

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FRIENDS OF POPLAR HILL MANSION

February 27, 2019

Open Board Meeting Minutes

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

I. Call to Order:

The February Open Board Meeting of the Friends of Poplar Hill Mansion was called to order on Wednesday, February 27, 2019 at 12:02 PM by Board Chair Ginny Hussey.

II. Approval of Minutes:

The Board Chair asked if there were any corrections or additions to the January 16, 2019 Open Board Meeting Minutes. Hearing none, the January 16, 2019 Open Board Meeting Minutes were approved as submitted.

III. Reports:

A.) Chair: Ginny Hussey

- 1.) Ginny welcomed guest Laura Baasland, Administrative Office Associate with the Mayor's Office to speak about the Maryland Open Meetings Act (MOMA). Laura is making her rounds to all the City's boards and commissions to make sure they are in compliance with MOMA. MOMA stipulates that there needs to be transparency in government and includes that all meetings of government agencies, of which the Friends is one, need to have all their meetings open to the public, give reasonable notice of meetings, including posting agendas in advance, and make all the minutes available to the public. Laura said that Sarah, as the Recording Secretary of the Friends and as the City liaison with the Friends will be going through training to make sure the Friends stay in compliance with MOMA. Laura also commented that currently, the Friends have been in compliance for the most part and complimented the Friends for that reason. Betsy asked Laura for clarification about Sarah acting as the Curator and the Recording Secretary. Laura replied that Sarah can act as both as an employee with the City and reiterated that Sarah is the liaison between the Friends and the City and concerns that the Friends have for the City should go through Sarah. Ginny thanked Laura for her time and invited her to stay for the remainder of the meeting.
- 2.) Ginny reported on the endowment fund with the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore. Overall, the endowment is in good shape with a total of \$227,049.13 of which, \$54,909.91 is available for use. Betsy asked that the Board receive a copy of the report.
- 3.) Ginny mentioned that she and Sarah will be meeting with Tom Stevenson later that afternoon as to try and make sure that there is a regular meeting between the Friends and the Department of Field Ops, of which Poplar Hill Mansion is a part. Ginny and the City want to be sure there is better communication to avoid misunderstandings. Ginny asked if there were any concerns from the Board that she should ask Tom. Betsy asked about the rear steps. Sarah said that the City has asked her to move forward in getting bids to make the repairs. Betsy and Nancy claim that there is a violation of the easement and want the City to address their concerns about the shutters and

- the exterior (garden). Nancy also asked for more information regarding the order of the CIP projects.
- 4.) Ginny asked that all committee chairs please have a written annual report done and turned in by the March meeting on March 20, 2019. A written report is needed by the Audit Committee for review.
 - 5.) Ginny asked the Board to set a time for the annual retreat to set the goals for the upcoming year for the Friends. The date of March 9, 2019 at 9:00 has been set for the meeting to take place at the Denny's in Fruitland.
 - 6.) Ginny also asked the Board to set the time for the Friends Annual Meeting, where the annual reports will be given. The Board decided to do this immediately preceding the regular meeting in April; so, the annual meeting will take place on April 10, 2019 at 12:00 immediately followed by the Friends regular Board meeting.
 - 7.) Ginny also reported that she bought 500 stamps before the price rose by \$0.05 as agreed upon at the last meeting.

B.) Treasurer Report: Chair Sharon Murphy

- 1.) See written reports for exact numbers.
- 2.) There is \$4,671.94 in the operating account.
- 3.) Sharon presented the totals to date for the Kitchen and Pianoforte. (See attached reports.)
- 4.) Sharon said we also received a \$100.00 donation for the Surgery Room in case additional material needs to be purchased for that exhibit.

