

Johnson Historical Society Meeting  
12 May 2021 at 9 AM  
Holcomb House & ZOOM

Present: Dick Simays, Tom Carney, Kelly Vandorn, Duncan Hastings, Linda Jones, Alice Whiting, Dean West, Mary Jean Smith via ZOOM, & Lois Frey.

President Dick Simays called the meeting to order following technical difficulties with ZOOM at 9:15 AM.

Secretary's Report: **It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the minutes from 4.14.2021 as printed.**

Treasurer's Report: Kelly Vandorn shared the budget report with all. With one paid membership for income and one bill paid she reported the change is \$23.63 ahead of April. **It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the Treasurer's Report as printed.**

Election of Officers: The Nominating Committee verified that all past officers were willing to serve again. **It was moved, seconded, and approved to elect the slate of officers which included: President, Dick Simays; Vice President, Tom Carney; Secretary, Lois Frey; Membership Secretary, Alice Whiting; and Treasurer, Kelly Vandorn.**

Administrative Items:

\*Webpage: Mary Jean shared the April analytics from Grant Harper, which included that all plugins are updated, theme has been updated, events page worked on to show Past and Future events, looking into and reviewing the Home page for a possible new look, and the number of page views for April is similar to March. Mary Jean talked to Grant about doing a virtual tour of the Holcomb House to post on the webpage. Following discussion, **it was moved, seconded, and approved to find the appropriate software and purchase it at a cost not to exceed \$1,000.**

Mary Jean is also looking into stories with pictures for a section of the webpage.

\*Facebook: The most recent addition is a series of parade pictures. Linda and Barbara are also gathering pictures of sugarhouses for a future post most likely in 2022.

\*Conservation Items: Linda and Lois plan to take the collection to Essex soon and will also inquire at the Vermont Historical Society. They will try to get a commitment before June 30, 2021.

\*Newsletter: Linda reported that the newsletter is at the final edit stage and will be prepared for mailing before May 21<sup>st</sup>.

\*Strategic plan report: Duncan has sent the working document to all for review. It was decided to schedule a special meeting on May 26, 2021 at 9 AM at the Holcomb House for discussion and completion of the document with action dates. With access to Holcomb House limited to Trustees only, Duncan will send the agenda with the ZOOM information should others want to join the meeting.

Bylaw revision committee report: Duncan reported that the Committee met on May 9<sup>th</sup> after which he sent their recommended changes to the bylaws to all. There were a couple of typos to be changed and it was noted that a date for when elections would take place was missing. It reads at the Annual Meeting but perhaps clarity (i.e. at the May meeting) should be added to Article IV, Section 11. Following discussion, it was noted

that final approval of a change to the bylaws requires two meetings; therefore, bylaw approval will be an agenda item for the June 9, 2021 meeting.

\*Building committee report: Dean reported that Lynda Hill has painted the damaged ceiling tiles, which look very good now. With concern about the cause of the leak, it was decided to notify Eric Osgood and Brian Story requesting they look into assessing and repairing the roof issue to avoid the potential for a new leak in the same area.

Mary Jean reported that she contacted Brian Story with information about the nasty vomit material noted last month and also queried him about the JHS taking over the second and third floor of the building. He responded that a proposal would be welcomed at any time. There was discussion about the status of the rental lease at this time and also what considerations and actions might be needed from the Trustees.

Because the JHS is interested in future occupancy of the second-floor following discussion, **it was moved, seconded, and approved to ask the Selectboard to be sure the upcoming lease for the apartments contains cancellation language to address a potential transition from tenants to town-use of the building.**

It was noted that any proposal to use the space would require a plan to show what the space would be used for and why it is needed. As with the renovations when the town purchased the building, both town and state regulations would need to be considered. Action items from the discussion include 1) address the roof leakage problem with the Selectboard and Town Administrator, 2) request clarification of language in the rental lease for upstairs, 3) establish a committee to prepare a proposal for expanded use of the building.

To address item 3, Dick appointed a committee including Kelly, Mary Jean, Dean, and Duncan.

Duncan reported that he has been attempting to meet with Hugh Albright about completing the excavating project to prevent damage at the rear of the building; however, there has been no progress made.

Kelly reported that the Lettiere's are on-board for whenever needed. Kelly, and Tom will coordinate for them to have a key and a password to the alarm. They plan to get the windows clean soon. They cleaned before the JHS meeting which is appreciated.

\*Rail Trail photos: The project is awaiting confirmation of the funding. JHS is looking to create two 3' x 5' panels estimated at \$400 each and to contract with a designer at \$100. The Committee has the pictures identified and a plan in-place. Following discussion, **it was moved, seconded, and approved to create a permanent display for the location.**

Fundraising: JHS was invited by Christina Holmes, Lamoille County Field Days to consider hosting Bingo as a fundraiser on July 23, 24, and 25<sup>th</sup>. Following discussion of capacity to participate in a three-day activity, it was decided to send thanks and regrets. Lois will follow-up.

Tom suggested JHS consider a Go Fund Me activity. Mary Jean volunteered to check with Grant Harper to learn the protocols required for that activity.

Lois mentioned that the raffle postponed during the Covid emergency is a potential activity when the limitations are lifted.

Program/Projects:

Tom's list for potential programs includes 1) Travis Smith talking about the history of the Waters, Davis House, 2) Ben and Stacy Waterman sharing their Peace Corps experience, and 3) Jay Kennedy with a photo exhibit.

\*Acquisitions: None

**\*Other business:**

Linda reported that the disc from the Department of Historic Preservation with the data from the State Historic Register for Johnson has been copied to a flash drive, which Tom has also copied to the JHS hard drive. Perhaps it can be made a searchable link on the webpage in the future.

Dick shared a letter from Dean West who announced his retirement from the JHS Board of Trustees effective June 8, 2021. As an original Trustee, appointed 11.27.2006, he feels it is time to create a vacancy for a younger member. He plans to remain an active member of the organization and will serve on committees if asked. Dean's service to the organization was acknowledged recognizing his guiding hand and wisdom to the board and his invaluable input for the organization. It was agreed that Dean could maintain access to the Holcomb House and would be given a key to use in the days ahead.

It is time to encourage community members to think about serving as a JHS Trustee.

Duncan renewed the subject of town cemeteries started last month with concerns about the Grow Cemetery. **Following discussion, it was moved, seconded and approved that the JHS will support the town in addressing concerns raised about the Grow Cemetery and recommends the boundary lines be determined and fencing installed to protect the parcel from potential encroachment and/or animal damage.**

Mary Jean reported she has received a request from Jeff Barrows to make prints from photos on the JHS Facebook page. Because the photos are in the public domain, anyone can make a copy to their computer. Acknowledgement that the source is the Johnson Historical Society Facebook page is appreciated.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Next meeting: June 9, 2021 at the Holcomb House with ZOOM availability if restrictions still apply.

Meeting minutes recorded by Lois Frey, Secretary