

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FRIENDS OF POPLAR HILL MANSION

September 19, 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; Guests (Potential Board Members): Loudell Insley and Tom Truitt

I. Call to Order:

The August Open Board Meeting of the Friends of Poplar Hill Mansion was called to order on Wednesday, September 19, 2018 at 1:02 PM by Board Chair Ginny Hussey.

II. Approval of Minutes:

The Board Chair asked if there were any corrections or additions to the August 15, 2018 Open Board Meeting Minutes. Hearing none, the August 15, 2018 Open Board Meeting Minutes were approved as submitted.

III. Reports:

A.) Chair: Ginny Hussey

1.) Ginny asked all present to introduce themselves to the potential Board members Loudell Insley and Tom Truitt. Loudell and Tom also gave a brief biography of themselves to the Board and gave some insight as to why they would like to become Board members. Loudell pointed to her expertise in real estate, focusing on historic homes and the fact that she has served on other Boards and Tom pointed out his computer skills and his desire to help his community.

2.) Ginny gave an update on the kitchen:

- a. Reported the results of the e-vote for approval to ask the Community Foundation for additional funds to do the labor in the kitchen. Ginny has submitted the letter of request for \$20,000.
- b. Ginny and Sarah will be meeting with the contractor to go over the proposal and sign the contract at the end of the week. The contractor is Joe Magoon, who is current with all his licensing.
- c. Ginny also said that she and Sarah will finally be meeting with Tom Stevenson to discuss possible reimbursement to the Friends for labor costs.
- d. Betsy asked about approval from the Historic District, which has not been given as of yet, but Ginny will ask the City about approval and trying to expedite the process so the work can begin as soon as possible.
- e. Shanie mentioned going directly to the Mayor's office or Council about getting emergency funding request, which should be able to happen even though the money was not encumbered originally.
- f. A question was asked about the funds for the contractor and for clarification as to who was paying and Ginny reported that as of now, the Friends are paying the money and leftover funds will returned to the endowment.
- g. Ginny will send out an update after the meeting with Tom to keep everyone in the loop.

B.) Treasurer Report: Chair Sharon Murphy

- 1.) See written reports for exact numbers.
- 2.) There is \$8,352.96 in the operating account.
- 3.) Sharon presented the totals to date for the Kitchen and Pianoforte. (See attached reports.)
- 4.) Sharon also reported that we brought in \$21.50 from the Yard Sale and Gift Shop sales of \$18.55.
- 5.) Motion to accept as submitted: David so moves and Betsy 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.) October 30, Haunted Rhymes Poetry Slam, Fenix Youth Project
 - b.) October 31, Haunted House Tour and Investigation, Chesapeake Tours
 - c.) December 22, Private Rental, Wedding Reception
- 4.) Changes to the calendar:
 - a.) September 15, Tour Cancellation
- 5.) Curator Remarks:
 - a.) Sarah set up in the Historic Village tent at the Wicomico County Fair. She tabled there all-day Saturday until about 3:00 and Sunday morning and evening. She said that attendance and the Fair overall was better than last year.
 - b.) Sarah also gave an update to the kitchen remodel. In addition to what Ginny reported, Sarah reported that the application for the easement alterations was submitted to MHT for approval. She does not foresee any complications and is positive it will be approved.
 - c.) Sarah reported that she participated in the Newtown Community Yards sale to try to sell the items left over from the yard sale PHM has last year. All leftover items were donated to HALO.
 - d.) The members of the SAR (Sons of the American Revolution) came for a meeting and tour and Sarah hopes to start a partnership with that group for more educational opportunities.
 - e.) Sarah also reported that she completed and submitted the CIP to the City. The projects include the residing and painting the kitchen and upper story of the Mansion, the reconstruction of the front portico, grounds improvements (this includes a gazebo) (need to work with David to develop a plan for the gardens and grounds), installation of ADA ramp and back porch repairs, and the repair and reinstallation of the shutters. The total of all the projects is estimated at \$225,000.
 - f.) Sarah also reported that the museum was open Saturday and Sunday for extended hours 12-5, for the National Folk Festival, though she did end up closing at 4 both days due to lack of visitors.
- 6.) Discussion Curator Report:
 - a.) Loudell asked about the cost of a wedding and other events at the Mansion for her edification and Tom asked about the regularity of weddings. Loudell talked about her experiences with Green Hill and their weddings and gave a possible suggestion for how to bring in more people.

