

Historical Committee
Minutes of the March 12, 2014 Meeting

Attendance: D. Addario, B. Aldrich, B. Diem, L. Franklin, S. Tucker and D. Beck-Clemens, Liaison. Absent: B. Black, B. Titus, and R. Stomber. Also present for part of the meeting was Mayor S. Pote

Presiding: S. Tucker, Chairperson. The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM.

The Minutes of the February 12, 2014 Meeting were approved as circulated.

CHAIRPERSONS REPORT – S. Tucker

Tea Party on March 20

Sue reported on progress for the Tea Party to be held on March 20 for her office staff. This will be a “test tea” with a friendly group before we sponsor others. Sue suggested a menu of rose shaped tea cakes, egg shaped pound cake, Baileys bread pudding, tea sandwiches and assorted cookies. Sue will bring tables and tablecloths. Members were assigned things to make and do. Members will arrive early on the day of the tea to assemble the sandwiches. The group discussed the materials still needed (some silverware, more tea pots, etc.) Lynn cannot be present the day of the Tea, but she has done some cleaning downstairs and offered to clean before the tea. The plan is for the group to have their meeting upstairs between 9:30 and 10:00, have the tea, and then tour the group through the Museum.

If the tea party is successful we would like to invite the Lions Club, The Seniors, perhaps the Council, Borough Hall Staff, and former Historic Members. It is believed that such activities will spark more interest in the Museum.

Meeting Date for April

Because of numerous conflicts, the Historical Meeting for April will be held on Tuesday, April 15 instead of Wednesday, April 16.

Update on Scout Projects

The Girl Scout working on her Gold Award is on spring break in Florida will be ready to get started when she gets back. Sue would like to coordinate the Girl Scout Silver Awards with the Gold Award. One suggestion was note cards that we need for thank-you notes.

Oaths of Office

Diddy is still missing B. Black and R. Stomber who are also both absent tonight. She will continue to pursue.

Report on Museum Attendance

Attendance has been light but there has never been a Sunday where no one has shown up. The extremely cold weather is certainly a factor and we need to do some publicity.

Report on Video Project

Chris Vander Fliet really wants to wrap this project up .He has sent us a revised script for review and it is clear that we will need to work on the structure with him. Steve Pote's interview will be on this Sunday, March 12 at noon. This is the same day Texier is open. We need to schedule a work session specifically for the video project.

FINANCIAL MANAGER'S REPORT – L. Franklin

Current Balance as of today: \$12,792.64. Expenses: \$1,160.00 for the throws. She has received financial print outs from Bill Hance and she has met with him to work out a process so that she is notified of any donations. Bill will send out the 501(c)3 forms and notify her so that thank you notes can be sent. She noted that Ray Adams was paid for our order of Hillcrest Road Books. Steve Pote and Jay Hyman both donated enough money to have their names on our plaque. Lynn wrote belated thank you notes to them. Lynn will plan to give a financial report at each meeting so that we can track our expenses.

It was agreed that ALL bills, receipts, cash from the sale of items, etc. all go through Lynn and Lynn will deal with Borough Hall for reimbursement, payment, etc.

Barbara and Betty Jean volunteered to go to Crown Trophy to have the names put on the plaque. Sue may want to see about having an outside plaque to go beside the Indian mortar, so she may go with them.

Also discussed was how to deal with the value of items donated. It was agreed that when the item is donated, Bill Hance puts the value on the 501(c)3 form. At this point, we have to take the word of the value of the item from the donor.

LIAISON'S REPORT – D. Beck – Clemens

Special dogs are coming Tuesday morning at 8:00 AM to chase geese away from the lake. It is a trial resulting from a Girl Scout Bronze project.

Deed to the Art Center/School

The question raised by Members of the Historical Committee about possible restrictions on the deed for the Art Center led to a thorough Borough investigation. It was determined that in 1860, the Spencer Family gave the property to the School Board with the restriction that it be only used by the schools. After a number of years, the School Board allowed the Art Center to use it. In 1976 the Spencer family sued the Art Center and the Board of Education because it was being used for something beside a school. The case took two years to settle and the judge ruled against the Spencer family because more than 20 years had gone by before they questioned it. In 1980, the Borough bought it from the School Board. During that final purchase by the Borough, a thorough title search was done and it was determined that the deed is free and clear for the town to do with it whatever they want.

Budget Hearing

The Historic Committee may come to the budget hearing. It has not been scheduled yet.

Ordinance Status

The Historical Committee Ordinance is now in the hands of the Ordinance Committee for updating. She will let us know when there is a draft ready for us to look at.

Recommendation about other Rooms at Texier

Dianna has asked the staff at Borough Hall to investigate the cost of having a company come in and scan all the items in the other rooms upstairs to get rid of the piles of paper. She will keep us posted.

OLD BUSINESS

Strategic Plan – D. Addario

Diddy circulated a draft of the Strategic Plan for 2014. Members are to make suggestions and corrections and be prepared to discuss and approve it at the next meeting

Annual Report – D. Addario

Diddy circulated a draft of the Annual Report. Members are to make suggestions and corrections and be prepared to discuss and approve it at the next meeting.

Deed of Gift Form – D. Addario

Diddy circulated a draft of a Deed of Gift Form. After some discussion some suggestions were made for revision, Diddy will make these, forward to Dianna for perusal by Al Cruz the Borough Attorney.

