

Dighton Historical Commission

Hybrid Meeting – Old Town Hall and Zoom

Minutes of March 14, 2023 Meeting

Present: Pat Gailes, Rafa Delfin, Pat Olsen, Irene Allie, Ron Smith, Kenneth Pacheco (Selectman Liaison)

1. Called Meeting to Order at 6:05 PM

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Secretary's Report

- Minutes of January 10, 2023. The motion under number 5 for the renovation plans at CPA funding - Should we look into submitting a letter of support for the renovation plan of the Smith Memorial Hall. Under "Budget"? Motion to waive the reading of January 10, 2023 minutes and accept as amended. Moved by Ron Smith; seconded by Irene Allie. All in favor.
- Minutes of February 14, 2023. Correction - page 2 - it was Irene Allie who was going back to Berkley to figure out the historic district, not Pat Olsen. Motion to waive the reading of February 14, 2023 minutes and accept as submitted. Moved by Ron Smith. Seconded by Irene Allie. All in favor.

4. Budget

- FY 23 Budget balance/expenses. Balance is \$1,406.90. Davol Printing invoice \$155, \$18.99 invoice paid will show on accountant expenditure sheet at the end of March 28
- FY24 Budget: Our meeting with Finance Committee/BOS is next Tuesday, March 28, according to Ken Pacheco
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5. Unfinished Business

- Discuss/Review/Act James Briggs Garden sign. BP (Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School) started the project of making the sign as they were the only ones interested. The sign will be made of wood with dark stain. Estimate cost is \$95 plus the purchase of two 6 x 6 x 8 foot lumber for base – estimate \$64 (\$31.32 each). BP's graphic department will do the infographic that Gailes showed us from her laptop. The image of the house will be in black and white. Motion to have BP complete the James Briggs Garden Sign with a cost not to exceed \$250.00. Moved by Ron Smith. Seconded by Irene Allie. All in favor.
- Nat Crane House Memorial. On March 3, Pat Gailes met with Derek Costa, superintendent of Bristol Aggie regarding Nat Crane House Memorial. He is very interested in this project and wants to work with us to make it a meaningful presentation not only to students, but others who visit. He suggested that we create a story line of Nat Crane and the house. i.e. who was Nat Crane? Any partnerships with school? Other neighbors such as David Standish? Any other owners of house connected to school. Timeline to make the bridge from community-school-Crane. Meet again in May – June. Need to do:
 - 1. Revisit Inventory of items
 - 2. Nat Crane family history - Delfin mentioned that some of the history of the house is mentioned in the 2019 calendar that town historian Myrna Santos had published on Dighton historical houses.
 - 3. History of owners through deed research - Delfin said that former owner William Harrison had gone to the Yalta Conference in 1945. Rafa will do the research. Irene will also do research via the Registry of Deeds.

- 2120 Water Street - (John Hathaway House) - No new information. The bank is still the owner of the property
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6. Preservation Planning

- Discuss/Review Community-wide Survey Update – Phase 2. Stacy Spies continues with Phase 1. Draft inventory forms are being prepared. The end of Phase 1 is April 14. Phase 2 will be the review of the forms and completed by May 12. Phase 3 will be the final production of forms, map and CD and will be completed by June 9.
- Historic Buildings of Dighton Program presentation, in collaboration with the Dighton Public Library, will be held on March 23 at 6:30pm Old Town Hall. Delfin will talk about the historical marker program, and he, Pat Olsen and Ken Pacheco will talk about their houses as they already have a marker.
- Historical Markers – Delfin said that he didn't find much information on two houses in North Dighton that have applied for markers - 150 & 158 Chase Street. He went to the Registry of Deeds to do some research, but he didn't see a history of ownership. Olsen suggested to check the books on Grantors and Grantees. Gailes said we still have to confirm historical markers for Historic Town Buildings. She messaged the Town Administrator and the Building Inspector and she's waiting for their response. Rafa said he hasn't heard back from Robert Peach, the marker vendor. Pat Gailes suggested that he contact him again.

