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April 1994

Minutes Ag Tractor Test and Power Committee April 28th, 1994

Tractor Museum

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MINUTES

Agricultural Tractor Test and Power Museum Committee
12:30 p.m., Shirley Trauger's Home, Exeter, Nebraska
Thursday April 28, 1994

Meeting was called to order by Dr. Bill Splinter, Chair. Thirteen committee members were present - Splinter, Maresh, Hoffman, Larsen, Melvin, Trauger, Tooker, Walters, Vanderholm, Fenster, Kleis, Ellington, and Chase. Tom Dorn, extension educator, and Jeri Ferris, niece of Fred Chase were guests.

Minutes of February 18, 1994

Minutes were reviewed and approved.

Historical Development of Tractor Testing

A copy of this report prepared by Frank Waters and Russell Candee was presented and circulated among members.

Museum Inventory

Les Larsen reported on the accomplishments of Laura Casey. She has completed her work and is submitting a written report to Larsen and Splinter on May 3.

Slide File of Antique Tractors

Frank Walters is compiling a set of slides on antique tractors.

Roof Protection

Larry Miller, a contractor from Omaha, has inspected the roof of the original tractor test building. He estimated \$14,000 to repair the roof. He noted that the stucco walls are starting to buckle. Paul Harmon, from the Construction Management Department at UNL, will inspect the walls on May 3.

The plastic cover has not been placed over the roof for fear the building could not support the extra weight.

Potential Source of Renovation Funds

Fred Chase noted that the Hitchcock Foundation in Omaha may be a source of funds for renovation. Splinter and Chase will prepare a renovation proposal for the Foundation's annual meeting in November. Needs for renovation are being addressed in three stages in the proposal to accommodate support from \$20,000 to as much as \$60,000. It was noted that our committee needs to be incorporated and registered with the Historical Society.

Museum Visits

Splinter reported on his visits to a tractor and machinery museum in Switzerland and the State Agricultural Heritage Museum in Brookings, South Dakota. Information on both museums was circulated to those present. The S.D. museum accumulated \$500,000 to renovate their livestock judging pavilion - 1/3 of funds from state historical society, 1/3 from federal historical society, and 1/3 from private donations. The museum now receives \$200,000 annually for operations and salaries from the state historical society. The museum's gift shop brings in \$18,000 annually.

Treasury Report

The museum's account at the UNL Foundation currently has over \$9,000.

Discussion and Revision of Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws

Numerous changes, revisions, and enhancements were made. Revised documents which include the following decisions are attached to these minutes.

*Changes in Bylaws:

Article VI, Section 5

Moved and passed that "Quorum shall consist of not less than 10% of the membership.

Article IX, Section 4.A

Moved and passed the changes of "at least three meetings per year. The President can call additional meeting as needed".

Article IX, Section 4.C

Chase moved and it was passed that "A quorum of the Board shall be 2/3 of the Board members".

Article II

Moved and passed to replace "Nebraskans" in both bylaws and articles of incorporation with "friends of the University of Nebraska Tractor Test and Power Museum" or the agreed to title for the group.

Kleis moved to have Chair combine present Article II in both bylaws and articles of incorporation with the previously agreed upon purpose of the committee. Motion carried.

Article XI

Fenster moved, and it was passed, to add "after having been submitted to the membership at a previous meeting" to the end of the sentence.

Article VIII, Section 3

Ellington moved to delete the office of President-Elect and to have officers serve 2-year terms and be eligible to be elected or a second 2-year term. Motion passed.

Article IX, Section 1.B

Chase moved, and the motion was passed, that Director terms be three years and the number of Directors to be selected be determined at each annual meeting and that member be elected at that time.

Article X, Section 2.B

Moved and passed to strike "in writing" in the first sentence and replace with "from the floor".

The committee then instructed the Chair and Secretary to revise the bylaws and distribute them to the members. Unless written concerns are given to the Secretary, the revised bylaws agreed to at this meeting will be considered approved. The committee also instructed the Chair and Secretary to revise the Articles of Incorporation.

Walters moved for approval of Articles of Incorporation as revised. Passed.

The group then agreed that all committee members will become members of the Board of Directors. The Chair was instructed to ask those not present if they wished to serve on the Board of Directors.

Officer elections were then held. The following are the first slate of officers for the Board of Directors of the Agricultural Tractor Test and Power Museum Committee:

President - Bill Splinter
Vice President - Robert Klies
Secretary - Glenn Hoffman
Treasurer - Shirley Trauger

Motion made and passed that dues would be a minimum of \$10, to be collected on a fiscal year basis.

Committee approved a certificate of appreciation for Les Larsen.

