

Historical Commission Meeting

Minutes for July 30, 2018, 4:30 PM

Approved at the 2/7/19 meeting

Shutesbury Town Hall – Community Lounge downstairs

Members Present: Karen Czerwonka, Miriam DeFant, Henry Geddes (4:50pm-quorum), Janice Stone. Mary Lou Conca (Associate) also present.

Members Absent: Kristin Van Patten, Christopher Donta.

Visitor: Leslie Bracebridge

1. General Discussion. Miriam DeFant was the Acting Chair of this meeting. Upon questioning about the role of "alternate" members, Leslie B. stated that the Town had voted on allowing alternate members to vote when needed, for all departments. It was stated however that the Selectboard said no alternatives for the new commissioners. Miriam stated that she had spoken with Kristin and Kristin may have difficulty coming to the Historical Commission meetings now because of her new baby. Miriam suggested she will ask Kristin which times and days are better for her, to see if that will help.

2. Discussion about potential CPC projects. Miriam provided members with a packet of information on the application procedure for Community Preservation Act grants. The one-page application is due November 15th, the six-page application due in January, if the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) agrees the proposed project is eligible. One of the primary ideas is the digitizing of historical records. Kristin will write up some ideas. Initial questions include which documents to do or do first, how can they be made accessible to the public (library, internet)? Another approach is to hire a "Roving Archivist". See information Miriam handed out about this, describing the program and different kinds of assistance available. The three main kinds of assistance are 1. Strategic assessment of the institution & documentation review; 2. Arrangement and description; and 3. Cataloging assistance. There needs to be coordination with the Town Clerk, Records Storage Committee, and Library. Another possibility is having a graduate student intern help us (for free), with Kristin supervising the intern. Kristin will look into this. Group discussed what is already known about the historical records in town. Leslie B mentioned the work done under an earlier grant by Bill Carrol, who surveyed all the municipal historical records and created a complete inventory list with recommendations of what to do. She will find his report to show the Historical Commission. There is also a Historical Properties survey that was done in 2001 by Peggy Hepler. There were 3 copies of this lengthy document for Town Hall, and one for the library. Commissioners should check online at Mass. Historical for a digital copy. Discussion then turned to the idea of working on CSLs (Ceremonial Stone Landscapes) under the CPC grant. If information was collected on locations of possible CSLs, would this information have to be made public? A Tribal Lands representative would have to be involved in the decision making, and from the beginning. Who would we work with? Doug Harris is a local Tribal Lands representative. There may be other people in Shutesbury or Leverett who could help. It was suggested the Commission compose and send a letter to each of the five Federal and State recognized tribes, explaining what we would like to do, and if they are interested in participating with us. Miriam proposed the Commission draft a letter of interest and we could approve the letter at the next meeting. Henry agreed to work on the draft. Janice made a motion to this effect, seconded by Karen and all voted in favor.

3. Discussion about Shutesbury Historical Commission vacancy. Two people have written emails expressing interest in joining the Historical Commission. Their emails were handed out by Miriam. They are Ezzell Floranina and Craig Pepin. Mary Lou also expressed her interest in becoming a member of the Historical Commission. Miriam stated it would nice to get the position filled as soon as possible. She will ask the two new people to come to the next meeting to discuss time available for meetings and backgrounds.

4. Unanticipated business at time of posting. Commissioners briefly discussed the new ADA trail in Northfield that was completed in cooperation with three area tribes, and includes signage about their history on the site. The Shutesbury Commission still needs to work on the MOU with tribes. Miriam said she would contact Lisa McLaughlin about it, or perhaps the Northfield Historical Commission. Minutes for 5/21/18 and 6/18/18 were reviewed for approval. Miriam made the motion to approve these two as written. Henry seconded, and all voted in favor. Miriam stated that she will get back in touch with Eva Gibavic about a walk through the state forest off Jennison Rd. She also volunteered to draft the annual report for the Commission. Keys. Leslie B told the Commission she will get some copies of keys made for the Old Town Hall. She asked the Commission if they would allow her to keep a set still, so she could continue to use the historical files for research purposes. Janice made the motion, seconded by Miriam, to agree that Leslie could keep a set of keys for continued access to the Old Town Hall for research. All voted in favor. Town Pound. Janice said she noticed a number of saplings growing up in the old Town Pound off Cooleyville Rd when she drove by recently. She asked the Commission if it was okay if she went in there with some loppers and pruning shears and cut down the young woody growth coming up within the historical structure. Commission agreed it was okay. Next meeting scheduled for July 23, 2018 at 4:30 PM.

5. Adjournment. Janice made the motion, seconded by Miriam, to adjourn the meeting. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 5:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted by

Janice Stone, Secretary
Shutesbury Historical Commission

List of Documents used at Meeting:

1. Agenda for this meeting.
2. MA State Historical Records Advisory Board info on Roving Archivist Program
3. Shutesbury Community Preservation Committee Application Packet
4. Draft minutes of 5/21/18 & 6/18/18 meeting minutes.
5. Emails from E. Floranina and C. Pepin.