to study and prepare comments for the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 3 pm.

Secretary,
Charlie Fenster

University of
Nebraska
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IANR

TO: Vice Chancellor Omtvedt
Vice Chancellor Splinter

FROM: Glenn J. Hoffman

DATE: February 10, 1993

RE: Agricultural Tractor Test and Power Museum Committee

As you both are aware, the Agricultural Tractor Test and Power Museum Committee grew out of Governor Orr's "Antique Farm Machinery and Equipment Commission" established by the State Legislation in 1988 as Bill LB 838. Since the committee was formed in 1991, membership has increased from 10 to 18. The members are a blend of university members, emeriti faculty, state leaders, and interested citizens. A current list of committee members is attached.

The major goals of the committee are to preserve and exhibit the methods used to test tractors and display the major improvements in tractor design and performance. These plans are now beginning to take shape. The committee desires to be recognized as an official university committee because (1) tractor testing facilities have been an activity of the University of Nebraska, Lincoln since 1920, (2) representation on the committee includes several from the university, and (3) activities of the committee can have significant impacts on the university. This recognition should assure understanding and agreement on such items as museum location, maintenance, and future operations. If you agree, please let me know what actions are needed to secure university sanction.

Attachment

xc: Richard Maresh
Charles Fenster
Fred Chase

GJH/nm

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Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Agricultural Tractor Test and Power Museum Committee

FROM: Dale H. Vanderholm Dale
IANR Facilities Director

DATE: April 6, 1993

SUBJECT: **Old Tractor Test Building**

Recent meetings of the Museum Committee have included discussion of the significance of the old Tractor Test building as a historical site and whether it should be preserved for that reason. The possibility of using it as a museum highlighting the tractor testing effort in the very early years as well as serving as a repository for reference materials was also discussed.

As I have communicated to the committee at previous meetings, this building has been identified for some years in the University facility planning efforts as targeted for demolition. Since the discussions about preservation and restoration of this building were inconsistent with that intent, I initiated communication with IANR administration regarding the future of the building and the area where it is located.

A meeting of IANR administrators and facilities personnel was held to discuss this question. During the meeting, several serious concerns were raised about the possible preservation of the building and its use as a museum. Initially, as has been previously communicated to the Museum Committee, there is no possibility of using University funds for renovation purposes. The University is in a serious budget reduction situation and is currently having difficulty in obtaining funds for even the most basic maintenance of buildings which house priority academic programs.
The University's experience with other museums located on central areas of campus suggest that these are not ideal locations. Visitor parking is a serious problem, especially when we already have problems for normal parking of students and staff. Visitor traffic also provides problems of adding to traffic congestion on central campus areas as well as problems of directing visitors to the location.

Even a small museum such as this would still require specific plans for operating personnel, and provisions for operating and maintenance costs. A cost figure simply to renovate the building to restore it to watertight integrity was slightly over $100,000. It appears to us the cost to bring it up to museum standards, meeting visitor code requirements, preparing displays, and other needs, will be much greater than that. An effort to accomplish only the renovation would be significant and still would not provide capability to house the bulk of the tractor collection which was part of the original intent of the Museum Committee.

There was recognition of the committee's perception of the historical value of the building, resulting in a suggestion that one alternative might be to move all or part of the building to an alternate location off-campus where it might serve as part of the museum to house the entire tractor collection. We would urge the committee to consider this as a possible alternative. There is recognition of the value of the Tractor Test Museum and the associated tractor collection and the desirability to maintain and display these for future generations.

For the above reasons, I was asked to communicate back to the Museum Committee that a consensus had emerged that continued presence of the old Tractor Test building on East Campus is not in the best interest of the University or IANR, and that alternate plans should be made by the Museum Committee.

While the Judging Pavilion has been made available for temporary housing of the tractors and given possible consideration for longer term use, this still appears to be a very costly solution which would not be adequate for the total museum needs. For this reason, we would urge the museum committee to continue to work with the Antique Machinery Commission and to consider other locations for a suitable museum such as State Fair Grounds, Camp Creek Threshers Grounds, or other alternatives that may surface.

We hope that the Museum Committee will be able to make some progress on developing a museum plan including provision for the needed funding for facilities to house the displays, plans for managing museum displays and a personnel operating plan.