

Smith-Harris House Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 24, 2016

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

FILED

Aug 26 20 16 AT 2:50 AM/PM
J. Allen
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

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

I. CALL TO ORDER. Chairman Lakowsky called the Smith-Harris House Commission Meeting of August 24, 2016 to order at 7:07 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES. Mr. Lakowsky asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the July 27, 2016 Meeting Minutes.

The following corrections were noted: On page 2, under E., the fourth paragraph to be revised as follows: "Ms. Massung will send a letter to the Lions thanking them for their financial donation." On page 3 under B. 1, "Mr. Seifel reported storage cabinets were discussed at the SStepCT meeting."

MOTION: Ms. Sasso moved to approve the July 27, 2016 Smith-Harris House Minutes, as amended. Seconded by Ms. Odgers. Mr. MacDonald abstained from voting. (4-0-1) Motion carried.

III. REPORTS

A. Public Delegations. Ms. Massung reported on September 18, 2016 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. a Quilting Tea will be held. The cost is \$15. Each guest can bring a quilt to be identified by Susan Jerome.

Commission member Maggi Prokop arrived.

B. Ex-officio Report. Mr. Cunningham was unable to be present, and there was no report.

C. Director's Report. See attached report.

D. Agenda Additions. The Commission was asked if they had any additions to the Agenda.

MOTION: Ms. Odgers moved to add tour money under Financial Report, item 4, to the Agenda. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (6-0) Unanimous.

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to add Purchase Repeater under Financial Report, item 5, to the Agenda. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (6-0) Unanimous.

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to add Motorcycle Show, under Events, item C. 1. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (6-0) Unanimous.

E. Chairman's Report. Mr. Lakowsky felt in the future when we are raising funds, we need to be specific about where the money is going.

Ms. Odgers put together the following Wish List:

1. Winterize the barn
2. Chinese Chippendale, clean and repair
3. Embankment Building, research and build
4. Wood stove for kitchen
5. Stone wall, repair

F. Financial Report.

1. Status Update. Mr. MacDonald reported we have \$12,670.85 remaining in our budget. We have spent 22% of it.

Ms. Odgers reported we had a shortage in our payroll account in 2015/16 and paid it from our 2016/17 budget.

2. Presentation of Bills.

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to pay AASLH, Constant Contact, Connecticut League of Historical Organizations, NEMA and STepCT \$734 from Museum Programs. Seconded by Mr. Seifel. (6-0) Unanimous.

3. Barn Rental. Ms. Prokop reported she has a rental for a Bridal Shower on September 10. Mr. Lakowsky agreed to be at the house on that date.

4. Tour Guides Money. Mr. Lakowsky reported money received for tours has always gone to the Friends. The tour guides are usually Friends. We are now paying tour guides and as a matter of good will we should consider giving the money to the Town. Ms. Odgers felt if it was a donation the money should go to the Friends and if we are charging the money should go to the Town. Mr. Lakowsky felt the Friends can put money aside for a specific project. Mr. Lakowsky felt the tour money should go to the Friends.

5. Purchase Repeater.

MOTION: Ms. Sasso moved to encumber \$50 for a repeater.

Seconded by Ms. Odgers. (6-0) Unanimous.

G. Collections Committee. Ms. DiMartino has prepared Temporary Custody Receipts. She will prepare a Deed of Gifts.

She informed the Commission we now have Past Perfect and will be able to prepare an inventory.

Ms. Odgers would like to have file cabinets in the attic. She also felt better lighting is needed. Mr. Lakowsky agreed to improve the lighting.

H. Correspondence. Ms. Prokop corresponded with the Town to request changes to our regularly scheduled October and November dates. She was informed we will need to use the Art Room for our meetings in October and November.

Ms. Prokop reported she sent a note to Peg Waterman inviting her and a guest to the Tea.

Mr. Lakowsky received an email from the Building Inspector and the Fire Marshal about the light on the corncrib. It had to be removed and it will be placed at the corner of the house. An electrician will install it at no cost in mid-September.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Property Maintenance.

1. Garden Fence and Maintenance. Ms. DiMartino reported Ms. Davis has been very pleased with the Leo Garrett Goodwin's help in the garden.

2. Front Walkway. Mr. Lakowsky reported the front walkway will be done.

B. Museum Development.

1. SStepCT Report. Chuck Massung and Bob Patterson will attend the next SStepCT meeting.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Property Maintenance.

1. Porch Repairs. Mr. Lakowsky reported the back porch floor is warping. The poles are rotting. The railings are too close to the porch and water cannot run off. The roof is ok.

It was felt a grant in the amount of \$15,000 may be available through the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation for repair and maintenance which is available for capital improvement. They require a matching grant. Mr. Lakowsky felt they may accept in kind services. Ms. DiMartino agreed to check on whether they will accept in kind services.

MOTION: Ms. Odgers moved to authorize Mr. Lakowsky to

obtain three quotes to build a new porch.
Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (6-0) Unanimous.

