



Municipal Building – Town of Franklin
355 East Central Street
Franklin, MA 02038

Town of Franklin, Massachusetts Historical Commission

Meeting Minutes February 15, 2011

Attending:

Commissioners

Present:

Del Arnold
Dianne Brunner
Alan Earls
Debbie Pellegri (Chair)
Bob Percy (Secretary)
Alice Vendetti (Treasurer)

Absent:

none

Associates

Colette Ferguson
Connie Lawson
Eamon McCarthy Earls
Marlene Oliver
Mary O'Neill

Absent:

Mary Olsson

Key:

→ = an action item

A → = a resolved action item

Finances

No bills were received or paid this month.

Last Meeting's Minutes – Approved as amended.

Commission Membership

Discussed the vacancy on the Commission. Three names were placed in nomination:

- Eamon McCarthy Earls
- Mary Olsson
- Mary O'Neill

→ We will discuss further at our next meeting.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

⊗ **Communications – (Bob, Alan, and Mary O'Neill)**

Bob and Alan are assisting Del with the brochure draft.

Bob contacted Gale Lembo, who graciously provided him with electronic copies of the Wadsworth Diaries as they were previously posted (Vols 1 and 2), plus full plain text of all four volumes. She also provided glossy photographs of the Wadsworth family, and a copy of the account of the infamous murder/suicide that took place in South Franklin in 1859. Gail L. gave us permission to post all of the Wadsworth Diaries to our future museum website.

Museum website: Bob plans to meet with Steve Sherlock who kindly offered his expertise in helping us set up a web site for the Museum.

→ Next step for the website? Discuss the purpose of this website.

Alan reports that Rob Lawson at Dean is looking for projects for his students that will help encourage historical consciousness.

Del would like to contribute to the walking tour, and provided a "Centennial Bus Tour" brochure to offer ideas.

⊗ **Document Preservation and Policies – (Alan, Connie, Del, and Eamon)**

Alan reports that he is working on obtaining electronic (microfilm) versions of 80 years of Franklin High School yearbooks.

The scanner, printer and memory have been received and will be set up on the west side of the basement area behind the piano near the sink to provide access to a power outlet. An electrical outlet will be added on the post beside the work table. One of the PCs from the library will be relocated to that table and the equipment is expected to be made operational this week.

⊗ **Events - Debbie, Colette, Mary O'Neill, Eamon**

The informal concert of the glass armonica given by Vera Meyer was very well received, and attracted roughly 70 visitors to the Museum.

Town's Birthday Celebration. Our town turns 233 years old on March 2nd. To celebrate, we have invited all townsfolk who share this birthday to celebrate with us at the Museum on March 20th. Debbie has sent out invitations, and plans are well underway.

→Preparations: what remains to do?

From last time: Alan suggested a one year anniversary of the museum move “social” (for May) to which we could invite historical commissions and societies from neighboring towns. This will be added to events for the future.

→Do we have an events calendar? If so, shall we add this 1st anniversary event?

⊗ **Grants - Marlene, Alan**

Alan has started a grants calendar to help us plan our efforts for submitting grants when they are called for. These include:

--a local arts council grant

--newspaper preservation grant

--grant to digitize the Franklin Register, published between 1873 and 1878, and seems not to be available in electronic form anywhere.

Alan suggested we maintain two separate and distinct grant avenues:

--one for the Friends of the Franklin Hist. Museum (FFHM): to fund events

--one for the Historical Commission: to fund support for archives and upkeep

→Perhaps keep the grants calendar on the web (but for Commission use only)?

⊗ **Hosting - Debbie, Mona**

Those who are hosting may be able to help us determine which FHS yearbooks we are missing.

→Who will we contact about this list?

Alan contacted Deborah Kreiser-Francis to get her opinion about the suggestion to laminate some items. She felt this would damage them.

Museum school visit: Lisa Rein at Oak Street School has requested a visit of 3 classrooms of fifth graders on Wednesday May 25th with a rain date of May 26. The first class would come at 9 AM-another at 10 AM and the last at 11 AM. Del responded that we will have the museum open. Del will plan to host and a second member should be there also. It would be good to present a short program. Details to be worked out with Lisa.

⊗ **Intern Coordinators – Alan**

Alan had a good chat with Rob Lawson, who would like his students to become more involved (see Communications). Rob says he would be glad to come speak at the Museum on various subjects.

→Perhaps pencil in speakers into our Events calendar?

Alan has also been in touch with John Layton, FHS history teacher, whose students are working on a genealogy project. (They plan to make a presentation of their work at the FHS Library on Wed., 3/23.) Mr. Layton teaches AP History. His students have researched all Franklin veterans! We may be able to place this information on our website.

→Who would like to attend their presentation?

Mr. Layton says he has a complete set of Town Reports. Which years are we missing?

→Do we know yet?

We need written guidelines about how we manage interns.

→Who might be able to begin looking at this?

Eagle scouts – are in search of projects. Bob will send Alan a list of projects we had put together.

⊗ **Museum Displays - Del, Alice, Dianne, Colette**

How to rotate? One suggestion was to rotate our displays with our monthly programs. The Displays Subcommittee may meet separately to discuss the options.

→Any plans to rotate displays? Perhaps this can be tied into the Events calendar.

We need to obtain some Plexiglas (perhaps from Franklin Glass) to cover our display cabinet drawers.

→Can we determine how big and how many, then contact Franklin Glass for an estimate?

⊗ **Museum Operations - Del (inventory, requests), Alice (finances), Dianne**

Inventory work seems to lend itself well to intern projects.

We need an overall “Quick Reference of Policies,” perhaps a distillation of the helpful info Alan has already put together.

→Will the end result be a PDF file? If so, we might want to post this to our website (private area?).

Old Museum: Del has assembled and bound a great deal of information about the Old South Franklin Meeting House. We may wish to pursue Nat’l Register status for this building. Rob L. may be able to assist us.

→Do we want to pursue Nat’l Register status?

Old museum: We have a copy of the deed. We also have a 40 page copy of the 1853 minutes of the Church meetings held at the South Franklin School that tell of the planning and building of their church (the old museum). This copy was among Barbara Smith's items and given to her by Nina Santora. Gail Lembo had donated two copies of these minutes to the museum in 1973 but so far they have not been located since the shuffling of documents after the move. Additional documents related to the old museum use and histories have also been assembled for information to support efforts to justify the continued use of that building.

A recent visitor to the museum Paul Lacroix, leads the Millis Historical Society and is a Franklin resident. His strong interest in history preservation and active work could support our efforts of common activities.

⊗ **Publicity - Mary Olsson, Mary O’Neill**

A job well done for the glass armonica event. Mary Olsson gave info to cable Channels 8 and 11; Del provided info to the new Franklin newspaper.

Friends of the Franklin Historical Museum (FFHM)

Debbie reported that we have \$3229.38 in this account.

We discussed the need for a Friends website. This would include postings about any needs, such as folding tables.

→We may want the FFHM web presence to be on the Museum website. Comments?

Correspondence -- None

Housing Rehab Requests -- None

Demolition Requests -- None

Research Requests -- None

New Business

The theft of the bell. Debbie and Del provided information to the Franklin Police and to media (TV stations and newspapers). Nearby foundries have been alerted.

→Any news on the bell?

Mary Olsson reports that the Jefferson Elementary School's second grade class read in the Milford Daily News about the theft of the bell, and wrote a letter to those who took it, saying that they had "made a lot of people sad." The letter stated that the class is planning a visit to the Museum later this Spring, and they would like to see the bell back in place when they visit.

***** * * * * *