

1772 Meetinghouse Restoration Committee
Meeting Minutes for January 30, 2023
Approved February 15, 2023

Members present: Bob Bickford, Robin Bickford, Marc Decoff, Ellen Phillips, Clayton Randall, Sue Randall

Guests present: Cathy Allyn, Cathy Orlowicz

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ellen Phillips at 5:58 pm.

Approval of Minutes

One spelling error was corrected.

Motion to approve minutes as corrected. (B. Bickford/R. Bickford) Approved unanimously.

Financial Report

As of 1/26/23 the checking account balance is \$24,318.23. The total debited from checking since 12/6/22 is \$1,530.38. Recent expenses were \$1082.06 for tarps for roof, \$328.83 for printing newsletters, and \$270.59 for newsletter postage.

Total in CRF is \$72,966.71.

Motion to accept Financial Report as presented (B. Bickford/R. Bickford) Approved unanimously.

*It was noted that Bob Bickford has not received his reimbursement check for the newsletter printing.

New Business

LCHIP

On Thursday, January 12, 2023, Marc Decoff (Board of Selectmen Chair and Meetinghouse Liason) and Nichole Zoltko (Town Administrator) met with George Born and Paula Bellemore from LCHIP at the Meetinghouse and toured the site..

The purpose of the meeting was to provide insight from the LCHIP organization on what could be done differently for future grant applications.

Recommendations

- verify that statements included in the application are accurate and true
- include the whole history of the Meetinghouse, not just the 1772 history
 - describe the building's significance throughout history

- include the scope of the work that the grant will be funding
- explain carefully why this specific restoration process is necessary and not another process instead
- explain imminent threat to the building
 - this needs to be explained more fully
 - the tarps give the impression that there is no imminent danger
 - take pictures to document areas of damage
 - explain effect of damage on other areas of the building's
 - ie: roof failure endangers plaster walls on interior
- funding plan
 - there needs to be a well thought out funding plan
 - ie: 15 major annual donors, moose plate grant
 - they want to see a resilient budget and a funding plan for now and in the future
 - work with Katie from LCHIP for funding options
 - CLG is not recommended for the Meetinghouse. There are not many grants available for brick and mortar that would be helpful.
 - In 2024 apply for 1772 Grant through the NH Preservation Alliance (similar to Moose Plate Grant)
- capacity for stewardship
 - what is the capacity for the Meetinghouse; this needs to be clearly defined
 - LCHIP considers the stewardship agreement as covering the entire 6 acre parcel of land, not just the building
 - paint on the trees was concerning to them
 - when considering stewardship, think about guidelines to preserve the facility and the parcel
 - consider “Is this process reversible?”
 - ie: don’t use tape or tacks on the walls
 - the Story Walk is encouraged as long as it doesn’t cause damage to the environment
- future use
 - ask “Why are you fixing this?”
 - be careful about renting the facility
 - think about guidelines for future use
 - consider how to educate the people using the facility
 - revisit the Preservation Planning Process: What is the building good for?
- Build community support

- there does not seem to be a unified vision within the community
- future uses needs to be more than showers or weddings, etc.
 - reach out to NH Listens (nh.listens@unh.edu or phone 603-862-0692) for help facilitating hot topics and difficult discussions
 - consider utilizing Town Facilitation or Town Mailer
- the Meetinghouse needs a new Historic Structure Report
 - contact Beverly Thomas from NH Preservation Alliance for list of people for this job
 - should be a neutral third party
 - consider these points:
 - opportunities for future use of the facility and parcel
 - realistic and feasible fundraising plan
 - CIP needs assessment – heating, insulation, year round use?
- have George Born at LCHIP review application prior to submission
 - be sure application is accurate and detailed
- top items for next grant application to LCHIP
 - demonstrate wide community support
 - describe scope of work
 - why this work
 - describe in detail why this plan and not a different plan
 - include an update Historic Structures Report
 - make use of NH Listens Facilitation
 - raise money from other sources
 - make your fund raising plan realistic and feasible

After reviewing the input from LCHIP the Meetinghouse Committee discussed the following points.

- LCHIP sees our relationship with the Town as poor
 - there has been lots of dissension from various people and the Board over time
 - How do we unite people to support the Meetinghouse restoration?
- the Meetinghouse belongs to the Townspeople
 - Marc – we need a Town discussion – What do people want to happen?
- Cathy O. - What does the Board of Selectmen want for the future of the building?

- Committee - We need a letter of commitment from the Board to provide continuity across time and Boards.
- we need a new Historic Structure Report
 - Steve Bedard did the first one – is it possible to update it?
 - The cost of a new report is in the range of \$10,000
- The Meetinghouse needs to be added to the Town's Master Plan
 - it should be mentioned specifically as a Town building and include it's designation as a historic landmark
- Sue distributed an article from Purdue Extension about safely removing paint from trees
 - Sue offered to pursue this avenue further once warm weather arrives

Meetinghouse Store

Ellen suggested a store that would be open at Meetinghouse events and at specific times during the month. Items to be sold would initially be notecards, colonial cookbooks, and ornaments related to the Meetinghouse. Ellen offered to open the store every other week to see how it is received.

Old Business

2023 events

- Spring Fling
 - Bob will contact Tim Molinaro to get feedback on May 21, 2023 as date for the event
 - Sue will contact Peter Cook of Berwick, ME for possible participation with historic items and ideas for fiber arts activities
 - can we coordinate with the Rec Dept. 5K race?
- Commemorative Stones
 - we have 2 stones sold, tentatively
 - Bob needs a minimum of 9 before setting the stones

501 C3

The group discussed the next step needed to form a non-profit committee to execute fundraisers for the Meetinghouse restoration project.

Motion: To create the Friends of the New Durham 1772 Meetinghouse. (B. Bickford/C. Randall) Approved unanimously.

Ellen offered to donate the \$30 needed to submit the application for 501 C3 status for The Friends.

Cathy O. pointed out that they would not an official 501 C3 until they are recognized by the IRS.

Clothes Shed

- letter of thanks from St. Paulie was received
 - last year our town's donations helped 8,000 people worldwide

Other Business

Next meeting: Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 6:00 pm. The Friends of the New Durham 1772 Meetinghouse will meet immediately after.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:15 pm. (C. Randall/B. Bickford) Approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Randall, Secretary

Rolling list of action

Bob – contact Tim Molinaro to confirm May 21, 2023 date for Spring Fling

Sue – contact Peter Cook about participation in Spring Fling, pursue paint removal from trees

Ellen – review rental agreement document for building and add how to take care of the building (ie: not tape, tacks on walls, etc.)