

Johnson Historical Society Meeting
14 October 2020 at 9AM
Jenna's Promise

Present: Dick Simays, Tom Carney (left at 10:45 am), Alice Whiting, Kelly Vandorn, Mary Jean Smith, Duncan Hastings, Linda Jones, Dean West, & Lois Frey.

Dick Simays called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

There were no additions to the agenda.

Secretary's Report: The minutes from September 9, 2020 were accepted as printed.

Treasurer's Report: Kelly Vandorn reported a balance of \$25,553.18. There were expenses totaling \$1,416.55 and \$310 in income.

Budget Discussion:

The Historical Society's reserve fund and the Selectboard response or lack of response to Dick's letter were discussed. The fundamental push-pull of how municipal reserve funds are identified and spent highlighted the discussion. Although reserve funds including the specific JHS request made by Dick were discussed at a Selectboard meeting, Dick has not received any response from the Board or Brian Story. The Selectboard minutes refer to checking with the town attorney regarding the disposition of reserve funds which generated the following motion: **It was moved, seconded and approved that the JHS should stay alert to the reserve fund issue until the attorney's opinion is announced and then follow-up appropriately.** Dick asked Duncan Hastings to take the lead of this endeavor.

Holcomb House Cleaning:

*Kelly reported that she and Lois Frey met with Al and Candy Lettieri at the Holcomb House. She subsequently received a bid for doing a deep cleaning of the display space at \$125 and a bid to clean the windows at \$150 (outside and inside but not the glass between interior and storm windows.) It was decided that all agreed that cleaning is necessary but timing is important. Until the Holcomb House can be used, that cleaning should wait. However, **it was moved, seconded and approved to ask the Lettieri's to clean the windows at \$150 before the weather prohibits the task.**

*With all present supporting having a cleaning service rather than Trustee volunteers clean the Holcomb House, it was decided that a budget item for regular house cleaning should be put into the next budget request under the Building and Grounds category.

Webpage: Mary Jean Smith continues to keep in touch with Grant Harper. He is willing to post what we send to him. Lois suggested that the video, *Once There was a Town: Sterling, Vermont* be posted as the October 1, 2005 Sterling Town Meeting celebrates its 15th anniversary. Mary Jean has a collection of Johnson pictures and 8mm film on a DVD to transfer for use by JHS. From experience, Tom Carney recommended YOST as a vendor with Terry Fox, the technical guru.

Strategic Planning Update:

Duncan continues to coordinate with Jane Van Buren of Noonmark Consulting. The planning session will be rescheduled. All agreed to set the retreat date for November 6, 2020 from 8 AM to noon. Duncan will confirm all with Jane.

Covid-19 status:

The town continues to follow emergency management protocols so the Historical Society does also. Greg Tatro has said the Historical Society can continue to use Jenna's Promise until Covid restrictions are lifted. In anticipation of the restrictions being lifted soon, **it was moved, seconded and approved to get the Holcomb House deep-cleaned whenever JHS gets permission to meet there.** Dick will coordinate with the town emergency board committee for meeting status.

Building Committee Report:

Duncan reported that Brian Krause will try to move the dirt pile and regrade the disturbed area at the Holcomb House before he departs by the end of the month.

Fundraising report:

*Alice Whiting reported the membership letter is ready for printing as is the newsletter. Alice, Linda Jones & Lois will prepare the mailing at the Municipal Building on October 15th.

*Alice also shared information from Grant Harper about what the JHS would need to do to set up an e-commerce raffle platform on the JHS webpage. (Information filed with minutes.) There were specifics which generated a few questions so Mary Jean will follow-up with him.

Acquisitions:

*Duncan reported that Brian Krause has an old survey instrument (circa 1940) in a handmade case which he will donate to the JHS if we want it. It does not have a deep-rooted connection to Johnson except it belongs to Brian who has lived here. Because of its age, workmanship, and the unique factor in the evolution of land measuring equipment, it was decided to accept the instrument. Thank you, Brian Krause. Safe travels.

*Mary Jean displayed a number of items received from Mike and Pat French including a framed picture of Charles and Ella Whitcomb which has been willed to the JHS by Meryline French. She had a Whitcomb genealogy, a picture likely of Charles Whitcomb and a picture marked Aunt Essie and Uncle Bill Davis. Additionally, Mary Jean donated a framed Landmark print which had belonged to Gary Smith. Mary Jean will complete the accessioning forms for all the items which she shared.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 11, 2020 at 9 AM.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned.

Meeting minutes recorded by Lois Frey, Secretary