Cleaning and Organizing Texier House

As approved at the last meeting, Lynn purchased two shelving units and she and her husband put them together. Barbara and others worked to organize the conference room and begin to put boxes and material on the shelves. It looks much better. Lynn cleaned the vacuum cleaner and her husband did some maintenance on it and it is working well. A big thanks to Lynn and Tom Franklin! Lynn also did a lot of cleaning downstairs. She said that there was a lot of gritty dirt on the floors and she was concerned about scratches. The venetian blinds are really dirty.

The Committee discussed whether or not the cleaning service should be used to do cleaning. Concern was expressed about security now that we have so many valuable items in the collection. It was decided that for now, we would clean ourselves until we can address some more security. Lynn volunteered to start cleaning the blinds.

We also need bigger door runners. A lot of dirt and salt are tracked in the back door. B. Diem will look into it.

New Member for Historic.

We are short one member and there is a person interested. She is waiting for her appointment and Dianna will follow up.

NEW BUSINESS

Archival Materials – L. Franklin

Lynn has consulted with Rick and will order some archival materials (cartons, sleeves, folders, etc.) for us to get started. She is exploring some other vendors for the best prices, but needs to speak to Rick about evaluating quality.

Upstairs Bathroom - L. Franklin

Lynn would like to decorate the upstairs bathroom and the Committee was very pleased.

Switch Plates – L. Franklin

Lynn would like to change the switch plates downstairs and the Committee approved.

Mayor Steve Pote, Guest

Mayor Pote stopped by to see some of the progress we have made. He announced that the Firehouse is getting some new security on their building and he would like the Historical Committee to consider upgrading the security at the Texier House. He cited the valuable material that we already have and the new material that we are receiving. This was coincidental since the Committee had discussed their concern about security earlier in the meeting. He asked if we knew whether or not the downstairs windows had security. (It is doubtful but unknown.) He encouraged us to use some of the donated money that we now have to upgrade our security. There are cameras in every room and security at the doors. He suggested we investigate the options with what is now available with technology. Dianna will follow up on this and the Committee will certainly consider it.

Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission - L. Franklin

Lynn is our representative to this group and she has attended one meeting. The group meets on the first Wednesday of each month. She is learning about the group and will be reporting to us on activities. She brought some materials for the Committee. She reported that the Somerville Fire Department received a grant from the County to set up a fire museum and there was concern that they were not open yet, after a long time. The Firemen cited that they underestimated how long it takes to inventory and organize materials and that they were still a long way from opening. The Firemen invited the Commission members to come and see how much work it is for the all volunteer group. (This certainly reinforced our experience with the length of time it takes to go through material and get things ready.)

Report on Workshop on Fundraising and Promotion – L. Franklin, S. Tucker, B. Diem

Members attending this workshop thought this was the one that was most helpful and related to our situation at this time. There was a lot of information about grants but unfortunately most grants required at least one paid staff person, which eliminates us. Other local fund raising resources were discussed and they offered to review grants before they were submitted. The Committee discussed possible sources of help with grant writing in the Borough, for example the Board of Education. Dianna has experience in writing grants as well. Also suggested was raising money on line through your web-sites, Facebook, and crowd funding. Targeting local businesses and seeking corporations that match what their employees donate are all possibilities.

Work Sessions at Texier

The following work sessions were scheduled:

March 18 - 10:00 AM – cleaning and setting up for the tea

April 2 - 10:00 AM - Photos for film and work on video

Museum Coverage for May

Coverage for the Museum Openings are as follows:

May 4 - Betty Jean and Barbara

May 18 – Diddy and Lynn

It is possible that the town picnic might be the 18th and there may be some changes made.

Memorial Day Ceremony

Members need to think about selecting a veteran for the Memorial Day Ceremony at our next meeting. Some suggestions were made. Lynn will get some information to Barbara and Barbara will follow up for a decision at the next meeting.

Valley View Yearbooks 1979-86

Sue purchased these yearbooks that were on EBay. When she received them, she believes they were the personal copies of Mr. Hodges, the shop teacher who was much loved by the students. These will be helpful for the Girl Scout project on the schools and they will go into the collection.

Durand-Hedden House, Maplewood – D. Addario

Diddy circulated a program from the Durand-Heddon historical home in Maplewood where they actually cooked in the open hearth and their yearly schedule. This could be used as a model in the future.

Thank You Note – B. Diem

Barbara read a thank-you note from Katherine Rule thanking us for the flowers we sent on the death of her husband. (Katherine donated her carving of the Castle and many other artifacts to the Museum.)

Liz Principe

Liz Principe is a former Historical Committee Member who Barbara contacted about some items in our collection that we have no information about. Liz was actively involved with the restoration of the Texier House when the Borough acquired it. She has not yet visited the Museum, but will come this Sunday and walk through to help us identify some things.

Need for More Signs in the Museum – B. Diem

Barbara wants to contact Mary Cicollelo to make some more signs. As we go through the exhibits Sunday, she would like to make a list.

Time Capsule – B. Diem

In 2026, the time capsule that was buried by Best Lake is scheduled to be opened. Diddy had found a copy of a letter that Tony, as a Councilman back then, had put in the capsule. She asked if people were aware of this time capsule and it seemed most people were not. There was some discussion about what would be the best way to make sure that someone knows about this in 2026. In the meantime, Barbara found a photograph of the capsule being buried. It was suggested that we make a display somewhere in the Museum to give publicity to this event.

The meeting was adjourned at: 10:00 PM

Submitted by:

Dorothy Addario
Secretary

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, APRIL 15, 2014, 7:00 PM TEXIER HOUSE

Approved at the April 15, 2014 Historical Committee Meeting