

Birge Fountain Committee Meeting  
November 16, 2011 meeting minutes

1. Call to order:

Chairman Lockett called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

2. Roll call:

Members present; Lockett, Loomer, Binnie, Dalee, Nass, Allen and Nosek, absent, none.

3. Approval of minutes:

Motion to accept the Sept., 2011 minutes was made by Loomer, seconded by Binnie. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Recap of 2011 refurbishment project:

Nosek summarized the events of the summer/fall refurbishment program, which included sandblasting, priming and painting the cast iron portions, and sandblasting, chemical patina and waxing the bronze figures. He noted that the Milwaukee artist, Tom Queoff, chose to use liver of sulfur chemical patina agent to create the "classic" brown toned finish, which adorns many bronze statues. The committee discussed the pros and cons of maintaining that appearance or allowing some features (dolphins, Maid's laurel, necklace and armband) to return naturally to the greenish-blue oxidized color for contrast thus allowing a match to the cast iron detail painting meant to mimic that color. Wire brush removal of the brown tint from the "flesh" portions of the cherubs and maid to provide even more color contrast was also considered. The committee will discuss these options in greater detail next winter.

Queoff also taught volunteers how to apply a twice a year wax protection to the figures, a responsibility that will need to be faithfully adhered to in the future by the city in order to sustain the renewed appearance.

Nosek presented a slide show of the project's progression and the committee approved showing it at the Dec. 6 City Council meeting. Volunteers will be invited to it and pizza at Gus's following the presentation.

5. Fountain Financials:

A. Moved by Nass, seconded by Loomer to pay outstanding bills in the amount of \$1,290 incurred in the Birge Fountain refurbishment this summer/fall for services rendered by various vendors. Motion passed unanimously.

B. The committee heard a report from Rod Dalee regarding the advantages of seeking membership in the Whitewater Community Foundation (WCF). The WCF is jointly managed by the Commercial Bank and First Citizen's Bank and a board of citizen volunteers. It is empowered by tax law to accept 100% deductible charitable donations for WCF member Whitewater community organizations and services. If the Birge Fountain Comm. were a participant, the WCF could manage our investment fund and provide other services like check writing at no cost. It was moved by Allen, seconded by Lockett that Dalee approach the WCF to seek membership. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Current and Future Maintenance Issues 2011/2012:

Nass commented on the list of maintenance needs of the Birge Fountain submitted by Dalee and Nosek in behalf of the Committee (list enclosed). Nass said all concerns have or will soon be resolved. Specific discussion about placement of trash can on North St. side of park) and winter snow shoveling of

promenade (as soon as possible after higher priority clearing) followed. Review of list will be featured again at the BFC's March 2012 meeting.

#### 7. Fountain Lighting:

The Committee discussed the pros and cons of changing fountain lighting over to LED style. While lower cost and less maintenance were attractive reasons to switch, Nass reported that LED lights can be problematic in the winter since they don't generate enough heat to melt accumulated snow sometimes. Allen objected to the harsher "cold" color. All agreed to wait to decide on change until "warmer" tone varieties were available.

Nosek noted that there was only one light in the upper basin illuminating the Maid's face and no more. All agreed 1 or 2 more lights should be relocated from the lower basin to the upper one where 2 outlets are available to accommodate extra lights. Nass agreed to implement said change.

#### 8. Fountain Surveillance:

Luckett reported on the recent act of vandalism that resulted in the bending of a spear and a trident, as well as the theft of the end of one them. Allen suggested getting a higher resolution camera despite the greater cost and the posting of a sign noting the camera's presence on site. Nass suggested placing the camera (and signage) on the nearby existing lamppost.

The Committee viewed the incident, which was recorded on the Fountain's current video surveillance camera. The vandalism occurred on a Thursday night at bar closing time. Four vandals took several minutes to do the damage but were not caught. The footage was remarkably revealing but apparently not clear enough for police to pursue an investigation. All felt the current location (mounted on the White Bldg.) provided a fine vantage point. It was moved by Allen and seconded by Luckett that Luckett investigate the purchase of a higher resolution camera and one that might also be capable of transmitting its images to other city monitors like the police dept.

#### 9. Future Agenda Items:

- A. Fountain surveillance
- B. Spring maintenance
- C. Replacement of aluminum trim on lower basin

10. Adjournment: Moved by Binnie seconded by Loomer that the meeting be adjourned Motion passed unanimously at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Roy Nosek, Secretary