

Westport Island History Committee

May 21, 2019

Present: Jeff Tarbox, George Richardson, Judy Hughes, Callie Connor, Paul Bonyun and Gaye Wagner

The meeting convened at 6:33 p.m. at the Town Office. Gaye motioned to approve the April 16 minutes; Callie, 2nd; unanimously approved.

Discussion opened on the Wright Landing House.

- George said there is money in the Ferry Landing account to cover renovations such as replacing the damaged flooring. He also noted that MMA loss insurance will cover up to \$100,000, or appraised value, if the historical archives are stored there under the auspices of the Town History Committee. If we are operating under the 501(c)3, we need to have our own insurance.
- It was agreed that before making a final decision about the Ferry Landing house, questions to explore are: 1) the costs of providing safe, secure storage; 2) our display needs and 3) how this space fits in with what we would like to see down the road – are we going to invest in a temporary solution or do we save for a space that is designed for our specific needs/vision? Perhaps we need to step back, leave the historical materials where they are, and just make enough modifications to create some current display space.
- Jeff moved: we **explore using the Wright Landing House for a display space this summer; speak to the Wright Landing Committee about getting the carpet replaced in the living room area; and delay a decision about permanent usage of the space until a feasibility study can be completed**, Gaye, 2<sup>nd</sup>, unanimously approved with the notation that we would **only be using displays that are not original materials**. Further discussion on the Wright Landing House issue was tabled at this time.

The discussion turned to two warrant articles – the usual \$500 appropriation article; and an article enabling a feasibility study for the possible use of the Wright Landing House for historical records storage/work/display space. Jeff made a motion endorsing the passage of both articles; Callie, 2<sup>nd</sup>; unanimously approved. George noted that we also need an article to allow usage of the house for display space this summer because renovation costs will be involved. Jeff moved that a third article be drafted to allow the History Committee to proceed with plans to use the house for display space this summer; Paul, 2<sup>nd</sup>, unanimously approved. Gaye will provide a draft article for Jeff's and the Selectmen's approval.

The next item of business was Bicentennial Planning. There will be a countywide meeting with the Lincoln County Historical Association (LCHA) on June 19 to keep the Lincoln County groups coordinated. Jeff proposed that we tell Lincoln County that we would like to plan for a Westport event without providing specifics at this time. Gaye and Judy will attend the meeting; others who are interested are welcome.

Jeff reported that Julie has resigned, so there is a vacancy on the Board of the Friends of Westport Island History as well as on the History Committee. Jeff will ask Mary Ellen to serve on a Nominating Committee to present a slate of officers for the History Committee for the coming year and to fill the Board vacancy. He will work with her.

Jeff also reported that Mary Ellen is in the process of setting up a bank account for the Friends of Westport Island History. We have been offered our first donation as a result of the recent news release. The Friends will need to set up a meeting and event for this summer. Amy has been working with Pedro on a "Friends" website.

Gaye presented an invitation from the Maine Historical Society to work with them to create a display in November that highlights history from Maine Memory Network Partners. Possible topics for a display are those where we have a body of items digitized that provide the framework for a story, e.g., Leighton postcards, the Tibbetts' or Tarbox letters, dedication of the causeway, or lumbering. It was agreed to participate; Gaye will follow up.

Jeff passed out a listing of the collections of documents and artifacts in the possession of the History Committee, in addition to the Town Office records. This is a start in a higher level documentation of our collection, one of the results of the monthly work sessions at the Town Hall.

Gaye made a motion to adjourn at 8 pm; Callie, 2<sup>nd</sup>; unanimously approved. **The next meeting will be on Tuesday, June 18, at 6:30 pm at the Town Hall.**