Kingston Historical Museum Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on February 6, 2024

Kingston Historical Museum – Nichols Memorial Library

Members present: Ruth Albert (via phone), Kathy Clark Chase, Jef Flanders-McDougall, Christine Hume

Friends present: Dan Doyle, Lesley Hume, Walt Roy

Selectboard Representative: Glenn Coppleman

Ruth called the meeting to order at 5:40 pm.

Meeting Items:

1. Chairperson’s Report:
2. 2023 Budget Report: The 2023 budget was overbudget by $331.00. This was due to not having accurate oversight of the November budget and then not having adequate funds in December for the purchase order for the archivist fees. All agreed that the Committee needed to exercise better oversight and not rely solely on the Finance Director for budget monitoring.
3. 2024 Budget:
4. January 6: Decision Day – The Museum Committee Budget was not modified.

Glenn informed the Committee and Friends that the Budget Committee did not recommend a budget; members took a principled stand. Apparently, cost of living increases built into the town budget were figures the Budget Committee members couldn’t agree on; thus, the budget is a Selectboard budget. The budget reflects the Museum’s requests.

1. January 13: Public Hearing and Warrant Articles - The Friends’ warrant article passed.
2. February 3: Deliberative Session – No questions were asked of the Museum Committee/Friends during the deliberative session.
3. Secretary’s Report:

Ruth motioned to accept the Minutes as amended. Jef seconded it.

1. Old Business:
2. Plains Cemetery – Data Subcommittee:

Jef said that the subcommittee hadn’t met since January 5th but had agreed to go to the Town Clerk’s office to look at the cemetery records on file and compare them to the Department of Public Works (DPW) records with the purpose to begin to fill in missing information. The Kingston Community Library (KCL) staff have expertise in this area of research and are a resource. Walt, who is a member of the Heritage Commission (HC) said that although the data research is an important goal of the HC, the priority, at this time, is the cemetery aesthetics (e.g. cleaning stones).

1. Additional New Exhibits (besides Frances F. Wood):

Lesley suggested that there be an exhibit of Carroll Winch’s comic book collection and in connection, have an expert’s presentation/appraisal of personal comic book collections, as suggested earlier in the fall by Sally Stevens. Ruth, who had already begun to look into appraisal events (jewelry, antiques) as fundraisers, said she would do further research in finding a comic book expert. Kathy said she would also help as she had recently seen a televised feature on an art school, located in New Hampshire, which focused on comic book art.

1. Banner: The Committee is grateful to Salem Signs for printing a banner of the Kingston Historical Museum Complex, free of charge. The Committee also thanked Walt for designing the banner. It includes photographs, in vivid color and texture, that he took of all the buildings in the museum complex. It will be on display during special events and fundraisers.
2. Barn: Glenn said that he, Ernie Landry of the HC, and Phil Coombs of the DPW are monitoring the restoration - work progress. He said that Phil is reaching out to other resources for assistance, realizing that the department needs more help than is available through the town crew. Glenn is aware that the storage of barn carriages remains an issue as the current storage container housing the carriages has to be returned this spring: He and Dan agreed the return date for the container is June 1st.
3. NH Preservation Alliance Presentation Update: Jef said that Andrew Cushing of the NH Preservation Alliance returned her call/email request regarding a presentation on historic homes; he told her that he is available in the summer to do a presentation. In the meantime, she read in the HC Minutes that the HC has similar plans with the Alliance. She recommended that the Committee collaborate with the HC.

Glenn said that the HC has taken on the task of educating Kingston residents who own historic/old houses and are interested in learning more about their houses and how to maintain them. Using the information from the 1983 Historic House Inventory, the HC, under the direction of Bob Bean, has created and mailed out a new inventory sheet along with a cover letter to individual home owners.

1. New Business:
2. NML Basement and Storage Consultant: Volunteers would like advice on storage-shelving and organization of museum objects in the basement.

At Glenn’s suggestion, Lesley said she will contact the NH Historical Society (NHHS) to find out if they can recommend a storage consultant. Related to this, Lesley suggested that volunteers register to attend the NHHS online presentations/workshops. For example, on Wednesday, March 1st, at 7:00 pm, there is a workshop called Creating a Virtual Scavenger Hunt.

1. Communication/PR: Now that the Carriage Towne News is no longer in circulation, the Committee and the Friends are concerned about communicating Museum news to the public. All agreed that social media is an option; however, it requires time and skill to create and update posts. It’s a consideration to be addressed at a later date. In the meantime, Jef suggested that we write the Museum’s email and phone number on the Museum outdoor sign. To reach the older generation who may not use social media, Glenn said that the Lawrence Eagle Tribune may be an option; it’s possible that it will have a section for Kingston news. All agreed that in addition to accessing the Tribune, the Museum can continue to update posts on the Town website and begin sending flyers/informational letters to visitors who have given the Museum their contact information.
2. Glenn Coppleman – Selectboard Update:

Glenn said that the HC has full documentation of the past repairs to the Nichols Memorial Library (NML) roof. A consultant, John Greene, has identified issues and what had not been done right. The HC has to figure out a good plan with the Town Counsel to determine a course of action: get the original company to return and redo the work or get the name of another copper and slate roofing expert who can give advice/do the repairs.

Glenn reported on the following:

The Selectboard Candidates Night is Wednesday, February 21st at 6:30 pm. There are two people running for a 1year position and there are four people running for two 3year positions.

The Kingston Days meeting is Thursday, February 15th. The attendees will make a decision whether to continue holding the annual event.

The Selectboard hired a new building inspector; his name is Paco Avila and he started the job this week. He has six years of experience and is very personable; the Selectboard is positive about having him on board. Paco’s office hours are posted on the website.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Chase