



Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting
July 18, 2020

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

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am.

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the May 16, 2020 minutes was unanimously approved.

3. President's Report

President, Robert Hanlon reported the following:

- **Partial Reopening:** Executive Director, Sarah Sands and OHS staff have put together a comprehensive health and safety plan to allow the opening of the Schoolhouse on a limited basis for the *Iceboating in Oysterponds* exhibition. The exhibition premiered on Friday, July 17th. Thanks to Bill McNaught for all his hard work.
We continue to maintain the rules about social distancing in Poquatuck Park to protect the health and safety of the community.
- **Support of Staff:** We remain committed to supporting our hardworking staff and continue their full salaries. We also continue to encourage staff to work remotely as much as possible.
Suggestions for a cleaning service are in the works.
Scott Robbins is available to open and close the Ice Boat Exhibit on Fridays and Saturdays.
- **Calendar:** Thanks to Sara Olmstead and Scott Robbins for all their hard work in putting together our virtual Heritage Day. The recording of this event is now available on the website.
To fill the gap left by the cancelation of the benefit and art auction the Benefit Committee has launched the Secret Postcard Project. This event engages a broad cross section of the community, both in the creation of the artwork and the affordability for purchase and is likely to bring in some profit. Thank you to EJ, Leslie Cohen and others who are making this possible.

We also have some individual, on-line, pop-up auctions planned of several donation items from North Fork Fresh and the Summer Benefit. Included in those items will be the ever popular Taz Smith birdhouses.

- **Finances:** The PPP program grant of approximately \$43,000.00 significantly helped our budget. The PPP money goes through the end of July. Sarah Sands and the Finance Committee continue to trim and balance the budget.
We have made soft requests for membership renewals and donations. We have gotten a significant response, especially from the new Griffin Giving Circle Members.
- **Committees:** We are in need of a Nominating Committee made up of at least 3 people. Ally Forstmann has resigned and her trustee position needs to be filled to complete her term which ends in 2022. In addition, three trustee positions need to be replaced. There have also been some proposals from members of the community on possible governance structure changes to OHS and this committee would address this area as well.
- **Our Virtual World:** The virtual lecture series was a smashing success and we look forward to doing more of this in the future. Thanks to John Holzapfel and all of the others who made this possible. The lectures are available for streaming on the website.

4. Financial Report

Treasurer, Michael Simon reported the following:

- Attached to the agenda was the OHS 2020 Budget vs. Actual Jan-June 30, 2020, the OHS Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2020, the OHS Profit and Loss Jan-June 2020 and the minutes from the OHS Finance Committee meeting.
- We currently have a surplus of approximately \$50,000.00.
- We have reduced expenses wherever possible and are operating on the assumption of no North Fork Fresh and no traditional Summer Benefit.
- The Griffin Giving Circle has been financially successful thus far.
- The Postcard program is hoping to bring in perhaps \$20,000.00.
- We anticipate having the PPP money classified as a grant and not a loan. There is a possibility that a minor part might have to be repaid.
- **Investment Accounts:**
Wells Fargo - \$2.3 million plus 13% since change of managers at the end of February
Vanguard - \$425,000.00 plus 12% year to date
- Previously authorized withdrawal for Webb House electrical work: \$15,000.00 approved; \$9,329.00 used.
- A review of the Investment Policy Statement will be performed as part of a normal routine in anticipation of a major re-write.

5. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director, Sarah Sands reported the following:

Administrative

- Federal Payroll Protection Program period completed. Bookkeeper is working on loan forgiveness documents.
- Electrical replacement is completed at Webb House.

Program

- Twenty-three (23) Alone Together Virtual Lectures – over 2,000 views by 482 unique viewers. Most lectures are available for viewing on the website.
- The Ice Boat Exhibition has been installed. A Suffolk County grant will fully cover the expenses. Docent training including Covid protocols was completed on July 15th. Possible old-timer roundtable will take place on the Schoolhouse porch in August.
- Virtual Heritage Day was attended by 67 families. There were some technical issues. Remix available on the website with tech issues excluded.
- East Marion Group led by Ellen Mitchell of the Community Engagement Committee is planning to collect oral histories and stories.

Resource development

- Griffin Giving Circle letters were distributed to 73 community members
- Membership appeal is planned for October. Discussion regarding joint appeal with OCA, OA, and EMCA is underway.
- SB sponsor - \$2,500.00 and \$250.00 agreed to change sponsorship to Postcard project.
- GiveSmart on-line auction platform purchased. Scott Robbins and EJ Camp are working to develop the host page and the postcard entries.

