



Bellingham Historical Commission
Meeting Minutes, Monday, January 29, 2024
Location: Historical Museum, 3 Common Street

Attendance

In Person Present Members: Rick Marcoux, Jeffrey Prescott, Bernadette Rivard, Marjorie Turner Hollman
Present on Zoom: Jennifer Russo
Members Absent: Franco Tocchi, Steve Joanis

The meeting was called to order by Chair Rick Marcoux at 5:01 pm.

Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes:

Marjorie Turner Hollman made a motion to approve the minutes of the November meeting. The motion was seconded by Jeffrey Prescott and was unanimously adopted.

Budget Update

Municipal Budget
Starting Balance \$7,000.00 Expenditures \$ 1307.06 Ending Balance \$5692.94

Expenditures by Month

July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
0.00	28.88	0.00	617.35	214.51	85.88	333.05					

Expenses since last meeting paid from municipal budget

Date	Vendor	Amount	Description
12/13/2023	Brodart	85.88	Archival Quality Pamphlet Files
12/15/2023	North Atlantic Fire Safety	333.05	Fire Extinguisher Inspection

Bills received but not paid

1/10/2024	Amazon Business	14.69	Plastic Sheet Protectors
1/15/2024	Amazon Business	16.98	Plastic Sheet Protectors

Gift Fund

Starting Balance \$2395.23 Deposits \$ 49.00 Expenditures \$ 0 Ending Balance \$2444.23

Correspondence: None

Old Business

Hours & Sr. Tax Work Off Staff Update - The person who was opening the museum on Saturdays as part of the town's Tax Work Off Program decided not to come back for the new year. Until we can find a replacement, our hours will change that we will only be open one Saturday a month (the 4th one) until further notice. Bernadette will staff the museum on 2/24, Jennifer on 3/30. We will need to find someone for April. We can discuss if we want to open May 25th as it is Memorial Day Weekend. Marjorie will continue to staff the museum on Tuesdays from 9:30-12:30 and Rick, Lauren and John will continue to work on projects as part of their Senior Tax Work Off hours.

Upcoming Programming - Bernadette, Jennifer and Marjorie, along with Catherine Perrault from the library and Gabrielle LaPlante are presenting a "Getting Started with Genealogy" program at the library on February 10th from 10 am to noon. We have begun accepting registrations and people are already signing up.

Security Fire Alarm Update – A scan of the building has been completed and the company is working on the plan for the new security/fire system to be presented to the fire department for approval.

Returning Items to Donors Update – **On a motion by Marjorie Turner Hollman, seconded by Jeffrey Prescott, and unanimously adopted, the following decisions were made on the items listed below:**

The totem pole, which has been determined not to have historically significant to the Cherokee. A decision was made to offer it to Bellingham Boy Scout Troop 14 for potential use at their camp.

We have not heard back from the family of Jud (George) Ratcliff after a letter was mailed about the corn sheller. We have found contact information for another relative that we will reach out to.

After no reply from Amy Cook or her family, a decision was made to dispose of the feather bed that is in the trunk, and keep the trunk to possibly store items in the basement.

FY25 Budget Update – Bernadette presented our budget to the Town Administrator and it will be reviewed by the Select Board in February

New Business

Discussion of "History" Black Oak on Hartford Avenue – The Tree Warden notified us about this tree that needed trimming and it was agreed to give him permission to trim it as necessary.

Family Cemetery Field Trip – More research needs to be done to determine if this is still a cemetery or if the bodies that were buried there have been moved to another location.

Request for funding of Poor Farm Presentation – **On a motion by Marjorie Turner Hollman, seconded by Jeffrey Prescott, and unanimously adopted, \$250 was approved to be spent on a Poor Farm Presentation by Meghan Boehmer, with a tentative date of mid-May.**

Lighting in Museum Basement – We received a quote of \$1913.00 from the town electrician to replace the ten 30+ year old fluorescent lights with new LED fixtures and lighting. **Bernadette made a motion to approve spending \$1913.00 to upgrade the museum basement lighting. The motion was seconded by Marjorie Turner Hollman and unanimously adopted.**

Yearbooks – Bernadette informed the group that the last year the museum has hard copies of the Bellingham High School Yearbook is 2012. The library has copies of all years, and all copies, except the most recent years, have been scanned by the Boston Public Library and are available on archive.org for anyone to view.

Library Museum Partnership – The library will be hosting a 6-week program on Bellingham history for homeschoolers. Two of the sessions will take place at the museum, where we will do the scavenger hunt activity!

Annual Report – Bernadette presented the 2023 Annual Report to the Town for approval. **Marjorie Turner Hollman made a motion to submit the annual report as presented. It was seconded by Jeffrey Prescott and unanimously approved.**

Property Information Requests – We often receive inquiries from people asking for more details about the property that they own: information about prior owners, use of the property, etc. Bernadette will work on a document that we

can put up on the commission website to direct people to the sources that are available for them to do that kind of research. If the address is one of our prominent homes/buildings, we might have information, but the vast majority of the information will come from the assessors office or registry of deeds.

Bernadette made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:02 pm. It was seconded by Marjorie Turner Hollman and unanimously adopted.

Next meeting date: To be determined

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bernadette Rivard".

Bernadette Rivard, Secretary