

Smith-Harris House Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
April 25, 2018

Present: Robert Seifel, Chairman  
Gary Lakowsky  
Richard MacDonald  
Maggi Prokop  
Robert Patterson  
Cheri Meier

FILED

May 1 2018 AT 1:20 AM/PM  
C. M. V. Yalton  
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Also Present: Daniel Cunningham, Ex officio, Board of Selectmen  
Joanie DiMartino, Smith-Harris House Director  
Donna Massung, Friends of the Smith-Harris President  
Kathleen Patterson, Collections Committee Chairlady

### I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Seifel called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

### II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Seifel asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the March 28, 2018 Minutes.

The following corrections were noted: Ms. Meier's name should be corrected throughout. On page 2 the April 28 Clean-up day begins at 8 a.m. On page 3, under item C. 1. The year is 2018.

**MOTION (1): Mr. Lakowsky moved to accept the March 28, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes, as amended. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald. (6-0) Unanimous.**

### III. REPORTS

A. Public Delegations. Ms. Massung reported the Plant Sale will be held in the barn on May 5 from 9 a.m. to noon, rain or shine. Ms. Meier offered help from students who need community service. She also agreed to distribute flyers at the school.

The Friends Annual Meeting will be held on June 2, 2018 at 9 a.m.

B. Ex officio Report. Mr. Cunningham reported after concern of liability for the Town, the Board of Selectmen have revised the Town's policy on the use of alcohol at the Smith-Harris House. The Board of Selectmen have approved three events with alcohol at the Smith-Harris House. Ms. DiMartino felt the best use of the three events is for the Friends to have fundraisers.

Ms. Prokop asked that renters also be allowed to have alcohol, since several have cancelled because they were not allowed to have alcohol. Mr. Cunningham stated the Selectmen are willing to try this new policy. He has reviewed the agreement and suggests some changes and recommends that the Town Attorney also review it. He felt the Commission needs to keep track of issues that may arise.

Ms. Prokop reported most rentals are held on Saturday nights. Ms. DiMartino suggested using one of the events for a fundraiser. First Selectman Mark Nickerson informed Ms. DiMartino he would like to see more fundraising by the Friends. Mr. Lakowsky did not feel the Friends would be able to have three fundraising events during the year. He felt the Friends could have a beer/wine tasting event. Two events could be allowed for barn renters on a first come first serve basis. He felt we need to be prudent on how we allow alcohol. Ms. DiMartino reported we will request a liability form and a certificate from the bartender.

Mr. Patterson asked how did they determine three events with alcohol would be allowed? Mr. Cunningham felt if it goes well there is a potential to go back to the Board of Selectmen to request more.

Ms. DiMartino stated Mr. Nickerson suggested having a large event. Mr. Lakowsky felt with the volunteer help we have, it is not possible to have more than one event per year. Ms. Prokop suggested having a meet and greet the politicians fundraiser. Ms. DiMartino suggested announcing the new name to pay for a new logo. Mr. Nickerson suggested requesting a donation of \$50 per person.

Mr. Cunningham reported we are finally seeing some activity on the Main Street project.

C. Director's Report. (See attached).

D. Agenda Additions.

**MOTION (2):**            **Mr. Lakowsky moved to add under Old Business,  
C. 3. April 28 Clean Up Day and C. 4. Property  
Maintenance. Seconded by Mr. MacDonald  
(5-0) Unanimous.**

E. Chairman's Report. Mr. Seifel had nothing to report.

F. Financial Report.

1. Status Update. Mr. MacDonald reported 35% (\$5,049.97) remains in the Smith-Harris House budget. Mr. MacDonald was asked to request a breakdown of the remaining balance in each account.

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

3. Barn Rental. Ms. Prokop reported the May 12 event was cancelled, because at the time no liquor was allowed.

#### 4. Budget Planning Committee.

a. Review of Budget and Planned Expenses. Mr. Lakowsky agreed to have a report by the next meeting of this Commission.

G. Collections Committee. Ms. Patterson reported we need more work space because the textile closet and room is full. We would like to use the children's room for additional work space.

MOTION (3): Mr. Lakowsky moved to allow the Collections Committee to properly store items in the children's room for future use. In the meantime the Collection Committee may use that room to sort out the collection. Seconded by Mr. Patterson. (5-0) Unanimous.

H. Correspondence. Mr. Lakowsky reported he received a telephone call from a chimney sweep who would like to inspect the house chimney. Mr. Lakowsky agreed to meet with him.

Mr. Lakowsky spoke to Mr. Bence. Mr. Bence needs two barn keys. Mr. MacDonald suggested leaving the barn light on to keep the bats out.

