

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FRIENDS OF POPLAR HILL MANSION

August 15, 2018

Open Board Meeting Minutes

Present: Board Chair, Ginny Hussey; Vice Chair, Jeanne Mears; Treasurer, Sharon Murphy; Board Members: Carol Smith, Betsy Wolfe, David Scheid, Shanie Shields, and Nancy Robertson; Curator & Recording Secretary, Sarah Meyers

I. Call to Order:

The August Open Board Meeting of the Friends of Poplar Hill Mansion was called to order on Wednesday, August 15, 2018 at 1:00 PM by Board Chair Ginny Hussey.

II. Approval of Minutes:

The Board Chair asked if there were any corrections or additions to the June 20, 2018 Open Board Meeting Minutes. Hearing none, the June 20, 2018 Open Board Meeting Minutes were approved as submitted.

III. Reports:

A.) Chair: Ginny Hussey

1.) Ginny reported that the work on the kitchen has stalled as the Friends wait for a meeting with Tom Stevenson to discuss the funding for the labor. The Friends received three (3) estimates for the job. The money for installation was hoped to be encumbered from the 2018 budget, but Ginny and Sarah were informed that that had not been the case. Ginny and Sarah are hoping to meet with Tom in the near future to discuss current money in the FY19 budget and see if the City will still be able to help cover the costs.

2.) Ginny went over the Community Foundation Endowment Fund; including how much money has been gained in the fund due to investments (\$32,000), the current balance available to withdraw (\$72,266.91), and the total fund balance (\$241,462.21). Sharon and Jeanne attended the annual meeting of the CFES to learn about the investments and diversifications.

B.) Treasurer Report: Chair Sharon Murphy

- 1.) See written reports for exact numbers.
- 2.) There is \$8,157.23 in the operating account.
- 3.) Sharon presented the totals to date for the Kitchen and Festival. (See attached reports.)
- 4.) Motion to accept as submitted: Jeanne so moves and David seconds. Unanimous.

IV. Curator Report: Sarah Meyers

- 1.) Donations/Acquisitions: None
- 2.) Total Guests since last report: 450 guests.
- 3.) Additions to the calendar:
 - a.) August 18, Private Party, Newtown
 - b.) August 25 Public Event, Horizons Salisbury
 - c.) September 8, Private Meeting SAR

- d.) September 8-9, National Folk Festival, Museum open extended hours
 - e.) December 1, Private Party, Four Seasons Garden Club
- 4.) Changes to the calendar:
- a.) None.
- 5.) Curator Remarks:
- a.) Sarah gave a wrap-up of the Festival. There were an estimated 250 guests in attendance. Sarah thanked all those who helped. She also presented a SWOT analysis to show where not only the museum succeeded, but also where improvements can be made for future festivals.
 - b.) Sarah also reported that she has submitted the final grant report for LESHHC. In the coming weeks the Friends should receive the final disbursement of funds from LESHHC in the amount of \$400. Sarah also recommended that the Friends consider nominations for the 2019 Best New Heritage Initiative award from LESHHC for the festival.
 - c.) Sarah also gave an update to the kitchen remodel. In addition to what Ginny reported, Sarah said that the Friends have final approval for the Wicomico Health Department with the adjustment of adding a hand sink. She also reported that according to the Health Department we do not need a license as long as the kitchen meets COMAR regulations and the Friends do not serve food more than four days a week.
 - d.) Sarah reviewed all the community and Chamber of Commerce events she has attended on behalf of the Mansion. She also mentioned potential collaborations between PHM and other museums, especially science and nature museums.
- 6.) Discussion Curator Report:
- a.) Nancy had unsolicited contact with MHT to ask about the kitchen remodel and told Sarah to expect a call. Sarah responded that she foresaw no issues with MHT and was going through the necessary steps to ensue that the requests of the Board to bring the kitchen up to code were being met.

V. Committee Reports:

A.) Membership: Betsy Wolfe and Nancy Robertson

- 1.) Betsy reported that she and Nancy are working to make the membership letter more appealing to people and that they will work with Sarah to do this. She has looked at letters other organizations send out to members and potential members and wants to model the Friends of PHM letter after those.

B.) Hospitality: Jeanne Mears

- 1.) Jeanne reported that she, Sharon, and Carol attended National Night Out. She brought up the question as to whether it is worthwhile of the Friends to continue participation in this event in the future. Her argument was no as it is geared to a different clientele than who would visit the Mansion. Shanie added that the event has gotten away from the original intent which was supposed to take place in the neighborhoods as a way to bring neighbors closer together. The counter argument was that as a City owned property, the Mansion should continue as National Night Out is a City event. The Board agreed that the Friends of PHM should not participate next year. Sarah, however, said that although the Friends and Board members may not participate, Sarah, as a City employee will still be expected to participate and promote the Mansion.

