

Smith-Harris House Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 27, 2016

Present: Gary Lakowsky
Richard MacDonald
Barbara Odgers
Kathleen Sasso
Robert Seifel
Maggi Prokop

FILED IN EAST LYME
CONNECTICUT
May 2 2016 AT 3:35 AM/PM
[Signature]
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Also Present: Joanie DiMartino, Smith-Harris House Director
Donna Massung, Friends of Smith-Harris President
Kathleen Patterson

I. CALL TO ORDER. Chairman Lakowsky called the Smith-Harris House Commission Meeting of April 27, 2016 to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES. Mr. Lakowsky asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the March 23, 2016 Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: Ms. Sasso moved to approve the March 23, 2016 Smith-Harris House Minutes, as presented. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. Ms. Prokop abstained from voting. (5-0-1) Motion carried.

III. REPORTS

A. Public Delegations. Ms. Massung reported the Plant Sale will be held on May 7 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. She left flyers for distribution.

B. Ex-officio Report. Mr. Cunningham had to attend another meeting and was unable to be at this meeting.

C. Director's Report. (See attached)

D. Agenda Additions. The Commission was asked for any additions to the Agenda.

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to add under Museum Development
2) Jazz Band, 3) Motor Trains Program, 4) Tour Guides,
5) Fundraiser at McCook's. Seconded by Mr. Seifert.
(6-0) Unanimous.

E. Chairman's Report. Mr. Lakowsky informed the Commission he will be on vacation from May 7 to May 17.

F. Financial Report.

1. Status Update. Mr. MacDonald reported there is \$7,339.57 remaining in the budget. The Friends and the Commission will each pay \$300 for two museum programs. The presenters will be given lunch. Supplies will be needed for stenciling and cooking expenses and for the distribution of recipes. Ms. DiMartino presented a list of items needed for Hearth Cooking and a Purchase Order in the amount of \$306.50.

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to authorize a Purchase Order to purchase cooking utensils for an amount not to exceed \$306.50. Seconded by Ms. Sasso.
(6-0) Unanimous.

2. Presentation of Bills. There were no bills presented for payment.

3. Barn Rental. Ms. Prokop reported she has no new barn rentals.

G. Collections Committee. Ms. Odgers was pleased to see that the outhouse has been preserved. While in the attic, she noticed there are restored boards.

H. Correspondence. Ms. Prokop sent out a thank you note.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Property Maintenance.

1. Garden Fence and Maintenance. Mr. Lakowsky reported the garden fence will be painted.

2. Front Walkway. Mr. Lakowsky reported the front walkway will be taken care of.

B. Museum Development.

1. SStepCT Report. (See attached Director's Report).

2. Jazz Band. Ms. Prokop reported the Montville High School Band Director would like his Jazz Band to perform in the Smith-Harris barn. Ms. Prokop was asked to contact him to determine whether or not they would be available to perform on June 11 or May 22 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

3. Model Trains/Bike Tour. The Commission expressed interest in getting more information on displaying model trains in the barn on October 1 in conjunction with the Bike Tour.

MOTION: Mr. MacDonald moved to request more information on the Bike Tour at the house and determine whether or not there is interest in also having model trains in the barn. Seconded by Ms. Sasso. (6-0)
Unanimous.

4. Tour Guides Compensation. Because the minimum wage is now \$9.60, it was felt the interpreters will need their hourly wage increased.

MOTION: Ms. Odgers moved to approve a Purchase Order in the amount of \$320 for interpreters' compensation. Seconded by Ms. Prokop. (6-0) Unanimous

5. Fundraising. The Agribusiness Subcommittee of the Conservation of Natural Resources would like to have a fundraiser at the VFW near McCook's Point Park. The Commission was asked for a representative to attend the planning meetings if it is interested in participating in this fundraiser. Mr. Christensen will be informed that the Commission is interested in participating in this fundraiser and will request that he inform the Commission of the planning meeting dates.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Property Maintenance.

1. Apple Tree. The Friends will have the apple tree cut down, have the stump removed, and replant two heirloom apple trees.
2. Split Rail Fence. There was no discussion the split rail fence.

B. Museum Development. There was no further discussion on museum development.

C. Upcoming Events.

1. 40th Anniversary July 3. Ms. DiMartino suggested having cake and ice cream. Invitations will be sent to the Board of Selectmen and state representatives. Ms. Prokop asked if the Commission would like the invitations to be written in calligraphy? It was felt calligraphy is a good idea.

The Commission will determine whether or not to hold the event on July 3 since most officials and residents would be at the Lobsterfest and Art Show.

