



Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting
May 16, 2020

Attendees: President Robert Hanlon; Executive Director Sarah Sands; Trustees Leslie Cohen, Sara Olmstead, Ann ffolliott, Leslie Koch, Michael Simon, Jessica Frankel, Ellen Zimmerman, Sandra Saiegh, Ted Harris, Suzanne Gluck, Jeri Newman, Allison Forstmann, Steve Rotella, Lydia Irving, Jeffrey Davis, Nina Caufield, Karin Constant

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:03 am.

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the March 21, 2020 minutes by Steve Rotella and seconded by Ann ffolliott was unanimously approved.

3. President's Report

President, Robert Hanlon reported the following:

- Office and Park closure: We continue to maintain closure of the OHS office and Poquatuck Park in order to protect the health and safety of our staff and the community.
- Support of staff: We remain committed to supporting our hardworking staff and continue their full salaries. They continue to work remotely and despite the Pandemic situation much is getting accomplished.
- Calendar: Based on the current and anticipated governmental restrictions, the unavailability of, and restrictions on our event partners and concern about public willingness to congregate, the Executive Committee decided to formally cancel the planned versions of North Fork Fresh, Heritage Day and the Summer Benefit. Alternative plans to experience these events virtually are in the works. If circumstances change enough that we can protect the health and safety of staff and community, we may try to complement the online experience with some modest in-person aspect of these events.
- Finances: We have filed for the PPP program from the Federal government and have received approximately \$43,000.00 which is equal to our payroll expenses from March through June. Executive Director, Sarah Sands has been working with the Finance Committee to review possible budget reductions and will propose a revised budget in the near future. While recognizing and understanding that our supporters have many other demands on their minds and pocketbooks we will be making a gentle outreach for renewals and donations. The event alternatives are likely to bring in some profits which

should bring us close to our revised budget. Our endowment provides a backup that can consider utilizing in these crisis times.

- Committees: The Development Committee and the Community Engagement Committee have been formed and have had one or more meetings. Board Members have been recruited to serve on both of these committees.
- Our Virtual World: OHS staff has done an outstanding job of presenting an online lecture series that is outstanding and successful. It provides needed engagement for the community, is a recruiting and donation tool and expands our ability to fulfill the OHS mission of sharing our knowledge and history with the Oysterponds community and beyond. Articles about the virtual lecture series have appeared in the Suffolk Times as well as other publications on the South Fork. Special thanks to Sarah Sands and all who have hosted so many of these wonderful lectures.

A motion to accept the President's Report by Michael Simon and seconded by Ellen Zimmerman was unanimously approved.

4. Financial Report

Treasurer, Michael Simon reported the following:

- Attached to the agenda was the OHS 2020 Budget vs. Actual Jan-April 30, 2020, the OHS Balance Sheet as of April 30, 2020 and the notes from the OHS Finance Committee meeting on May 13, 2020.
- There was a discussion on whether the Webb House funds, currently in Vanguard Mutual Funds needs to be re-evaluated. The Finance Committee will review the Vanguard funds on a monthly basis. A motion to approve the withdrawal of up to \$15,000.00 for repairs to Webb House from the Vanguard account by Steve Rotella and seconded by Michael Simon was unanimously approved.
- The year-to-date financial reports indicated a current surplus of \$62,556.92. Two budget revision scenarios were discussed. Scenario A which includes no special event income and severe expense reductions including staffing results in a deficit of \$22,794.00. Scenario B which includes no special event income but maintains staffing, Buildings and Grounds and program expenses as budgeted in January results in a deficit of \$124,396.00. It is anticipated that fundraising solicitations and alternative plans for special events along with more moderate expense reduction will result in a break-even situation at year's end.
- The Committee discussed a limit on withdrawals from the Wells Fargo Stein fund when the funds go below \$2 million. The spending policy that was created at the time the Stein funds were acquired will be reviewed.
- The Committee agreed that the savings of \$7,000.00, the clean audit in 2018 and the approval of the Gardiner Foundation was justification to move forward with a Review instead of a full audit. A motion to authorize the review instead of a full audit by Ann ffolliott and seconded by Steve Rotella was unanimously approved.

5. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director, Sarah Sands reported the following Administrative

- Staff (except for Curator Bill McNaught) are working from home. IT Service enabled remote access to OHS server and network files.
- As of this board meeting, sixteen (16) "Alone Together Virtual Lectures" have had over 1,000 views by 389 unique viewers. Over half have watched more than 6 programs and a dozen people have watched all. Another 8 webinars are currently planned. We have received \$3,400.00 of unsolicited donations from webinar viewers. A Reactions/Comments page to the OHS virtual lecture series was attached to the agenda.
- Federal Payroll Protection Program was approved and a direct deposit of \$43,800.00 was received.
- The Historic Ice Boat, "The Red Bird" has been assembled in the Schoolhouse. All exhibitions and programs are currently on hold. We are considering installing all 2020 exhibits and creating an ongoing virtual tour on our website.
- Electrical replacement is underway at Webb House.
- OHS has been approved for the LIU collections digitization program.
- The new Community Engagement Committee is making plans for activities for summer 2020.

