

History Committee

October 27, 2021 at the History Center

Present: Mary Ellen Barnes, Joan Mason-Bradford, Jean Wilhelmsen-Exter, Dennis Dunbar, Jeff Tarbox, Louana Frois, John Henderson, Dedee Greenleaf Hodgdon and Gaye Wagner

The meeting convened at 4:32 p.m. at the History Center.

Jean made a motion to approve the Minutes with two edits; Joan, 2nd, unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report: Jeff called for questions on the Budget Tracker emailed to members and noted that the Friends have \$14,000+ in the bank. There is no change in the History Committee account since last month. There being no questions, Joan moved to approve the Treasurer's Report; Dennis, 2nd: unanimously approved.

Cloud Storage: Jean has opened a History Dropbox account and has begun populating it. She handed out instructions for accessing the account and will email the instructions.

Catalogit: Jean received some interest in her email asking for those interested in training on Catalogit; others expressed more availability for the winter months. Stay tuned for training opportunities.

WCA Newsletter: Jean submitted two announcements for the Community Association newsletter: 1) new history notecards available in November, and 2) new public hours at the History Center -- 12 to 2, beginning in November.

Parsons House: Jean received a call regarding the purchase of the John Parsons (Eloise Baker) house by Samuel Snider. Snider is planning an extensive and accurate period restoration of the Parsons House and is interested in any photos and information from our collections regarding the house.

Nametags: Jean found a vendor for plastic nametags with a magnetic fastener at \$10 each. She proposed an initial order of nametags for History Center staffing volunteers, FOWIH Trustees, and active volunteers. Jeff noted that the vendor used by Maine Maritime charges a \$52 set up charge and \$7.23/piece, which may be more cost-effective in the long run. Jean will follow up with the Maine Maritime Museum's vendor.

Fred Bailey Diaries: Deb Williams has transcribed 38 hours-worth of the Fred Bailey diaries and has turned them back to us for completion. Gaye will speak with a summer resident who has expressed an interest in doing transcriptions as a "long-distance" way to get involved with the History Committee to see if she might help.

Spirit of America Award: Jean presented the Spirit of America Award Certificate to fellow History Committee members. She accepted the Award on behalf of the Committee at the Select Board's meeting on Monday.

The Friends of Westport Island History ("Friends")

Present: Same attendance. The meeting convened at 5:09 pm.

Workroom Lighting for HC Work Rooms: Mary Ellen provided a cost and layout proposal for Honeywell 4' LED linkable 5000 Lumen shop lights for HC1 and HC2; total cost: \$253.30 for the lights and chains/hooks. Jeff made a motion to accept the proposal with additional funds to cover extension cords that may be needed; Joan, 2nd; unanimously approved. Mary Ellen will seek concurrence from the Selectmen before making the order.

UV Film: Jean received an updated quote for UV film for all windows (minus the bathroom and doors) from Maine Sun Solutions for \$3,450, about a \$55 increase from last year. Jeff made a motion to accept Maine Sun Solutions' proposal; Joan, 2nd; unanimously approved. Mary Ellen will follow up with the Selectmen.

Heat Pumps: Jeff has noted temperature fluctuations in the last week with changing outside temperatures – particularly with HC1. Today, it was cold in HC 1, and the heat pump was not on. Before the weather gets colder, it was decided to consult with Dyer Electric and perhaps have them do an inspection. Jeff will follow up.

Notecards & Sales: The Notecards Subcommittee is proposing two new sets of cards: a set of Winter Scenes and a set of Historic Scenes by Westport Island artists. Express Copy printing quotes: 400 cards -- \$201.91; 600 cards -- \$295. Dennis made a motion to print 600 cards; Jean, 2nd: unanimously approved.

Jeff proposed mailing costs for note cards (1 pack, \$4; 2 packs, \$5; 3 packs, \$9; 4 packs, \$10) to accommodate postage and packaging. Members agreed we should offer mailing. Gaye will follow up with a pending inquiry.

New Acquisitions: Sarah Richard donated 3 boxes of Jerry Day Mason's (her mother's) poetry/art books: "Speaking to Strangers" (31) and "Chiaroscuro" (29) for the Friends to sell to benefit the History Center.

Book Reprints: Jeff will work on a 20-copy reprint of his mother's book; and Gaye will work on a 30-copy reprint of the Swanton book to replenish our supply at the History Center and have some for sale at the Town Office.

Event Committee: Joan provided the following update from the Event Committee:

- Joan will be working with Dedee to develop a program for February's "Celebration of Verlie Colby-Greenleaf's Birthday" with family and friends at the History Center;
- Prof. Joseph Hall, Bates College, who specializes in Native American history, has agreed to do a talk late spring/early summer for a \$150 honorarium that he will donate to a local charity that helps Native Americans. No luck yet in contacting the Native American food caterer for a possible ticketed dinner;
- By next month, the Committee will have a July date, a budget, and a program outline to propose for the 2022 fundraiser – a Tarbox family history event centered at Callie's home. They are planning the event for 90-100 people. Jeff and Callie still need to work out details to involve Sasanoa Brewing. Kyle is open to the idea if there is compensation for losing a day of summer business. After discussion, it was suggested that in addition to buying beer kegs/food from the Brewery & the Farm, we look at ways to market the event in conjunction with them -- promoting a visit to the farm at the conclusion of the history event; and
- The Committee is inviting comment on whether to do the Scavenger Hunt again given the disappointing turnout. Possible ideas to generate interest: things to find and take, e.g., a diary page, toys of the era, something you could find in nature and decorate as a child, etc. With "giveaways", we would need a sign-up to ensure enough available items. Dennis noted that the Scavenger Hunt flyers are being used; it seems to be working as is -- a self-guided Scavenger Hunt.

Fall Appeal: Because current memberships are extended through 2022, Mary Ellen asked if we wanted an end-of-year fundraising letter. Three thoughts from Louana: a letter is better than an email; there are many competing demands for end-of-year money; spring might be better timing – ideally focused on a specific goal. There was agreement on the following suggestions: 1) an end-of-year note of appreciation with a fundraising appeal in the spring focused on funding an intern; 2) working with Prof. Hall on an internship; and 3) a student interested in Native American History to compile Native American history on Westport. Mary Ellen will draft a year-end letter.

PR & Communications: Mary Ellen and Gaye will work on posting a weekly historical photo on Facebook. Mary Ellen noted as a member of the Wiscasset Chamber of Commerce, we can use the Chamber in addition to the WCA Newsletter to publicize exhibits, hours, notecards, etc.

Calendar: Joan will set up a draft Google calendar to help organize planning and events.

Dennis made a motion to adjourn at 6:30 pm; Dedee, 2nd; unanimously approved. **Note:** The next meeting will be a week earlier because of Thanksgiving: Wednesday, November 17, at 4:30 pm, at the History Center.