



Bellingham Historical Commission
Meeting Minutes, July 21, 2025
Location: Bellingham Public Library & Zoom

Attendance

In Person Present Members: Rick Marcoux, Jeffrey Prescott, Franco Tocchi, Steve Joanis, Bernadette Rivard, Lauren Hummell

Members Present on Zoom: Jennifer Russo

Members Absent: none

Guests: David Carr of Gravestone Guardians; Kristine Moore, Chair Plainville Historical Commission

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jeff Prescott at 5:00 pm

Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes:

Rick Marcoux made a motion to approve the April minutes. The motion was seconded by Franco Tocchi and unanimously approved.

Rick Marcoux made a motion to approve the June minutes. The motion was seconded by Franco Tocchi and unanimously approved.

Financial Report

Invoices paid since last meeting

Date	Vendor	Amount	Description
6/13/2025	Amazon Business	33.24	20 Pak of Flash Drives
6/1/2025	Bellingham Public Library	246.25	Printing of 250 Crimpville Comments
6/18/2025	Pair.com	123.26	Wordpress website
6/26/2025	Amazon Business	222.12	36 Binders
6/20/2025	GEM Plumbing & Heating	377.00	MiniSplit Annual Maintenance

Municipal Budget

Starting Balance	\$7000.00	Expenditures	5643.06	Ending Balance	\$1356.94
		Encumbered Balance	Signs Plus		-\$952.00
				Unspent Balance	404.94

Expenditures by Month

July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
1766.12	163.30	0.00	206.19	44.81	697.29	00.00	00.00	299.19	0.00	1373.95	1092.21

Gift Fund Balance \$2179.23

Correspondence: Request from MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau for Revolutionary War Stories

Rick Marcoux made motion to skip to the agenda item for the presentation by David Carr of Gravestone Guardians. The motion was seconded by Steve Joanis and unanimously approved.

David Carr of Gravestone Guardians made a presentation to the meeting about the work of his nonprofit organization. They have recently been approved by the Cemetery Committee to clean, reset, and repair gravestones at Bellingham cemeteries.

He spent a few minutes talking about the Gravestone Guardians and why they do what they do; specifically clean, reset and repair gravestones. They also maintain veteran's gravestones and hope to expand with more

community engagement in their work. They follow guidelines from the National Park Service and use noninvasive ethical techniques and have liability insurance.

The have started work at the Center Cemetery on Route 140 and shared pictures of the before and after of some of the cleaned stones. The difference was dramatic.

Old Business

Signs – We are awaiting the delivery and installation of the new museum signs by Signs Plus. The design has been approved, permits have been applied for, and dig safe has visited the site.

Pete's Bluebird Sign Auction – Information has been sent to Jesse Reidle, DPW Director to move forward on the auction of the sign.

Crimpville Comments - Discussed plan for fall 2025 issue and we will begin to work on content for Bellingham at the time of the American Revolution as a theme for the next issue. Spring of 2026 will be a celebration of the 250th anniversary of the country and 4th of July celebrations past.

New Business

Donation of Items from the Whiting Family – Jeff and Lauren met with Whiting family at their Scott Street home to accept donations from the family. The items accepted include: 25 Reel to Reel Tapes; 10 8mm films (one entitled “our wedding”); and egg candler; a quilt and pillows; 2 boxes of newspaper clippings; a baseball bat; and a chicken crate. The Commission needs to follow up with the family to get written documentation of the donations and the stories behind them.

Inventory of New Items – Discussion of formalizing the process for inventorying new items. Currently the application form is added to the back of the binder of the inventory documents. As Lauren finishes up organizing paper vs. digital inventory lists, we can make a formal process for how items get added to the official inventory of the museum.

Loan of School Pictures to the School Department – The Commission has agreed to loan school pictures to the School Department for display in the school administration building. The idea is to have a painting/photograph of each of the people that have a school in town named after them. We have the painting of Clara Macy. Jennifer Russo will touch base with Dave Cutler to arrange a time to get a picture of Joe DiPietro. Pictures of Keough and Primavera will come from yearbooks or other sources and be provided as digital files that they can print and frame. The painting of Clara Macy will have a prominent disclosure on the reverse of the painting that it is on loan to the School Department so that future generations will know it's ownership.

1198 South Main Street – Eldredge/Rockwood House – Jeff Prescott will contact Johnny Khoury to arrange a time for Jennifer Russo to go to the home to take photos to document the house as it was the first Bellingham Public Library. In this discussion it was noted that the draft information that was prepared by Steve Joanis on proposing a Demolition Delay Bylaw was sent to the Town Planner, Rob Lussier.

Plan to Value Items in our possession with no ties to Bellingham History – Discussion of ways to sell items to raise funds for the gift fund. It was decided to see how the auction of the Pete's Bluebird sign works out to see if that might be a viable option for more items.

Collaboration with nearby Historical Commissions and Societies – Franco Tocchi invited Kristine Moore, Chair of the Plainville Historical Commission to discuss the possibility of collaboration and/or in person meetings of members of local Historical Commission & Societies to share ideas, programs, etc. on a routine basis (quarterly or twice a year). They plan to bring a proposal to a future meeting for a fall meeting date.

Shared drive files – We have files both on the google drive and town server. Since the Town Server is the official email that archives the Commission's files, but is not accessible to all, relevant files on that server will be periodically downloaded to the google drive so they can be visible to all.

Digitization of legacy media – Kristine from Plainville informed us that their Commission has the equipment to digitize legacy media. We discussed getting interns or volunteers to review the content of our collection so decisions can be made about what to spend the time and/or money resources on digitizing.

Rick Marcoux made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 pm. It was seconded by Steve Joanis and unanimously adopted.

Next meeting date: August 18 2025

Respectfully submitted,

Bernadette Rivard