

JOHNSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
October 13, 2021 at the HOLCOMB HOUSE

Present: Dick Simays, Linda Jones, Duncan Hastings, Kelly Vandorn, Tom Carney, Mary Jean Smith, Alice Whiting, Mary Jean Smith (11 AM), Lois Frey. Guest: Dean West.

Dick Simays called the meeting to order at 9 AM.

Additions to the agenda included surplus/reserve fund, telephone answering, and budget plans.

Secretary's report: The minutes from 9/8/21 were approved as printed. At Casey Romero's request via a follow-up email additional information for the VOREC grant discussion was noted. Her email states: *Kylie Hill said the old bridge was on her land with access from the parcel her parents sold to the village. She knows right where it is. Interestingly, the old ROW agreements are meant for snowmobile use only, so they wouldn't cover a year-round-use recreation bridge.*

Treasurer's report: Kelly Vandorn distributed a copy of the monthly report for July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022 (attached.) One highlight is the breakdown of Tuesday Night Live income/expense which was a net of \$6,569 with expenses of \$514 (which included the new canopy) for a final tally of \$6,040. It was noted that Dick's request to the Selectboard to put the balance (final surplus) into the Historical Society's Reserve Fund was denied at their 9.7.2021. Dick has not received notification of the in-action. Following discussion, **it was moved, seconded and approved to request that the Selectboard rollover the \$850.59 year-end balance into the current Historical Society operating budget.**

*A budget committee with Dick, Dean, Duncan and Kelly was set-up to prepare the 2022-2023 proposed budget for the Selectboard's consideration.

Administrative items:

*Hosting schedule –It was decided that the Holcomb House would continue to be opened by appointment only and masks will be required for all in the building with no exceptions.

*Dick checked on the question of forwarding Holcomb House telephone calls to another number and found that it could be done. It was again noted that the message on the answering machine needs to be updated. Also, there is a notepad next to the telephone which can be used to record any action taken in response to an in-coming telephone call.

* Facebook: Following news from Dick that he had located more pharmacy pictures, Linda announced she would use them for her up-coming Facebook page as they will complement the theme of the September 2021 newsletter.

* Newsletter: With assistance from Dick Simays (whose parents operated the pharmacy for many years) Linda documented the history of the pharmacy in text and pictures in an excellent newsletter.

*Webpage: Mary Jean reported Elias Gillen is ready to create the virtual tour of the Holcomb House; however, until the potential water problem in the East Room is resolved and the artwork can be re-hung, she feels the project should be put on hold. All agreed.

*Grow Cemetery follow-up: Duncan shared that while no deed has been found for the Grow Cemetery, records from the Town of Sterling document that the Sterling Selectboard fenced the cemetery. Resolution of the issue will need the landowner and a representative of town to meet and codify their decision about the boundary line. Fencing is required according to state law.

Strategic Plan Timeline Review:

*Duncan distributed large-page copies of the Strategic Plan time-line to those who did not have one. The document will be used at a November 9, 2021 at 9 AM special meeting to complete the planning exercise.

Standing Committee Appointments:

*Dick asked for and received volunteers to serve on each of the Historical Society's committees with the following results:

Buildings, Grounds & Facility Development – Tom, Dean, & Mary Jean.

Collections & Program Development – Linda, Alice, Kelly, Duncan & Lois.

Revenue Development – Lois & Dick.

Membership Committee – Alice, Linda, Mary Jean, & Lois.

Nominating Committee – Lois & Tom.

Building committee report:

At the September 7, 2021 Selectboard meeting the Board gave its support for a JHS committee to come up with a plan, that will not cost the taxpayers any money, for the Historical Society to occupy the second floor of the Holcomb House. Eben Patch was previously appointed to that committee. At that same meeting, Brian Story said he would get multiple quotes for the repair and insulation to conform with the town's procurement policy. It was decided that all art on the east wall should be removed by the end of December to prevent potential water damage if the problem still exists.

Program/Projects: Programs await the easing of Covid 19 restrictions.

*It was noted that some of the military uniforms are showing signs of mildew. Dick suggested that vacuum display bags might be used for the uniforms and perhaps other fabric items. Alice volunteered to check the cost and availability of those special storage bags.

*The disposition of the items stored at the back of the parking lot was raised. Some is trash which has been discussed previously. Other items should be assessed and a plan developed for future action. Lois suggested that the two mill wheels might be used by the Tree Board as seating at the Arboretum. A brief history of the wheels could be prepared and displayed at the site. All agreed it was a good idea. Lois will follow-up with the Tree Board.

Fundraising report: No report.

Acquisitions:

*Linda shared an autograph book received from Leslie Crisp Martin which belonged to Miss Lottie V. Mudgett dated 12.25.1895.

*Lois shared 8 items donated by Betty Miller including State Health Commission licenses from Ila's Home Bakery during the 1950s and 1960s.

*Lois shared a framed photograph of Dog's Head Falls taken in 1978 before the rock formation was damaged which was donated by Doug McGown, the photographer.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Meeting minutes recorded by Lois Frey, Recording Secretary