V. Committee Reports:

A.) Membership: Betsy Wolfe and Nancy Robertson

- 1.) Betsy reported that not much had been done, but hopes to meet soon to bring forth new ideas. She also mentioned that she wanted to meet with Rob Withey (former Curator) to have him look through old photos and see if he can identify anyone in the photos for our records.

B.) Hospitality: Jeanne Mears

- 1.) Jeanne reported that Sarah will be speaking to the Wicomico Women's Club on October 2nd at 12:30 and invited anyone to attend as the meeting was open. She reported that it was good publicity and the ladies were also interested in having a meeting here or another function at some point in the future.
- 2.) Sarah asked if anyone had a projector she could borrow so she could do a PowerPoint projector. Betsy suggested that the Mansion buy one. David agreed that it would be a good investment. The possibility was also brought up that it would be good advertising for the Mansion to outside groups who may want to do a meeting here if we had a projector. Sarah asked the Treasurer if a projector was in the budget and Sharon acknowledged that there was funds available. Carol motioned that if Sarah found a projector for under \$400, the Board approve purchase. David seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.
- 3.) Jeanne also brought a copy of Chesapeake Brides Magazine, which may provide an advertisement opportunity for PHM as a wedding venue. It is published out of Easton. Loudell asked if we participate in the Bridal Show at the Civic Center (which PHM does).

C.) Publicity: Carol Smith

- 1.) Carol reported that she has been busy, but will be sure to add our fall events to the community calendars. There are two deadlines coming, one for the Bridal edition of the Salisbury Independent and the other is to get the Festival for next year listed in the Wicomico County Tourism Magazine.

D.) Acquisitions: Carol Smith

- 1.) Carol brought up the issue of window treatments and said that after reviewing the inventory of Dr. Huston, there were window treatments listed (one suit). Carol emphasized that Dr. Huston was a wealthy man and there was no reason to assume he did not have curtains. She also mentioned the need for the front of the house to have a uniform appearance for photos. Betsy listed other items on the inventory which would suggest curtains and wealth, such as a large quantity of fringe. Sarah asked how many curtains are in a suit and that was unknown. Betsy insisted that items may have been left off the 1828 inventory. Carol is proposing that the Friends reconsider the drapery issue with draperies that are consistent with the period. She reasserted that the bylaws suggest interpretation of the "families" that lived here which would examine all the periods of the house. David suggested working with the Curator to develop an exhibit which would interpret the other families in the attic, or second floor.

E.) Mansion Improvements: Betsy Wolfe

- 1.) Betsy reviewed the Withey auction coming up on October 5th and said that there was a fire fender that she may purchase. Some of the other furniture was of interest, but nothing really spectacular.

- 2.) Betsy also suggested changing the Christmas décor of the second floor this year to try and attract different people. She wants to put a collection of small miniature dioramas and dollhouses. She suggested borrowing items from Martha Graham.

F.) Garden: David Scheid

- 1.) David reported that he spoke with Town and Country Garden Club to start working on the “woodland garden” area by cleaning, planting ferns, and redoing irises. They will also be doing boxwood pruning.
- 2.) David also reported that the fountain was a gift and there is no accession record.
- 3.) He wants to know more about the easement on the grounds (in addition to the building) and for what that easement would allow.
- 4.) David also wants to start to develop a plan of interpretation for the grounds, i.e. should the grounds be period or pretty for events and fundraising.
- 5.) David would also like to bring the Horticultural Department from SU to visit the Mansion and possibly start helping on the grounds.

G.) Budget & Finance: Sharon Murphy

- 1.) None.

VI. Old Business

- A. Shanie asked about the Genealogy Conference. Sarah clarified that it was in October of 2019.
- B. Shanie also reported that the Chipman Center Board thought it was great that PHM wanted to move our festival in 2019 to the same day as their Juneteenth event.

VII. New Business

- A.) The Board thanked Loudell and Tom for their interest in joining the Board. Betsy mentioned that Scott Rall also had an interest in joining.

VIII. Adjourn:

The Chair asked if there were any further business. Hearing none she called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Betsy made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Carol. The meeting was adjourned at 1:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sarah Meyers
Curator
Recording Secretary