

**Watchung Historical Committee**  
**Minutes of the October 18th, 2023 Meeting**

**Attendance:** Bob Mayers, Don Monetti, Tim Logan, Maureen Greenbaum, Michael DeParto, John Guzman, and Chris Vander Fliet

**Absent:** Fred Hayeck, Stephen Pote, Paul Fischer (Council Liaison), Terri Pavlak, and Keli Leunes

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Motion to approve the minutes from the September 20, 2023, meeting was made by Tim L. and seconded by Bob M. and approved.

**CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – C. Vander Fliet**

Vander Fliet thanked everyone who continued to Operate/Open our Museum to the Public/Open House and update the Open House schedule document.

Vander Fliet thanked everyone who helped out for Weekend Journey through the past and all of the contributions, big and small including insurance coordination with the town (Don M.), food pickup (Tim L., Keli L., Steve P.), sign/banner pickup (Terri P.), and volunteers at the museum during the weekend. It was a huge weekend and there were many efforts to make it a reality. A total of about 45 people attended the two-day event.

Vander Fliet reported to keep an eye out for the Borough Newsletter and the article published by the Historical Committee. There were lots of recaps from the year and recent events which are included in the article.

Vander Fliet reported that we received a recent donation from Denise Story. She donated a Bobby Thom son commemorative plate and will also be donating a signed baseball by Bobby Thomson. Keli L. was working on a thank you card to Denise Story, similar in fashion to the previous donations the Texier House received over the summer.

Vander Fliet reported that Wilson Memorial Church was looking to showcase some of their history in the next year or so as they celebrate their 115<sup>th</sup> year. Tina Keli from Wilson Memorial mentioned that Watchung Historical and Wilson members can get together to create a more complex and impressive display on Wilson Memorials History at the Texier House.

Vander Fliet reported that a resident recently alerted him of a Historical Preservation Fund by the National parks Service. He asked if any of the members would like to take a look at the grant/fund and Mike Departo offered to take a look at the requirements.

**VICE CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Ness Property: Tim Logan reported that he will work on some historical notes related to the Ness property and existing artifacts (including a large sawblade) from the Ness property, for a future display. It's going to take some time. He will be talking with his friend to see what type of display they could build in the Texier House to shed light on the history of the property. Logan noted not much wall space for a new display was available at the Texier House, but that a display could be built in the middle of a room.

### **LIAISON REPORT – P. Fischer**

Paul Fischer was not present; no report was provided. The following is a list of outstanding items that we need our liaisons support on:

- Key Fobs/Door Lock
- Alarms at Texier House
- Bylaws
- Securing Benches on outdoor patio.
- Texier House – Routine Cleaning
- Approval of Historical Website/Digital Archive
- Gods Acre Sign
- Legend of Watchung Mural

Vander Fliet did report that Paul was going to be coordinating with the Borough and Christine Ead on a new sign at Gods Acre that would include all of the names of the inhabitants at Gods Acre as well as the correct spellings of all of those who are buried there. The back of the sign would have QR codes that Maureen Greenbaum can work on to bring you to a video and timing of that particular inhabitant that you might be interested in learning more about.

### **PROJECTS/NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Legend of Watchung Mural Discussion**

Vander Fliet reported that he had a meeting with Ron Jubin at his office hours about the Legend of Watchung mural and the next steps. Two locations were discussed – the wall to the right as soon as you walk into Council Chambers (mural would need to be installed on a curved wall), and the wall that faces the cell tower behind borough hall (mural would cover the middle window). More to be discussed on this at the next meeting, and the art conservator needs to visit the site to get a better understanding of final installation costs for the mural.

#### **Harvest Festival Participation (October 28<sup>th</sup>)**

Maureen G. said she would have a table for Historical with artifacts and photos for the public to view at the event.

#### **Thank You Cards**

Vander Fliet thanked Keli L. for writing and mailing out thank you cards to the following people who made significant donations to the Texier House Museum in recent past. These included:

1. Monetary donation from Phyllis Juetter and Christine Ead
2. Karen Pennett/Pennett Family donated a Laundry Mangle (roller to remove water from washed clothing) to the Museum.
3. The Acosta Family (Jorge and Erin) donated an old bench from the German Camp which was in Watchung.
4. Tim Jones donated Ice Cutting tools from Watchung Lake and they were hung up. He also donated slide photographs of Native Americans and Wetumpka Falls.
5. Denise Story donated a Bobby Thomson commemorative plate and will be donating a signed baseball from Bobby.

### **Digital Picture Frames**

Keli Leunes will report at the next meeting about different digital picture frames we can use at the Texier House for the school display (to house class pictures) as well as a frame for the wall in the media room for the veterans. It was decided by the committee that we should be able to pause the digital pictures frames at any given time if needed.

### **Historic Website and America 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Maureen Greenbaum**

Maureen showed the process for creating an Historical Website with links to numerous Watchung-related material and video archives.

### **Web Designers**

It was reiterated that we need help from outside web designers or students to further polish and develop the website. The committee was in agreement we needed to provide some structure to the website before we could have others to further detail and fine tune the website. We have lots of pictures, we need words for them. Maureen Greenbaum continues to work on the website.

**Whispering Leaves** – Don Monetti gave a short overview of what he's been doing on Facebook with WWL Monetti summarizes some of the main articles from each issue and posts to Facebook. Many members from town comment and reminisce about their memories and relationships to the stories posted.

### **Historical Questions for Borough Hall Sign**

Mike DeParto has tried to coordinate with the Borough on posting historically related questions to the digital sign outside of Borough Hall. It would help to get people interested in Watchung History as they drive or walk around town. Mike did mention that on 11.22.2023 it will be the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of JFK's assassination. He asked if anything happen in Watchung at that time.

### **Meeting with Mt. Saint Mary's**

Mike DeParto reported that three students from Mt. St. Mary's are interested in doing very basic archival work. They would need to be supervised by a female Historical member. They will be coming for a tour of the Texier House Museum the following week.

### **Museum Filming Tour**

The committee felt that filming the Texier House and supplementing the filming with tours from the members might help us to be able to have more information that we can provide as it relates to inventory. It will also help us to better prepare for what might be required for the Emergency Preparedness Grant that Steve Pote attended and provided information on.

### **Texier House Project List**

The Texier House Project list for students and volunteers was revised prior to the meeting and ready for distribution to those volunteers and students interested. Maureen Greenbaum updated the website with the projects that we had listed. It did not include the extra descriptions, but just the projects themselves. It was decided by the committee that more detail can be provided to those students or volunteers who might be interested and that the projects can take a life of their own as they progress.

### **Schedule for Texier House Openings**

November 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>

December 3<sup>rd</sup>

### **PUBLIC PORTION**

(No comments)

### **Announcements**

10/28/2023: RVCC Symposium: Middlebrook Encampment. Bob Mayers will be at the event selling books and welcomes all to attend.

The November historical meeting would be a workshop.

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.**

Submitted by: Don Monetti (Acting-Secretary)

**NEXT MEETING: Wednesday November 15th @ 7 pm.**

Attachments:

1. No attachments.