Town of Franklin Massachusetts

Historical Commission

Meeting Minutes, January 21, 2020

(delayed one week for scheduling purposes)

Commission Members present: Colette Ferguson, Phyllis Malcolm, Paul Pisani, Mary Olsson

Associate Members: Alan Earls

Visitors: Debbie Pellegri FFHM

Minutes of the December 10, 2019 meeting were approved.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

APPOINTMENTS: See discussion and vote

PRESENTATIONS: None

DEMOLITION REQUESTS: None

FRIENDS FHM:

* Debbie reported that the Friends have approximately $9,000. At the recent FFHM annual meeting the Commission’s wish list for funding was approved. The ornaments nearly sold out this year. Three were returned from the Senior Center and are now in the gift shop. The Friends plan to do a new design for this year. Considerations are the Water Trough at the center of town, or the Library. A design of the Museum was suggested, but Debbie didn’t think an ornament with the Museum on it would sell. When members objected, Debbie said maybe it could be considered in the future.

One item on the wish list was a new podium. Alan offered to do some repair work on the podium to make it more secure, thus saving the need to replace. Alan suggested we also need to look at the amplifier, and ensure it is working properly

DISCUSSION/VOTE:

* New Commission member: Two names were put forth for consideration; Mary O’Neill and Randy LaRosa. Both are long time volunteers and Mary was at one time an associate member. After discussion, Randy LaRosa was nominated and by unanimous vote, selected as the newest member of the commission, bringing the number of members to a full 7. Randy will need to meet with Town Administrator Jamie Hellen and be approved by the Town Council and their next meeting.
* The Policy and Procedure manual put forth by archivist Rebecca Finnegan was reviewed at length.
  + Change the logo on the front of the form to the new museum logo
  + The new mission statement was accepted
  + The new vision statement was accepted, with the added words in the last paragraph ‘…increased financial support and donations *through the FFHM*, which will…’
  + Alan suggested an interim form for donations where a donor would drop of an item or items, it is evaluated for acceptance into the collection, and we get back to the donor letting them know the decision.
  + On the deed of gift, it was suggested we need more space for description of materials. The copyright clause was questioned, the commission would like further understanding of that so that we are able to explain to donors.
  + Explanation of the sensitive materials clause is needed.
  + Explanation of Processing Plan form was requested. Is this filled out by archivist for each collection?
  + Finding aids – where are they? Are some already established? Will the finding aids be available to the public online?
  + Collection information – ‘open for research’ is that online or physically or both? Again, copyright was questioned.
  + Deaccession policy – we have many items in our possession that have not been accessioned – do they need a paper trail? Much like a collections committee it was suggested a deaccession committee be formed as well, to avoid one person making a decision about an item or items that may have value to the collection that is not readily obvious without explanation.

There was much discussion about the items that have already been discarded, such as old annual reports, HS yearbooks, items that commission members recognized as belonging to particular collections (i.e. Jeon collection, Jimmy’s liquor store collection) that had been separated and discarded into the dumpster. There were other items, that although may not necessarily fit into the collections policy, were non-the-less not trash and could have been repurposed rather than being sent to a landfill. It was requested that a letter be sent to Jamie asking that this procedure stop until we have further guidelines.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

* Treasurer’s Report: Phyllis reported that we had approximately $2600 in funds
* Archivist Report: most important thing is approval of the collections policy and procedures and the new disaster management section. Rebecca is going through one box/cabinet at a time processing what she finds. Left side of the basement almost done. She has started converting the old reference room into a storage area for non-archival materials. She has updated the map in the library with locations for every collection she has created so far.
* Demolition Delay: Both Mary and Brock have talked with Jamie. It was agreed that we need to tackle one thing at a time. Let’s get through approving Policy and Procedure first and move on from there. We’re still very interested in amending the DD Bylaws.

EVENTS:

* Second Sunday Speaker Series – Mary to print schedule for takeaways. Next speaker is Chris Woolf on February 9th discussing Russian Influence during the American Revolution.

OLD BUSINESS:

* Jim Johnston donation update: Mary, Brock and Jamie visited with Jim at his home. Jamie accepted a letter of intent from Jim. (to be included with minutes) We are moving forward with accepting the donation. A future date will be determined to meet at the museum to discuss what changes are needed to make space to accept the donation. The collection/donation will be housed in the room that is now the gift shop.
* Museum/Commission Stationary – Mary to get the file to Phyllis so she can have stationary printed at Tri County
* Basement cleanout update – a future date, hopefully a Saturday to discuss how to proceed.
* Visitor tracking form and donation form – It is important for all hosts to fill out these forms completely and accurately.
* Volunteer meeting: Mary received a list of names from the Town Hall, of people interested in volunteering at the museum. A date will be set for a volunteer meeting and each person contacted and invited.

NEW BUSINESS:

* New meeting night: The commission would like to change the meeting night from the second Tuesday to the second Wednesday in order to allow for Rebecca’s schedule to attend meetings. A motion was made to change the meeting night, seconded and approved. Mary will notify the Town Hall and the Town Clerk’s office. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday February 12, 2020.
* Fire Wagon in front of museum – The fire department would like to take the fire wagon, restore it and display it at the fire house. It was agreed that this would be the best thing to do, rather than keeping it out in the elements where it is rotting away.
* CPA on agenda at 2/5/20 Town Council meeting. All members are encouraged to attend the meeting to support the initiative.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

* Phyllis noted that we were able to donate 4 large bags of food to the Food Pantry from the collections made during the SSSS. It was decided to continue the effort. Mary will include the request starting with the March publicity and on the SSSS schedule.
* Phyllis stated that the Veterans office would like to borrow the American Legion information we have for a display at the Town Hall. It was agreed to allow them to use the materials now on display in the museum. We will have to catalogue the items before lending them out. It is the 100th anniversary of the Edward L. Grant American Legion Post in November of this year.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:07PM