Committee thanked Bill Splinter for preparing the articles of incorporation and the bylaws.

Committee expressed their appreciation to Shirley Trauger for her hospitality and lunch.

Committee discussed various potential solutions for the museum building, but no actions were taken.

The committee asked the Secretary to send our minutes to the Governor's Antique Agriculture Machinery Committee in care of John Skold.

Following adjournment at 3:00 p.m. the Trauger's conducted a tour of their antique agricultural machinery.

Final Report

Since the museum does not have clear and legal title to most of the tractors in its collections I assigned only temporary numbers to the objects. To accession an object into a museum's collection is a serious and legal matter. If the museum does not have clear title to the objects the museum is not the legal owner and this can lead to many problems if there is ever a dispute about the object between the museum and the original donor. Therefore, objects should not be accessioned into a collection until the museum has ownership or a loan policy. Many of the Tractor Museum's objects are on loan to the museum and therefore not the possession of the museum.

Assigning temporary numbers is a way to prepare an inventory without accessioning the objects. To my knowledge this is a complete list of the tractors in the museums possession. The equipment list is as complete as possible at the moment. Everything that could be identified was assigned a temporary number. The objects, although not many, that do not have numbers are still unknown.

The T numbers are the tractor inventory and the E numbers are the equipment and other objects inventory.

For the location I broke the Tractor list into objects stored in the Main Building and the Horse Barn. For the tractors at Mede I simply used Mede, NE as the location.

For the location for the equipment I used Storage Room 1 and Storage Room 2. Storage Room 1 is the room on the same side of the building as Les's office. Storage Room 2 is the room with objects in it across the hall from Les's office.

Accomplishments

1) A temporary number system has been established which enables the museum to keep better records of the tractors and equipment it currently has in its possession.

2) All of the tractors have been recorded, labeled, and

assigned temporary numbers. The tractor numbers all begin with a T followed by a dash and a number ranging from 1 to 49. This shows that currently the museum has 49 tractors in its possession.

3) All of the equipment that Les and I could recognize has been recorded, labeled, and assigned a temporary number. These numbers begin with the letter E followed by a dash and a number ranging from 1 to 97. This shows that currently the museum has 97 know objects aside from tractors.

4) The above information has been recorded, compiled, and written on inventory sheets to provide the museum with a working inventory of its collections.

5) I looked through all of the donor files and placed all known donors with what I determined to be the appropriate donation. This will aid the museum when you formalize your ownership of the collections by getting deed of gifts from the donors. I address this point in more detail under the next steps to take.

Enclosed with this report are the tractor and equipment inventories, recommendations for the next steps to take to establish museum procedures and policies for this institution, sample documents and cataloging methods, and a Museum Studies student to contact who is interested in completing the next steps to this ongoing process.

Recommendations for the next steps to take

1) The most immediate next step to take is to put the inventory sheet information on a database. This will let you use the information more readily and print lists according to the tractor manufacturer, number, donor etc. This is also the first step in computerizing your information. I would suggest using Paradox. This is the system used by the Nebraska State Museum and is easily adaptable and fairly easy to use.

2) The next most important step is to write to all of the people who have donated or loaned tractors to the museum and send them a deed of gift form to sign and return to the museum. This form gives the museum clear and legal title to the objects. They are essentially the property of the museum after this sheet is signed and no longer the property of the donor. I have included some sample deed of gift forms that are widely used in the museum profession. These copies came from A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections by Marie C. Malero. A copy of this book can be obtained from the library.

3) Once the museum has clear and legal title to all or most of the tractors or a formal loan agreement has been established, the museum can then accession the tractors and equipment. This essentially means that the objects will legally be a part of the museums collections. The steps included in this process are:

- 1) Establishing a accessioning format. This includes the number system that will be used and deciding what information will be found on the catalog sheets.
- 2) Assigning a permanent accession number to every object.
- 3) Completing a catalog and condition sheet on each object.

I have included some information on accession systems you can use. This information is from Museum Registration Methods which is published by The American Association of Museums. Within

the next year there is a newer edition expected and this new edition of the book would be a useful tool for the museum to have. All of this information can be adapted to work in the best way for this museum.

4) The storage/exhibit areas need to have tighter climate control. The objects in your collections are older objects that require stable temperature and humidity levels. Continued exposure to intense heat and cold will damage these objects beyond repair. The museum must explore options in proper storage and exhibit methods.

I have talked with a first year museum studies student who is very interested in assisting the museum in carrying out these next steps I have outlined. Her name is Jill Koelling and she is interested in this position if the funding is available for another semester. She has completed one year of the program and will graduate next year. Her number is 438-6934 and she is most interested in working the first semester of the coming school year.