C.) Publicity: Carol Smith

- 1.) Carol reported that we should set the date for next year's Festival and several other events so that the Friends can get published in the Wicomico Tourism magazine. After a discussion about when the Festival should take place (i.e. should it be moved to May or the fall), Sarah suggested that the Friends work with the Chipman Center and plan the Festival on the same day as the Juneteenth Celebration. This would create two festivals on the same day within walking distance of each other and might help attract more visitors to both venues and also the Newtown Neighborhood. Shanie liked the idea of cross promotion and even suggested a joint advertising effort with posters to promote both events together. The Board agreed that the Festival will be on June 15, 2019.
- 2.) Carol also reiterated the idea from past meetings that the Friends should advertise in wedding magazines or other publications, such as the special edition of the Salisbury Independent, even if this were to mean that the Friends purchase ads.

D.) Acquisitions: Carol Smith

- 1.) None.

E.) Mansion Improvements: Betsy Wolfe

- 1.) None.

F.) Garden: David Scheid

- 1.) David reported the sprinklers are working, but must be turned on manually. Sarah will be turning them on as needed.
- 2.) David mentioned that he wants to look into the possibility of redoing/reconfiguring the back yard. He mentioned the possibility of removing the fountain as it is not period appropriate. There was some debate as to whether that would deter from the appearance of the yard and make it less appealing for rentals. Sharon argued that brides often get married in front of the fountain and Sarah concurred with that statement. The Board was divided on the issue and Ginny suggested that the discussion and any vote be moved to the next meeting.
- 3.) David said that once the weather gets cooler, he would like to clean the west side of the property line and cut back some of the bushes, vines, and underbrush.

G.) Budget & Finance: Sharon Murphy

- 1.) Carol went over the Audit Report more in depth:
 - a. All Treasurer's reports are in order and checkbook is in order
 - b. The inventory is in order. She reported that she and then Board member, Hsin, went over half of the inventory and the other half will be reviewed in 2019. After the complete inventory is reviewed, the Audit Committee will make recommendations for possible deaccessions.
 - c. The financial records of the Curator are in order with all receipts in order.
- 2.) Carol submitted the motion for the Board to accept the Audit Report. Shanie motioned and David seconded. The motion was passed unanimously, with the thanks from the Board to Carol for being so thorough.
- 3.) Carol recommended that the Friends file the necessary paperwork to officially file with Maryland Charities.

VI. Old Business

A. Festival Recap

- 1.) Ginny thanked everyone for all their assistance and work on the Festival.
- 2.) Shanie commented on the diversity at the Festival and said there was a good mix of people in attendance.
- 3.) David and others commented that there needs to be more coverage in the house as people come in and tour. Perhaps it would be good to have someone in each room, as David said that he was in the Surgery Room for an extended amount of time as people were asking him questions and looking around.
- 4.) The pillory did not get enough attention. One, it did not have very much participation and secondly, guests did not interact with it [for photo-ops] as was expected. The Friends need to do more with the prop in the future.
- 5.) There were issues with the food trucks: one was too expensive, one had moldy food, and now the other one has gone out of business. For next year there was a question as to if there should only be one food truck instead of three to consolidate it better.
- 6.) Next year, coffee needs to be provided to participants and vendors. Many asked for coffee, especially the War of 1812 reenactors.
- 7.) Next year, perhaps the Friends should consider charging a vendor fee for the marketplace. Sarah argued that it was important to have participants to make the festival successful and by charging a fee it may dissuade vendors from wanting to participate.
- 8.) For future festivals, there needs to be more hand-on activities for children and families. The archery and sheep were especially popular with children and we need to have those back.

VII. New Business

A.) New Board Members

- 1.) Betsy reported that two potential Board members have submitted their names for consideration: Loudell Insley and Tom Truitt. Betsy passed out copies of their letters of intent.
- 2.) Ginny informed everyone that potential Board members need to come before the Board first before submitting letter of interest to the Mayor's Office because the Board needs to meet people first and also approve potential members before the Mayor or City can appoint them.
- 3.) Ginny asked Betsy to invite Ms. Insley and Mr. Truitt to the next meeting for the Board to meet them and learn more about them.

VIII. Adjourn:

The Chair asked if there were any further business. Hearing none she called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. David made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Betsy. The meeting was adjourned at 2:19 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sarah Meyers
Curator
Recording Secretary