7. New Business

- Discuss/Review/Act Annual Report due April 3. Motion to accept the Annual Report for the Town of Dighton. Moved by Olsen. Seconded by Delfin. All in favor.
- Review/Discuss/Act Segreganset school house. Gailes passed out copies of the proposed purpose of statement for the school house that was written last April 2022. For FY25, we have a Capital Outlay request for architectural plans and designs for the school house. Olsen expressed concern about the sign outside the school house; she said it's rotted and looks horrible and needs more than a new paint. She asked who designed the sign and Gailes thinks a woman named "Kathy Yell" (?) designed it. Rafa asked who designed the sign for the Dighton Historical Society but no one knows. Olsen stated that Dighton doesn't keep up the town building and then they fall into disrepair until it's too late. Pacheco said that we should talk to the Building Commissioner Jim Aguiar who should be in charge of fixing the sign. Gailes asked if we are willing to paint if we need to. Olsen said yes. Gailes will talk with Aguiar. Smith asked if the school house is owned by HC; Gailes said it is owned by the Town.
- Review/Discuss/ Act Historical Commission 50th Anniversary. Delfin asked if the commission has ever celebrated a milestone anniversary, but no one knows. Gailes suggested that we could probably do a write-up or discussion about the first founding Heritage Committee from where the Historical Commission came off of. Charlie Harris, Helen Lane, Elaine Varley and Helen Brown were very involved in getting the history of Dighton documented and were known for getting this commission started and Gailes said they deserved some recognition. Olsen said that Helen Lane started the committee based on a biography that she had read at the Historical Society. Gailes said that Lane started the committee because of a state statute. Pacheco said that Lane was active in the Society in 1962 and she was 68 when she started the committee. As an aside, Olsen asked if Jack Torres is still living. Torres is the man who lives in a trailer and has a "perpetual yard sale" and he has written poetry about Dighton which could be featured in the commission's 50th anniversary celebration. Olsen has a painting of the Unitarian Church on Elm Street that could be displayed. Smith asked if there are past Minutes and Gailes said they are kept in a filing cabinet at the Town Hall. Annual town reports may be accessed through the Town Clerk, Mark Pacheco. Olsen said she a copy of 1973 town report and will check if the Heritage Committee is mentioned in it.

8. Library Building Committee Report

- Met with CPC for a walk through of 207 Main Street with CPC members, representatives from Granite City Partners on March 1, 2023
- On March 13, 2023, CPC voted to approve the application for funding of the 207 Main Street project for \$323,000 – which will be in the Warrant of the Town Meeting on June 5. Voters will decide to accept or reject the funding. CPC will write the article for the warrant.

9. CPC Report - None

10. Correspondence

- Email from Town Historian Myrna Santos regarding Historic Homes for Sale (three houses on Elm Street). Myrna is asking that the Historical Commission write a paper about each house and its history for the realtors to provide perspectives as a way to provide some history information for potential buyers. We can send updated copies of Form Bs. Gailes asked if this is an endeavor that is worth taking on; Smith responded "I don't see why not," though he added "how do you know when a house is for sale?" Gailes responded "word of mouth and you have to be checking the listings." Olsen stated that a letter from the Town Historian might carry more weight since the Commission is powerless. We don't know what the owner will do with the old house they purchased and we can't control how they spend their money. They could restore the house, or demolish it. A letter from the Town Historian pleading that the owner does not demolish the house or continue to preserve it. Gailes will further discuss this with Myrna. Side comment by Smith who stated that when he moved to Dighton in 1982, there was a Welcome committee who welcomed new residents. What happened to this committee?
- Gailes said that she looked through the files and mentioned previous historian Elaine Varley who at one time was sending letters (from 2002) from the Historical Commission to express her thanks to owners for purchasing older houses. In the letter, Varley also included information about the houses and invited the owners to join the Dighton Historical Society. And in case of bad weather, she added her phone number to call in case a DHS meeting was cancelled.
- Gailes reached out to the realtor of 2120 Water Street and they were appreciative of the information that Gailes was able to provide. This house is in the national historic district.
- Email from Mass. Historical Alliance about Mass History Commons – Revolutionary Commemoration in Your Town celebrating 250th anniversary. Gailes will see if the video is already available so we can all watch it.

11. Public Input - None

12. Other

- Resignation from William R. Pruitt. He resigned from the Historical Commission and from CPC (as HC's representative). Motion to accept Pruitt's resignation from the Commission and to send him a letter of appreciation. Moved by Smith. Seconded by Delfin. All in favor. We need to find a replacement for Pruitt to represent us at CPC. Smith expressed interest in joining CPC of which he was a member for years, but wishes that other people have the chance to do so. We will discuss further in our next meeting who will be the new representative to CPC.
- New Conflict of Interest Law Procedures

- Dighton employees and board or committee members are required to take the NEW Ethics Training in 2023 through the new system. This can be done online and lasts an hour.
- Open Commission position – 2 openings
- Next Meeting Date: April 11, 2023 6 PM. Pacheco said that this was his last meeting since he decided not to run for another term as selectman. He hopes another selectman will be selected to replace him as BOS liaison. We thanked Pacheco for his contributions to the Commission.

13. Adjourned at 7:08 PM