

JOHNSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Meeting Minutes
14 April 2022 * 9:00 AM * Holcomb House

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

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

Secretary's Report: **It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the minutes from 3.30.2022 as printed.**

Treasurer's Report: Kelly Vandorn distributed the monthly report (attached) with expenses of \$5,123.53 and income of \$9,904. The balance as of 4.12.2022 is \$29,394.66. For FY 2022 there is \$665 left in the Conservation Fund. Linda Jones and Lois Frey will deliver several items to Kofile for processing. **It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented.**

In an attempt to clarify who can purchase what, there was discussion about the Procurement Policy (adopted in September 2021 by the Selectboard.) The policy designates Purchasing Agents; but does not clarify who is the Purchasing Agent for volunteer groups. It was suggested that a purchase order system would be a better way to assure accountability. Kelly will check-in with Rosemary to learn the most appropriate process for the Historical Society.

By Law Review: Lois asked the Trustees to consider amending the Historical Society by laws, a process that would need to be discussed and if accepted confirmed at the next JHS meeting. The original By Laws in Article III, Governance, Section 1 stated in part: ***having a least one member of the Town Selectboard or their designated representative appointed to the Board of Trustees.*** As a founding member of JHS, Lois stated that the inclusion seemed to make sense at the time; however, it seems now that having a Selectboard member serve as a liaison (as practiced by the Johnson Public Library) rather than to serve as an appointed member of the JHS Board of Trustees would serve both entities more effectively. Therefore, she suggests amending by deleting the requirement. If Section 1 is changed then the last sentence in Section 5: ***The Selectboard member, or their designee shall not hold any of these offices*** should also be eliminated. Following discussion, **it was moved, seconded and approved unanimously to amend the By Laws as recommended.** The change requires an affirmative vote by 2/3rds vote of the Trustees present at the May 12th meeting. Lois also pointed out a typo in Article VII, Section 1, which she will correct.

Administrative Items:

*Holcomb House hosting schedule: With some continued reservations about Covid, the need to re-set some of the exhibits and organize materials in the building, and to do an assessment of the past Open House schedule, it was decided to wait another month before reopening. Visitors are welcome to contact any member of Historical Society to schedule a visit or call Dick Simays (802 635 7080) or Lois Frey (802 635 7826.)

*Social Media

Webpage: Mary Jean Smith reported that Elisa Clancy at 3W Promotions has the web page up and running. Following discussion, it was decided that Mary Jean would check with Rosemary Audibert to see if there was capacity within the Municipal Office team to receive assistance in uploading materials to the webpage. She and Elias Gillen will work (as time permits) on the proposed video project.

Facebook: Linda reported the recent Facebook postings are receiving likes and comments. The Facebook page has 1,363 likes and 1,396 followers.

Newsletter: Linda is close to completing the May newsletters. She also reported that Jane Marshal has written a paragraph supporting the Johnson Historical Society. Following review, all agreed that it would be appropriate to use the message for promotional purposes.

Standing Committees:

*Building, Grounds, & Facility Development: Nothing new to report.

*Program Development and Collections: Linda, Alice, Kelly, Duncan & Lois held their first meeting with the following actions. Linda and Alice will Co-chair this committee. The committee will have 2 sub-committees: Accessioning & Presentations. The accessioning committee which Lois will chair is made up of Lois, Linda, Duncan, Jacob Vandorn and Kelly. Currently they are meeting Mondays from 9:30 AM until noon. The presentation committee is made up of Linda, Alice and Kelly. They will meet soon and plan dates, times and content for future presentations. After looking through the strategic plan they set three priorities. 1) A gathering of the entire membership of the Historical Society. A brief business meeting will be held discussing the current goals and needs of the Historical Society. This will include reports from committees and recruitment of volunteers and potential board members. discussed possibly holding the meeting in June and having a potluck or ice cream social. 2) Develop a walking tour of Johnson. This will require outside help. The thought is to have an app for smart phones or plaques on historical buildings with electronic links to information about the buildings. The walking tour will be a self-guided tour. 3) Oral Histories of Johnson residents. They will develop a list of longtime Johnson residents, a script of questions, and a process to record the interviews and save them.

*Revenue Development: No Report.

*Membership: No report.

Second Floor Occupancy committee report: Mary Jean reported the committee met on April 6th. Reviewing a Holcomb House expenses and revenues spreadsheet from that committee meeting, Duncan explained and answered questions. The main take-away is the cost for JHS to occupy the second floor would be \$3,507 annually in lieu of rent. Dean mentioned the importance of having a financial history of the organization prepared for the presentation to the Selectboard at their April 18th meeting (or the earliest possible date) which Dick and Mary Jean will attend to discuss potential future occupancy. With Duncan recusing himself from the vote, **it was moved, seconded and approved unanimously to accept the proposal to increase the in lieu of rent from \$1,700 to \$3,507 for second floor occupancy of the Holcomb House if approved by the Selectboard.** Looking to the future the committee will look to next steps as they determine what needs to be done for occupancy.

Second Floor Tenant Situation and Parlor Damage: The committee also discussed their observations about damage to the parlor ceiling from the upstairs apartment. Kelly had arranged for the Letterie's to clean. They were able to clean the floor and the display case. The upholstered chair will need a special vacuum cleaner which Kelly will provide. The ceiling tiles will also need treatment. Brian Story has contacted Brian Raulinaitis to assess the damage from the second floor to the first-floor ceiling. No report yet.

Welcome Center Picture Panels: Duncan reported that the photos for the Ted Alexander Building will be two 3' by 5' panels. Linda and Dean have identified pictures and with Duncan will select which ones to use. Duncan volunteered to handle the arrangements with Great Big Graphics. Once identified each picture will receive an informative caption or short write-up and an acknowledgement of the Johnson Historical Society with contact information.

Acquisitions:

*Greg and Dawn Tatro invited members of the Historical Society to check-out items left at the Parker and Stearns Office Building. Linda, Dean, Tom, and Don Garrett inspected a large number of items in the storage room and selected more than 40 items including an old Burroughs Adding Machine and Stand, an early typewriter, large scale and weights, time clock for night watchman, contracts, deeds, maps, and other paper work and more. These items will be a great addition to the *Economy of Johnson* section of the society's collection. Thank You Greg and Dawn!

*Duncan shared a picture of the Henry & Abbie V. Davis Farm, great grandparents of Bill Davis. Duncan received the picture from Norm Larow (who received it from Bill Davis) and Linda has scanned it. Thank You Norm!

Other

*Tom reported that Jacob Vandorn has agreed to handle video-taping when JHS again offers programs. Tom suggested updated equipment was needed. Kelly will ask Jacob to do the research and prepare a proposal for the Board to approve in the days ahead.

*Dick shared a letter from Johnson Elementary School teacher, Elizabeth Cass asking if the JHS was interested in participating in their Barn Quilt Trail project. Student, Lilly-Jean French provided the details, which included the choice of sizes available. **By consensus, it was decided to respond in the affirmative and that a 2' x 2' barn quilt would work well.** Dick will follow-up.

*Dick shared an email message from Stephanie Reese, who has just purchased the former diner on Main Street. She is looking for pictures of the building, which show changes over the years. Lois will check with Linda for pictures and will follow-up with Stephanie, a resident of Stowe.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 AM.

Meeting minutes recorded by Lois Frey, Recording Secretary