#### IV. OLD BUSINESS

##### A. Property Maintenance.

1. Garden Fence and Maintenance. Mr. Patterson reported the Eagle Scout has done some work at the house. He has been growing plants. Part of his project is to make bat houses.

Mr. Patterson received an email from a former member of the Friends. Mr. Lakowsky suggested that she be requested to send another email to discuss what she would like to do.

2. Front Walkway. Mr. Lakowsky reported the front walkway will be taken care of after the re-branding.

3. April Clean-up Day. Clean-up day will be held on April 28, 2018 from 8 a.m. to noon. Mr. Patterson and Mr. Massung prepared a list of items that need attention. Mr. MacDonald suggested that someone with a truck remove debris. The lilac bushes can be removed and replanted. Mr. Patterson discussed the lilac bushes with Mr. Massung and they feel the larger one should remain and the smaller ones should be replanted in the area of the outhouse. Mr. Lakowsky agreed to bring battery powered equipment and a truck.

Mr. Lakowsky reported the Salem Lions Club cut wood to give to the poor free of charge. Mr. Lakowsky suggested giving them wood we do not need so they can give it to the poor.

4. Property Maintenance. Mr. Lakowsky spoke to Mr. Bence regarding the bird hole.

He plans to meet with Mr. Putnam regarding mowing.

Mr. Patterson felt the outside tables are in need of repair.

Mr. Patterson felt the garden fence needs to be secured.

B. Museum Development.

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

V. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Property Maintenance.

1. Porch Repairs. Mr. Lakowsky is waiting for a second estimate on porch repairs.

B. Museum Development.

1. Vote to Change Name. Ms. DiMartino reported we have the full support of the First Selectman to change the name. He will take care of changing the Charter.

**MOTION (4): Mr. Lakowsky moved to change the name of the Smith-Harris House to Brookside Farm and Museum with a tag line that recognizes all three families (Avery, Smith and Harris) with a tag line to be developed later. Seconded by Ms. Meier. (5-0) Unanimous.**

3. Spend Down. There was no discussion on this matter.

C. Upcoming Events.

1. Bike & BBQ 2018. Mr. MacDonald reported the coolers have been purchased.

2. Walk of Horror. There was nothing new to report on the Walk of Horror.

VI. **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION (5): Mr. Lakowsky moved to adjourn the April 25, 2018 Smith-Harris House Commission Meeting**

**at 8:15 p.m. (5-0) Unanimous.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary**

## **Director's Report—April, 2018**

### **Smith-Harris House Commission & Friends of Smith-Harris House, Inc.**

#### **Strategic Plan**

- The Strategic Plan moving forward; work has begin on the name and interpretation change.
- Bob Seifel, Donna Massung & I met with the First Selectman to update him on changes determined within the plan; we have his full support going forward, and will offer a presentation to the Board of Selectmen in the future.
- I'm writing the final report for our CTHumanities grant; please see me if you have any comments you'd like added to the narrative questions.

#### **Programs**

- "Novel History" continued this month at the East Lyme Public Library. seven people attended the second session. The next speaker is Phil Devlin, and the Smith-Harris House Commission is covering the cost of this speaker. The next date is April 30th; book is *Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway.
- We are going with our standard program Open-House Museum Day on Saturday, June 9th. We will be open 10 am to 3 pm in line with the other two historic houses in town.
- Wil Reed's class visited on Wednesday, April 11th, Maggi Prokop gave them a tour.
- I have located a potential guide for Fridays this summer; Mindy is not returning for Saturdays due to work obligations, but she wants to continue to be involved in collections as a volunteer.
- We are co-sponsoring, along with the library and the senior center, a reading of the *Declaration of Independence* at the Senior Center on Tuesday, July 3rd. Discussion will follow.

#### **STEPS Sub-Committee**

- Still reviewing committee descriptions, name change issues, and rebranding.
- Statement detailing alcoholic beverages on site has been generated for internal use.
- Finalizing policies and text to date, and prepping for Board Manual creation.
- Facilities Rental policy final draft has gone to the Landscape Committee and Dan Cunningham, attorney at law and Commission Ex-Officio for review.
- Next meeting April 30th 2:30 pm at the ELHS library.

#### **Meetings Attended**

- STEPS Sub-Committee meeting, 4/2 & 4/23
- Strategic Plan Joint Commission/Friends meeting, 4/9
- Commission meeting, 4/25

#### **Upcoming Meetings**

- STEPS Sub-Committee meeting, 2:30 pm ELHS Library, April 30th.
- Other meetings TBD.

#### **Upcoming Time Off**

- May 22—25 for poetry conference

Submitted by: Joanie DiMartino, Executive Director

April 25, 2018