2. Motorcycle Show August 14. Mr. Lakowsky sent emails to motorcyclists informing them the Motorcycle Show will be held on August 14 from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms. Sasso moved to adjourn the Smith-Harris House April 27, 2016 Regular Meeting at 8:45 p.m. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (6-0) Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary

Director's Report
Smith-Harris House, April, 2016

Upcoming Meetings

- Historic House Trails brochure meeting, Tuesday, May 3rd, 10 am, Charter Oak Center, all welcome.
- S-HH Friends Board of Directors meeting, Tuesday, May 10th, 2 pm, all welcome.
- STEPS-CT Collections Unit continues--1:00 pm to 4:30 pm, open-house, Monday, May 23rd, location TBD; Smith-Harris House representation REQUIRED that day. All welcome.
- Smith-Harris House Commission meeting, Wednesday, May 25th, 7 pm.

Programs

UPCOMING:

- Friends of Smith-Harris House Annual Plant Sale, 5/7, 9 am to 1 pm. Open to public.
- Legend Trips Ghost Tour, 5/14, 6 p.m. to 1 a.m.
- East Lyme Middle School field trip, 5/18 & 5/25, Closed to public.
- Wil Reed's class visited for a tour on Friday, April 1st. Thank you Maggi for assisting.
- "East Lyme Bike & Barbecue: Ride for Historic Places and Open Spaces" Saturday, October 1st, 2016. Model train option for barn; needs discussion.
- Joint-preservation summer fundraiser; needs discussion.
- Middle School Program: please see attached sheet.
- Legend Trips Ghost Tour-- at 25 people we are sold out! Everything is in place for 5/14.
 - participating Smith-Harris House staff: Joanie DiMartino, Gary Lakowsky, Maggi Prokop, Dick MacDonald, Michael Hart, Valerie Kibler.

STEPS-CT/Collections Update

- At the beginning of the Collections section, we learned about the State of Connecticut Abandoned Property Act, and what that law means to museums. I've included it as part of an email, as I want everyone to have a copy of it. It's important.
 - We will be establishing a procedure for accepting items for consideration (a priority!), then a formal collections policy and scope.
- Also, several people have asked me about the "Revisiting Volunteerism" article in the AASLH *History News* quarterly journal, so I've scanned it and sent it along for perusal at your convenience. It's important to have an idea of the changes going on with how people give of their time.

EAIC Grant Final Report

- Please fill out the Angels form and return it to me as soon as possible, if you participated. I'll be finishing the final report for the grant by the first week of May.

Historic House Trail Brochure

- I've sent a copy of the brochure draft to everyone. You can see on the final panel that sponsorships were received; the committee chose to go with sponsors rather than write a grant,

which wouldn't have been approved in time for this summer season. The Friends paid for the first \$100, and the committee asked for a second \$100 from each of the 16 participating houses.

- The Commission needs to approve putting a second \$100 toward the brochure. It will be printed in 15,000 copies.
- Conn College is unavailable that date, so the brochure launch is still being determined.

Summer Tours

- The summer season is upon us, and I want to put forward the idea of hiring two interpreters; one to work Saturdays, one to work Sundays; I can cover Fridays with my hours.
 - This will serve two purposes: it will free up Commission members for other responsibilities, and will enable Maggi to have assistance and extra coverage during barn rental events. Also, expanding our staff base will allow us to have a larger pool of people to work with in the future on programs and other tasks when the funds are available.
 - The Commission also needs to consider an increase in wages for interpreters as well. Our site is well-below the local average.

Other

- If we have the opportunity to purchase much-needed supplies for the House to benefit our mission of education and preservation, here are a few suggestions that have been put forward over the past month:
 - hearth-cooking equipment, so that we can offer more cooking demonstrations/programs. It's a large expense, but long-term use, and will allow us to do more for our visitors. Hearth cooking is a perennial favorite with museum audiences.
 - A safe for important papers/documents, as per STEPS.
 - installing safety rails along the basement steps and the attic.
 - funding the rest of the cost of past perfect software not covered by the Rotary grant.
 - a specialized vacuum that can be used on the floors as well as with the textiles collection.
 - sending Commission/Friend Board members to various upcoming day-long conferences.
 - the CT League of History Organizations has an annual conference on June 6th. The topic this year is collections, and they are offering a deal where each organization can send up to six people at the member price each of \$50, which includes breakfast, lunch, coffee break, and sessions.
 - NEMA has several upcoming workshops as well in nearby environs. One on working with and displaying textiles collections, and another on leadership in museums for boards and staff.
 - Please see me if you're interested in attending for more information.

Meetings Attended

- 3/28 & 3/29--STEPS-CT Collections full-day sessions.
- 4/5-- Historic House Trail Brochure meeting.
- 4/8--meeting with Barbara Odgers.
- 4/12--Friends of Smith-Harris House meeting.

- 4/14--meeting with Barbara Odgers & Kathleen Patterson (joined by Donna Massung).
- 4/25--STEPS-CT Collections half-day session.

Submitted by:

Joanie DiMartino, Executive Director

April 27, 2016