

Sharon Historical Society Interim Board Meeting, September 2, 2021 [Draft]

The Board met remotely by Zoom on Sept. 2, 2021.

Present: Brad Larson (president), Don Williams (vice president), Elisabeth McGregor (secretary), Carolyn Weeks (treasurer), Doug Southard (archivist), Maria Anderson, Debbie DeBassio, Jimmie Keating, Paul Lauenstein, Shirley Schofield

Brad called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM and reviewed the proposed agenda: officer reports, preparation for annual meeting and elections, discussions on finances and communications, building and grounds (elevator etc.); need to schedule additional September meeting.

Historical Reflection: Shirley told the story of George C. Morrell and his wife Kate, summer residents of Sharon (wintering in Boston) and philanthropists in the early 20th century. They had an estate on Massapoag Ave, which is pictured in 'Sharon the Beautiful,' first published in 1912. It later became the Sharon Spring Hotel, then Carvin's Inn, next Corman's and finally Green Manor, which burned down.

They donated land for the Sharon High School on South Pleasant Street in 1909, and established Kate Morrell Park on land behind it, to be set aside as a place for meditation and quiet reflection, with benches and no sports areas, although over time children played there. In the 1990's a granddaughter of the Morrells called to visit the land and wanted to see it cleaned up and restored. Some work was done and the improvements lasted a few years, and the site is still there, between Pine Road and Forest Road. Shirley expressed gratitude to the Morrells for their love of the town.

President's Report: Brad expressed gratitude to Don for keeping an eye on multiple aspects of the building and grounds. He's been pleased with the good work we've been doing as a board, and would like to take some time at our next meeting to set up some general procedures and guidelines for board meetings as we move into elections and possible changes in the Board composition. He also spoke of the need to improve our financial situation, and particularly the need to make it easier for people to join and donate via a simple link or check box.

Treasurer's Report: Carolyn reviewed her previously submitted monthly report, showing receipts of \$424.03, disbursements of \$2236.38, a checking account balance of \$2215.22, and total funds balance of \$27,015.53. Debbie raised questions about the possibility of a free energy audit and a grant from Eversource for non-profits.

It was noted that members of the Garden Club had spent time pruning and weeding the shrubbery and other plantings around the museum, assisted by Don and Joanne Williams and Beth McGregor. Shirley reported that she had sent thank you notes to Sue Molinda, Con Healey and Susan Drisko.

Annual Meeting and Elections: Maria reviewed the reasons the Nominating Committee is recommending that the Board remain at its current size of 12 members (5 officers and 7 board members); efficiency, cohesion, balanced composition, and no experience of tie votes that would suggest the need for an odd number. This falls within the size range of 11-15 members allowed by the bylaws. We concluded that this recommendation should be made early in the meeting. If a motion is made from the floor and passed by those present to increase the number of board slots, then that

number of those getting the most votes would be elected. The ballot would not have to be altered. Maria expressed concern that people who did not feel safe staying in the room for the whole meeting after turning in their ballots might not realize that they might be able to vote for 1-3 additional people if a motion passed to increase the size of the board; thus we would need to make the recommendation and allow its amending from the floor early in the meeting. Any additional nominations from the floor should be allowed early in the meeting for the same reason.

Moved (Beth), seconded (Paul) and voted (unanimous) that the Board recommend that the Board consist of 5 officers and 7 members, for the reasons stated by the Nominating Committee.

Don noted that we need to present a clear agenda for the meeting, preferably printed, and that explanations should be done upfront.

Carolyn raised the question of the span of time to be covered by the Treasurer's Report, since the last annual meeting was in December 2019 and there was no 2020 meeting. We concluded that a year's time, September 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021, would be sufficient for the report.

Don reported that as of today there are 270 members (including family memberships) eligible to vote, but many live remotely. We will have a complete list of eligible members at the meeting to check off members as they arrive.

Building and Grounds: The elevator inspection by 3Phase Elevator Corp (which took over the original company, Eagle Elevator) revealed a leak in the main maxton valve. Mr. Perry sent a company proposal to replace it at a cost of \$10,234.80. This might have come about due to prolonged non-use; Don will check about price breaks for non-profits, other companies who might bid on the work, and the possibility of repairing or replacing a seal rather than the full valve replacement. Meanwhile, the elevator has been taken offline and can't be entered. Debby noted that we can still legally use the downstairs because it has two stairway exits plus the bulkhead; the only problem with holding member meetings is that without the elevator it isn't handicapped-accessible, so we would have to have a Zoom connection available upstairs.

Don will reach out to Mass Save to schedule an energy audit, and we'll ask Meg to explore any possibilities of an Eversource grant.

Finances: The Ways and Means Committee needs to meet soon, to plan for a direct fundraising mailing. Morey Waltuck will research how we can add electronic payment of dues and donations via the website. Brad asked that we set up a Paypal account to make it easier to donate

Moved (Brad), seconded (Don) and voted (unanimous) to authorize Brad and Carolyn to set up a Paypal account for the Society.

Brad and Carolyn agreed to set to work on this right away; there are some complications to be worked out. Brad expressed hope that we could also own our website and create designated email addresses such as president and treasurer@sharonhistoricalsociety.org, which among other things would make the Paypal setup easier.

Upcoming Events: Shirley and Jimmie reported on preparations for the Antique Car Display and PorchFest on September 12th. Jimmie has 30-40 cars lined up. We have license from the health

department and will sell hot dogs, packaged chips and cookies, and drinks. The Broccoli Brothers will perform.

We will also schedule a voting procedures rehearsal with Marlene Chused on September 28 or 29, for the Annual Meeting on September 30th.

We'll have a table at Sharon Day on October 3rd, and will tentatively hold a Yard Sale on Oct. 16(?)/23(?)

Archives: Doug reported that JJ McGrath informed him that the Police and Fire Museum will close, and would like to return or offer some of its holdings to the Historical Society. He also reported that preparations are well underway for Digital Commonwealth to digitize around 50 photographs from our collection.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 21, 7 PM. Main agenda is preparation for Annual Meeting. Also to discuss board guidelines and approve summer meeting minutes. Brad will send out a zoom link.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisabeth McGregor, Secretary