Marketing

- Alone Together Virtual Lecture Series was mentioned on Hamptons radio station.
- Several Suffolk Times articles and columns regarding slave cemetery.
- Slave Cemetery article in East End Beacon.
- Ice Boat exhibition press release

What's Ahead

- July 25th – 10am to 12pm Campus Clean-up Work Day. Looking for volunteers.
- Labor Day weekend – Postcard On-line Art auction. Possible public viewing and reception in Poquatuck Park.

6. Community Engagement Committee

Chair, Leslie Cohen reported the following:

- Postcard Project: The Postcard Project has been met with much enthusiasm. The cut-off date for submitting postcards is August 15th. A possible preview of the postcards is scheduled for September 5th in Poquatuck Park.
- Ellen Zimmerman, Sandra Saiegh and James Harris are working on an East Marion oral community engagement project. Partnering with EMCA they are collecting stories and images that reflect the history of East Marion. Using the Story Core Program all results will be stored in the Library of Congress.

7. Development Committee

Chair, Steve Rotella reported the following:

- Minutes from the committee's July meeting was attached to the agenda.
- The Development Committee has met four times: an organizational meeting; a member and prospect list reviews and assignments meeting; and two update and review meetings.

- Due to the cancellation of our events, the Griffin Giving program had to be reset. Instead of offering tickets to events and sponsorship recognition we rolled the program out as an appeal to become a **Founding Member** with an inscribed brick/special walkway recognition and a Founding Member dinner when we are able to hold such an event.
- To date, the Griffin Giving Circle results have been outstanding with 29 donations amounting to \$89,934.00.
- We have also received \$1,820.00 from 19 individuals who attended our webinars.
- A fall membership drive is up next. We should begin to think of ways to provide value to members vs. non-members who visit or “buy” from us.
- Next year we will be focused on Griffin renewals as well as its expansion to a larger group, hopefully with events back on the calendar to add more value and better differentiation by level. We will also plan other general donation appeals to other groups.

7. Slaves Burying Ground

The Board of Trustees has organized a Slaves Burying Ground Working Group that will focus on seeking evidence, enlisting expertise and being diligent and honest in sharing what is learned.

The Slaves Burying Ground Working Group chair, Ann ffolliott reported the following:

- The individuals who have agreed to join the group are Priscilla Bull, Thomas Dyja, Sebastian Heath, Jim Latham, Jeanne Markel, Jerie Newman, Lyle Tuthill, Ruth Tuthill, Ted Webb, Ellen Zimmerman and Sarah Sands (ex officio).
- The Working Group met by Zoom on July 10th. The group agreed to proceed with two initial investigations: hiring archaeologists working with ground penetration radar to learn what we can about the existing conditions in the Slaves Burying Ground; and oral histories of anyone in Orient – or who once lived here – who has anything to say on the subject.
- Ann is currently working to identify appropriate Ground Penetrating Radar practitioners who have done similar work on the East End of Long Island and elsewhere.
- Ann has asked the Working Group for names and contact information of people we should interview for oral histories. The group is also looking for individuals to conduct the interviews.
- The group will move forward with a temporary sign for the burial ground as soon as possible.

8. Collections Committee

Chair, Ann ffolliott reported the following:

- With the closing of the OHS campus due to Covid-19, the work of the Collections Committee, including reviewing donated objects and furthering work on the Collections Care project, came to a stop. Committee meetings will resume when it is safe to meet.
- When the pandemic is over we still hope to be able to move forward on our plans to deaccession several carriages so that we can take better care of the remaining carriage collection, and that the Gardiner Foundation-funded project at the Palmer School of Library & Information Science at Long Island University will continue so we will be able to begin the project of digitizing our archives. We have been accepted into the program, and if and when it starts up again, we will be able to take advantage of their expertise and

state of the art equipment to digitize some of our most treasured documents. Information about the program is available on the LIU website under the Gardiner Foundation Grant.

- We can't move forward on consideration of permanent solutions to our collections storage issues until the campus is fully open. Any permanent solution will involve a Capital campaign, which we cannot launch until our fundraising efforts are not totally focused on keeping OHS solvent, the lights on, the buildings intact, and our staff employed.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 am.