Resource Development

- The Development Committee has convened.
- North Fork Fresh and the Halyard event have been canceled.
- To date, the Griffin Giving Circle gifts total \$45,500.00.
- The database clean-up is in progress in preparation for Membership appeal.
- Mail appeals to North Fork Fresh and Summer Benefit attendees is in progress.
- GiveSmart, on-line auction platform, has been evaluated, decision to proceed.

Marketing

- Articles on "Alone Together Virtual Lecture Series" has appeared in Dan's Papers, Hamptons.com and Times Review newspapers.

What's Ahead

- July 5th – Virtual Heritage Day
- Mid-July – Social Distance Garden Tour
- September 4th – Revised Summer Benefit (Postcard Art Auction)

6. Calendar for 2020

North Fork Fresh

- The traditional version of North Fork Fresh has been cancelled for this year.
- Jessica Frankel has volunteered to be the chairperson for this event next year.
- The North Fork Fresh Committee is exploring an alternative raffle or auction of the contributions it has already received.

Summer Benefit

- The traditional version of the Summer Benefit and Art Auction has been cancelled for this year.
- Allison Forstmann and Elanna Allen are the Art Auction co-chairs.
- Together with the Community Engagement Committee they have developed an alternative to the Summer Benefit called “Wish You Were Here” – a Postcard Art Auction. This plan will be a creative exercise and auction that will enlist broad community support and should provide some financial benefit.

Heritage Day

- Heritage Day planning is proceeding, but is based on a virtual celebration which will take place on July 5th.
- Co-chairs, Sarah Olmstead and Catherine Chaudhuri have plans for a deep roster of readers and performers who will carry on this important tradition.

7. Community Engagement Committee

Chair, Leslie Cohen reported the following:

- Minutes from the committee’s meeting on May 12, 2020 were attached to the agenda
- Sarah Sands reviewed the Community Engagement section of the Strategic Priorities. The Committee agreed that connecting with the community through programs and activities other than fundraising was essential.
- Sarah Sands presented the plans and confirmed activities that are on hold as a result of the Covid-19 crisis.
- Allison Forstmann discussed the reasons for canceling the traditional Summer Benefit and described the revised Postcard Art Auction. It will be an on-line auction ending on Labor Day weekend. An on-line auction platform called Give Smart will be utilized for the auction. In addition, a weekly one item auction will include experience items as well as baskets that traditionally would have been a part of North Fork Fresh. Suzanne Gluck and Jessica Frankel will lead this effort. This event will create a community connection that will reach a broad audience.
- Ideas for continuing 2020 Programs were discussed:
 - The Committee agreed that the webinar series is a huge success and should be continued during isolation with 2 lectures each week and possibly one lecture per month year round, especially during the winter. Jessica Frankel and Suzanne Gluck along with Scott Robbins agreed to assume responsibility for recruiting and scheduling speakers.
 - Sarah Olmstead and Catherine Chaudhuri will chair a new virtual format for Heritage Day. It will include a series of pre-recorded activities similar to past years including singing God Bless America, reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, reading the Declaration of Independence, a slide show of past Heritage Days, and singing This Land is Your Land. Other ideas include ringing the Schoolhouse bell as well as the bells in both churches. Children may also be asked to submit photos of their decorated bikes for judging.
- Leslie described a request for the youth of the community to record the experiences of community members and/or their time during the Pandemic for inclusion in our archival record. Gathering social isolation recipes into a cookbook was also suggested.

- A new event is planned for 2020 that will be possible to conduct within social distancing guidelines. A self-guided Garden Tour of 5 or 6 or more gardens will be enhanced with a frame-able map of each garden painted by a local artist. This event would take place in early July.
- A Drive-In Movie Night was also suggested. The ferry terminal parking lot was mentioned for this event. Lydia Irving will look into this.

8. Development Committee

Chair, Steve Rotella reported the following:

- Minutes from the committee's meetings on April 30 & May 11, 2020 were attached to the agenda.
- The lack of diversity in funding sources was discussed. The need to move away from an events based fundraising program was unanimously acknowledged.
- Steve reviewed the fundraising section of the Strategic Priorities.
- Alternative sources of funding were discussed due to the cancellation of all summer programs and events. It was agreed that a two-fold approach was best.
- A Griffin Giving Circle solicitation will be signed by committee members and mailed to a select list of 75 donors. The list will be comprised of high level special event ticket purchaser and high level donors. A preliminary list of 121 prospects was presented.
 - The approach will be revised to offer a Founding Membership in the Griffin Giving Circle and recognition via a personalized brick on a walkway on the OHS campus. In addition, a grand opening of the walkway will be accompanied by a special catered dinner for Founding Members only and a special gift will be presented to each Founding Member, perhaps something made from the historic Buttonwood tree.
- Another solicitation will be sent to the balance of North Fork Fresh and Summer Benefit ticket purchasers (approx. 110) requesting that they make a donation in the same amount that they spent on tickets in 2019. Steve Rotella and Bob Hanlon wrote this letter that was mailed on May 12th.
- At the May 11 meeting the Griffin Prospects list was evaluated name by name. A final list of 77 prospects was developed for the final Griffin Giving solicitation. The solicitation letter will be prepared by Steve Rotella and Bob Hanlon and delivered to committee members for their signature and the addition of a short note on the letter. Follow-up phone calls or meetings may take place as needed.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 am. The next board meeting is scheduled for Saturday, July 18th at 9:00 am.