IV. Curator Report: Sarah Meyers

- 1.) Donations/Acquisitions: Two Handmade Straw Brooms (Reproduction) – Carol Smith; Flax Spinning Wheel (Permanent Loan) – Wirt Wolfe
- 2.) Total Guests since last report: 44 guests
- 3.) Additions to the calendar: None
- 4.) Changes to the calendar: Cancellation of March 14 Event
- 5.) Curator Remarks:
 - a.) Sarah and Sharon bought a new refrigerator for the kitchen.
 - b.) Sarah recapped the MHT concerns. She said that she reviewed the paperwork she could find from the work done to the house as well as Board minutes from the period and was able to piece together what happened. Sarah asked Ben and Tom for guidance on how to respond to MHT based on what she found and about the recommendations MHT made in their report. Ben said that in her response to ask for their forgiveness, explain everything that she discovered, and say that the City will do everything they can moving forward to accommodate their requests.
 - c.) Sarah attended Maryland History Day, sponsored by Preservation Maryland, in Annapolis to speak to our statewide legislators about preservation funding and preservation legislative initiatives.
 - d.) Sarah met representatives from the Chesapeake Bay Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, including the Executive Director, Melinda Kay, who showed an interest in coming down along with other members of the group to take a tour of the Mansion. The President of that group is Kevin Utz, one of the designers for Becker Morgan here in Salisbury. He is familiar with PHM and Sarah spoke to him about the Mansion and the CIP. He would be very interested in helping PHM with future plans the Friends may need.
 - e.) Sarah continues work on organizing this year's PHM festival.

- f.) Sarah is submitting a nomination to LESHHC for Friends to receive a Best New Heritage Initiative Award for the Festival. She asked the Board members if they could recommend anyone who might also be willing to submit nominations.
 - g.) Sarah met with several contractors about replacing the rear steps due to the safety concerns. They should be submitting bids within the next week, which she will forward to the City.
 - h.) Sarah attended the SMA conference this week and will report further on that in the next Curator's Report.
 - i.) Sarah designed a wedding venue advertisement for the Bridal Showcase edition of the Salisbury Independent. The ½ page ad cost \$299 and the special edition was published last week. She suggested to the Publicity Committee that PHM could take the ad and create a postcard advertisement which could list rates and more information on the back. The Board has discussed doing a brochure, but a postcard option would be cheaper and could be mailed more easily to potential brides. Also, with the Board's approval via email vote, Sarah reserved the booth for the Bridal Show in Ocean City on March 3rd.
 - j.) Sarah also made the suggestion for the Friends to join the Maryland Museum Association for an annual fee of \$50.00.
- 6.) Discussion Curator Report:
- a.) The Board discussed trying to work more with Salisbury University and UMES to find music programs for the Mansion that will not cost that much money. Sarah agreed that that was a good idea and asked if anyone had those connections as she does not. David volunteered to talk to a connection at SU to see what he could find out.
 - b.) Shanie talked about the Juneteenth Festival at Chipman since the Friends are trying to coordinate their efforts for the same date. Shanie informed the Board that a lot of the Juneteenth Festival has been moved to the Downtown Amphitheater.
 - c.) The Board liked the idea of a wedding postcard advertisement that would be easy to mail to brides. David made the motion to get postcards made and Scott seconded. There was a unanimous decision to print postcards contingent on how much they cost.
 - d.) Carol made the motion that the Friends join the MMA for \$50.00. David seconded. The vote was unanimous.

V. Committee Reports: (New Chairs were chosen)

A.) Membership: Tom Truitt

- 1.) No report.

B.) Hospitality: Jeanne Mears

- 1.) No report.

C.) Publicity: Scott Rall

- 1.) The Bridal edition of the Salisbury Independent featured the ad Sarah created.

D.) Acquisitions: Carol Smith

- 1.) Wirt Wolfe has donated for permanent loan a flax spinning wheel.

E.) Mansion Improvements: Betsy Wolfe

- 1.) No report.

F.) Garden: David Scheid

- 1.) No report.

G.) Budget & Finance: Sharon Murphy

- 1.) Sharon presented a draft of the annual budget. Some committees did not turn in a budget, so Sharon had to use best guestimates. Currently it does not balance and she asked the Board for recommendations where to cut spending and find revenues. There was a brief discussion and a few suggestions made, including removing power-washing from the budget since that has already be done and finding a much cheaper maintenance alternative. Sharon will work on a final draft for the Annual Meeting.

VI. Old Business

- A. None.

VII. New Business

- A.) Nancy is donating jewelry to be used for door prizes at teas and other events.

VIII. Adjourn:

The Chair asked if there were any further business. Hearing none she called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jeanne made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Sharon. The meeting was adjourned at 1:22 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sarah Meyers
Curator
Recording Secretary