

Westfield Historical Commission
Meeting Minutes –January 25, 2021



Attendees: Cindy Gaylord (Chairperson), Carly Bannish, Cindy Bronson, Crystal Hollister, Mike Ingraham, Ellen McEwan, Debbie Oppermann.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Secretary's report: Ellen McEwan made a motion to accept the minutes of the November meeting (December's meeting was cancelled). Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's report: Carly Bannish reported that there have been no changes in the Historical Gift Fund (\$7716.55). Since the last report the cost of the D2 for stone cleaning was paid out as well as a payment to Dinn Brothers for the Preservation Award plaques. A second installment on the Old Burying Ground has not yet been paid out of the account. The General Fund is currently at \$3870.09.

Unfinished Business:

1. Plaque for Old Burying Ground (OBG): Design Workshop has been contacted about making the plaque. Commissioners should consider which stones and families should be highlighted and submit ideas to Cindy G.
2. Wrought Iron Repair for OBG: The enclosure is completed and will be painted when warmer. Myrtle will be planted to prevent weeds. The scope of the work did not include the front gate, which will still need repair of broken pieces, scraping and repainting. Cindy will reach out to the Technical Academy to see if anyone there can help with the welding. Crystal will reach out to Home Depot to see if they could give a donation.
3. Immigrant report reminder: Carly Bannish requested a few updates on sources used to create the write-ups for the Pocket Sites Tour.

New Business

1. Virtual Historic Tours: Fred Gore has been a tremendous help, using his 360 degree camera to film. The Dewey House and Immigrant Tour are scheduled to be made next. Cindy G suggested that we could fund these projects if they were moved to the 350th Historic Subcommittee. Commissioners agreed unanimously. Crystal suggested using QR codes as another way to promote access to the tours. These codes would be easy to scan with a smartphone, link directly to the Virtual Tours and could be posted at various locations like the Athenaeum, Children's Museum, Boys and Girls Club, Westfield on Weekends office, etc.
2. Donations: General Shepard's sword was returned. The news was even picked up by several national news outlets and NPR Canada. The molds "rescued" from the HB Smith teardown are currently "on loan" to the Westfield Whip Co. An object presumed to be a medical/first aid kit was donated. It's contents included thread marked Warren Threadworks, a bullet, wooden stick, and cotton. This item is now housed at the Atheneum. Ed Phillips's family donated old school report cards to the Atheneum.

3. Old Burying Ground Inventory: Bruce Cordis is compiling all the lists he can find to make one compilation of who is buried at the OBG. Not everyone buried there has a headstone (particularly stillborn babies) however whenever possible, they will be accounted for in the inventory.
4. Term Limits: Cindy B, Ellen & Mike terms are up on Feb 1st. To be reappointed, they will need to send a bulleted "resume" to the Mayor to give him a sense of who we are. Send the blurbs to Holly Lurgio.
5. Moving the SchoolHouse: Debbie suggested the Commission meet with Dennis Picard to identify next steps moving forward with this idea.
6. Boys and Girls Club expansion. Since this is paid for with a grant, a member of the commission needed to participate in the vote. Cindy G voted in favor of this expansion.
7. Canal Update: Debbie O. reported that Shannon Walsh did submit for approval from the National Registry of Historic Places.

Next meeting: February 22, 2021

Adjourn: Ellen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Carly seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, Crystal Hollister, WHC Commissioner