2. Upstairs Bathroom. Mr. Lakowsky reported Mr. Cutillo of Niantic Plumbing came to the house to look at the upstairs bathroom. He has agreed to have the old tub removed and cap the faucets. He felt the tile and sheet rock need to be removed. The floor will need to be replaced.

B. Museum Development. There was nothing new to report on museum development.

C. Upcoming Events.

1. Motorcycle Show. Ms. Massung felt the Motorcycle Show would have been more successful if the weather was better.

Ms. Sasso suggested advertising it in the Connecticut Run, which lists all motorcycle runs and events. Mr. Lakowsky was informed we need to advertise in January and February so motorcyclists plan for it. Ms. Massung will bring it up at the next planning meeting. Ms. Sasso suggested that Mike's Famous be asked to run the show. Ms. DiMartino did not want the Friends to lose control of the event.

2. Bike and Barbeque is scheduled for October 1 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mr. MacDonald agreed to work on having model trains in the barn. We need two or three volunteers to be in the house. Refreshments and entertainment will be provided. The bike ride ends at Rocky Neck.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms. Prokop moved to adjourn the Smith-Harris House
August 24, 2016 Regular Meeting at 8:50 p.m.
Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (6-0) Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary

Director's Report

Smith-Harris House, August 2016

Upcoming Meetings:

- Quilt display meeting for quilting tea; Friday, 8/26 at 12 pm at S-HH; all are welcome.
- Gravestone preparation/NEMA workshop meeting; Wednesday, 8/31 at 9 am at the Old Stone Church Burial Ground; all are welcome.
- "Lunch with NEMA" webinar on "Hibernation – Not Just for Bears: Putting Your House Museum 'to bed' for the Season;" Wednesday, 8/31 at noon. Let me know if you'd like to participate from your home computer.
- STEPS-CT sub-committee meeting; Friday, 9/9, 2:30 to 3:30 pm, East Lyme High School Library; all are welcome.
- Friends of Smith-Harris House Board of Directors meeting; Tuesday, 9/13 at 2 pm at the East Lyme Public Library; all are welcome.
- STEPS-CT sub-committee meeting; Friday, 9/23, 2:30 to 3:30 pm, East Lyme High School Library; all are welcome.
- Other meetings TBD.

Programs

- We need tour coverage this Saturday, 8/27, from noon to 4 pm—ACTION ITEM
- A group from the Lighthouse Center is scheduled for a tour on Wednesday, 9/7 at 1 pm.
- The "Quilting Tea" date has been confirmed for Sunday, 9/18 from 1 pm to 3 pm. We will serve savories and sweets with tea, and Susan J. Jerome will offer a presentation, look at participants' quilts, and we will have a quilt display tour of the House.
- Things are shaping up for "Spirit Voices" on Saturday, 10/22 from 3 pm to 6 pm. We have confirmed use of the Burial Ground for tours, and also Nick Fulton has committed to our display of a 19th-century hearse. I've been playing phone tag with the local Spiritualist camp, and have located someone to read "tea leaves."
- Summer tours are drawing to a close; I'll have numbers at our next meeting. The new sign is a success, as well as the historically appropriate American Flag on the portico.
- Donations received during summer tour season—ACTION ITEM

Collections

- We now have Past Perfect!!!!
 - Special thanks to Bill Scheer from Town Hall for stopping by the museum and working with our computer system to get us set up. We are reading to begin proper inventory, logging in artifacts already recorded by hand, maintaining donor information, and our membership base.
 - I wrote up a usage form for the Temporary Custody Receipt; both can be found in the modern kitchen on the shelf where we now keep professional development information.
 - The Smith-Harris House has the display case in the East Lyme Public Library for the month of October. We need to begin to plan now what we'd like to feature on exhibit, as this will sneak up on us quickly—ACTION ITEM.

NEMA Off-Site Workshop

- A meeting is scheduled on August 31st at 9 am between the Smith-Harris House, Fulton-Theroux Funeral Home, the Old Stone Church Burial Ground Association, and the CT Gravestone Network to assess Elizabeth Avery Henderson's tombstone, and determine if it can be repaired, and if so, the best way to do so. Also, the cleaning of the Avery Family stones in the plot as well.
- This meeting should also begin the dialogue for our presentation on the 11th of November.

Technology

- I had a great meeting with the tech dept. at Town Hall; they recommended we purchase a "wifi repeater" which will allow us to boost the local signals. Carmen Ames had some great suggestions and ideas for us moving forward, and was very helpful in explaining our options.

Landscape

- While discussing tech issues I spoke with Joe Bragaw from Public Works; he is aware of the seriousness of the bat situation in the Barn and is looking into ways to solve it as soon as possible; I appreciate his taking the time to listen to our concerns.

Meetings Attended:

- 8/18—STEPS-CT sub-committee meeting
- 8/23—Quilting Tea meeting
- 8/23—Technology meeting
- 8/24—Commission meeting

Submitted by:

Joanie DiMartino, Executive Director

August 24, 2016