

Shutesbury Historical Commission
Minutes – 8/10/22
(approved 3/1/23)
Virtual Meeting

Meeting start: 7:30 pm (started late due to lack of a quorum)

Commissioners Present: Henry Geddes (Chair), Miriam DeFant, Janice Stone, Greg Caulton, Karen Czerwonka (joined at 7:40 pm)

Others Present: Mary Lou Conca, Bert Fernandez, Leslie Bracebridge

Discussion with Prospective New Commissioners: SHC met with Bert Fernandez. Has been a resident since 1980; is a retired pediatrician; interested in participating; is away during winter months but can participate via Zoom. **Geddes moved to recommend Fernandez’s appointment to the Select Board; Caulton seconded. Roll Call: DeFant: aye; Geddes: aye; Caulton: aye; Stone: aye.** Geddes will communicate this recommendation to the Select Board. Select Board will want to meet applicant when they review the appointment. Geddes will attend.

Approve minutes for 6/22/22: Geddes moved to approve the 6/22/22 minutes as written. **Stone: seconded. Roll Call: Caulton: aye; DeFant: aye; Geddes: aye; Stone: aye.** Because SHC did not meet in July, there are no other minutes to approve.

Update on SHRAB project: Funds were received and used to purchase a budget of office supplies, including a filing cabinet. Caulton has keys to the closet. SHC has to agree on an organizational structure for the storage closet. Fernandez interested in volunteering. DeFant: Town Clerk wants to be informed when entering the building. Suggest work party in October to begin reorganization work.

Commissioner Re-Appointments: Geddes got a note from the Town Clerk that some Commissioners need to come to Town Hall and complete paperwork. Urges Commissioners to take care of this.

Guideboard Update: Stone has not been able to make progress; she and DeFant plan to work on the Scope of Work.

Historical Signage for Town Property: DeFant sent draft language to the SHC. Stone thinks it may be too long. Caulton: suggests Commissioners edit it and submit it some Indigenous elders to get feedback about the content. DeFant: attempted to get feedback from a couple of parties but never heard back. Sent it to Lisa Brooks, is an Indigenous writer who lives in Leverett and wrote a couple of historical books that address land deeds in this area; hoped to get feedback about the accuracy of the content. Caulton: since she wrote the book, she is likely to just approve it. He and Conca have been considering sending it to others. DeFant: asks to have edits sent to her so that she can incorporate them into the draft. Caulton suggested sending the draft to Rhonda Anderson, who is part of the Mass. Commission on Indian Affairs. SHC discussed generally how to structure a display; including possibly a multi-sided installation that would allow more text

and possibly some maps or images. DeFant: perhaps we could find an artist who would be willing to assist with the design. One option would be a 3-sided structure, with Indigenous history, colonial history, and perhaps a map. Geddes: would be good to have a balanced presentation. Caulton: need to vet content through a diverse group of people. Caulton could prepare digital content for sign with text that can be read from 3' away. Caulton: the text could use QR codes to link to more content on the HC website. DeFant likes that idea. Caulton: maybe such a structure should be at the new library where there will be more foot traffic; There is no deadline for this, so the SHC will continue to explore options.

Membership on the Commission: Caulton shared that he is considering stepping down as Commissioner and becoming an Associate Commissioner. He has not decided. Feels he is not a good fit for meeting protocols and policies. He was appointed a year ago but is unsure when his term expires. He will check with the Town Clerk. Bracebridge: Caulton's term expires in 2025. Caulton: would like to stay on to work on projects but doesn't want to deal with the bureaucracy.

Donation Offer from Mary Lou Conca: Conca offered to donate an antique school desk to the SHC for the West School House. Bracebridge: the West School House is quite full of antique materials from all of the former school houses in town; it is set up like a typical classroom; SHC has historically had annual work parties to maintain it; because of space limitations, she advises that the SHC only accept donations that are clearly associated with Shutesbury history; suggests the SHC visit the School House before accepting any more materials; she has not been there for a while but knows it needs cleaning. DeFant: we need to address the cleaning and upkeep issues; we should do an inspection. Bracebridge not interested in taking it on as a project due to time constraints, but it was left in good condition when last inspected; the worst issues are mice and mold; in past, the SHC has vacuumed it, scrubbed it out, cleaned the roof, etc. Geddes suggests Conca inquire of Sirius Community to see if they want the desk. Czerwonka is interested in helping with a work party. Caulton: we need to schedule an annual work party. Fernandez: if there is mice and mold, you may need to do a remediation. Plan is to set up a date in September for an inspection.

Donation of Post Card from Michael Pill: Pill has donated an antique piece of correspondence related to Shutesbury. He has generously donated a good deal of material in the past. Bracebridge offered to draft a thank you letter. Will leave the letter in Town Hall for Geddes to sign.

Motion to adjourn: Geddes; Czerwonka seconded. Roll Call: Caulton aye; DeFant: aye; Geddes: aye; Czerwonka: aye; Stone: aye.

Next meeting: Wed; September 14 at 7 pm.
Meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.

Documents Used:

Agenda
Draft minutes for 6/22/22 meeting
Draft language for sign on Town Common

Respectfully submitted by Miriam DeFant, Secretary, 11/30/22