

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FRIENDS OF POPLAR HILL MANSION

March 20, 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, Loudell Insley, and Nancy Robertson; Curator & Recording Secretary, Sarah Meyers

I. Call to Order:

The March Open Board Meeting of the Friends of Poplar Hill Mansion was called to order on Wednesday, March 20, 2019 at 12:01 PM by Board Chair Ginny Hussey.

II. Approval of Minutes:

The Board Chair asked if there were any corrections or additions to the February 27, 2019 Open Board Meeting Minutes. There was a question concerning whether a certain vote was taken at the last meeting, not reflected in the minutes regarding allocating funds to make repairs to furnishings throughout the Mansion. A motion was made by Carol and seconded by Nancy to change the budget for furniture restoration to \$5000 from \$2000 using part or all of remaining monies from the kitchen project. The February 27, 2019 Open Board Meeting Minutes were approved, as amended.

III. Reports:

A.) Chair: Ginny Hussey

- 1.) Ginny talked about the meeting she and Sarah had with Tom Stevenson. Bids have been received by the City for the rear steps. The City will review and choose the contractor. Tom also gave the go ahead to remove the 12 hemlock trees between the parking lot and the yard. Tom reviewed the CIP and said that the Mayor put the plan in the order to accomplish the goals and that tentatively the CIP has been approved.
- 2.) Ginny gave an update on the kitchen. The hand washing sink has been installed and passed the plumbing inspection. Sarah will be lining up the final inspections, including Fire and the Health Department.
- 3.) Ginny reminded everyone that the May Open Board meeting will be at the Chipman Center, as suggested during the goal setting session. Ginny also reminded everyone that the April Open Board Meeting will be April 10, 2019 due to a private event at the Mansion on the date of the regular time and date of the meeting and this will also be the time of the Friends' Annual Board Meeting immediately preceding the Regular Open Board Meeting.
- 4.) Ginny distributed copies of the CFES Endowment report for the period ending 12/31/2018.

B.) Treasurer Report: Chair Sharon Murphy

- 1.) See written reports for exact numbers.
- 2.) There is \$4,083.55 in the operating account.
- 3.) Sharon presented the totals to date for the Kitchen. (See attached reports.)
- 4.) Sharon said we also received a \$200.00 donation for the festival.

IV. Curator Report: Sarah Meyers

- 1.) Donations/Acquisitions: Jewelry for Door Prizes – Nancy Robertson
- 2.) Total Guests since last report: 106 guests
- 3.) Additions to the calendar: October 19 & 20 Genealogical Conference (WYCC)
- 4.) Changes to the calendar: None.
- 5.) Curator Remarks:
 - a.) Sarah recapped the Small Museum Association Conference she attended in February. She listed several of the sessions she attended and many of the topics she was able to learn about. The overall theme of the conference was diversity. The session dealing with assessment was also interesting as Sarah would like to see the museum go for the AAM accreditation. This session dealt with best practices and core documents for all museums and provided a checklist for the accreditation process. The Friends do not have all the core documents and are lacking a Disaster Preparedness Plan and Ethics Policy, so Sarah will be working on these documents in the coming year. Sarah also made a few new contacts with other museum staff, including Shemika Berry, a Historic Interpreter at the National Colonial Farm in Accokeek. She interprets the lives of enslaved women and does a whole theatrical performance about Harriet Tubman. She said that if interested she would be willing to come over and do a program.
 - b.) Sarah attended the Bridal Show in Ocean City. She said it was not as large as the show that was at the Civic Center, but the brides who attended seemed more serious about their weddings. The organizers of the show did limit the amount of each type of vendors. PHM was one of four venues (including the restaurant hosting the show). This made it much easier to talk to brides without them being overwhelmed about choices. Sarah spoke to several brides and grooms and one bride is definitely booking with PHM. The postcard advertisement was made and the show provided all the vendors with a list of all the brides who attended; using that list, Sarah mailed all the brides in attendance a postcard to advertise PHM.
 - c.) Sarah attended a City training session about insurance and special events sponsored by Local Government Insurance Trust. There was a question as to whether the Friends may have to obtain special events insurance (a one-day special policy) for events held at the Mansion and sponsored by the Friends. Even though the Friends are a City Board and the property belongs to the City, the Friends act as their own organization with its own accounts and the events fall under the purview of the Friends, and not under the direction of the City. Sarah will seek further clarification from Tom Stevenson and Andy Kitzrow.
 - d.) Sarah did the training for the certification for the Maryland Open Meetings Act. Currently the Friends are pretty much in full compliance, with a few modifications. The Friends are required to have someone who has undergone the training attend their meetings and now, that Sarah has the certificate, the Friends meet that requirement. Sarah has a .pdf file of the handbook and if anyone would like to read it.
 - e.) Sarah also made the suggestion for the Friends to table at the Genealogy Conference on October 19 & 20. A 10x10 booth costs \$200 and the hope is that it will bring in visitors from up and down the east coast.
 - f.) Sarah also mentioned an upcoming conference she would like to attend on May 7. The Community Foundation is hosting a Delmarva Grants Conference at Wor-Wic. The day long seminar will offer information, education and networking for nonprofit professionals in Maryland and Southern Delaware. There will be CEU's offered for breakout sessions and a two-hour funders panel with local grant makers. Breakout sessions will focus on Program Evaluation and Outcomes, as well as Fundraising. [The Board was in agreement and since the expenditure is under \$100, no motion needed to be made.]

- 6.) Discussion Curator Report:
 - a.) The Board discussed the best ways to market the museum, especially at tabling events such as the upcoming Genealogy Conference. The use of a small exhibit and videos should be employed. Sarah mentioned that the museum has a small glass exhibit case and she has already prepared videos showing the preservation of the Mansion as well as the video she created for the Surgery Room exhibit. Carol made a motion to spend the \$200 to attend the two day Genealogy Conference. Loudell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
 - b.) On the topic of marketing, Loudell suggesting adding a picture frame somewhere, perhaps in the front hall, with a photo of the latest wedding to take place at the Mansion to show potential brides when they tour the Mansion.
 - c.) Sarah also briefly mentioned the upcoming Delmarva History Conference taking place at Salisbury University in June. It is the first year for the event and Sarah wanted to attend, but was unsure of exactly what was being offered. The cost is \$100. David made a motion for Sarah to attend, based on more information of what was going to be included and what the benefits of attending would be. Betsy seconded. The motion is pending.

V. Committee Reports:

A.) Membership: Tom Truitt

- 1.) Tom reported that membership is low with only about 36 members. He and Nancy met to discuss membership and is open to ideas to generate new members, both individuals and corporations.
- 2.) Sharon mentioned that when a letter is sent out, be sure to include civic organizations such as the Elks Club and the Moose as they make annual donations to non-profits.
- 3.) There was a suggestion to add the Board members names to the letterhead or along the side of the stationary.
- 4.) Loudell suggested that a special benefit to corporate sponsors would be their name on the letterhead or printed on the stationary.
- 5.) There was a brief discussion about changing the level names to Bronze, Silver, Gold, Diamond, etc.
- 6.) Betsy would like to see membership cards.

B.) Hospitality: Jeanne Mears

- 1.) Linda Cockey, the bell ringer for Asbury, would be a good source of information for names for entertainment.

C.) Publicity: Scott Rall

- 1.) The Bridal postcard was printed and mailed out. The suggestion was made for Sarah to add the photo to social media.

D.) Acquisitions: Carol Smith

- 1.) Carol received a thank you letter for her donation and asked if everyone who donates receives a thank you. Sarah responded yes and Carol complimented her on a nice letter.

E.) Mansion Improvements: Betsy Wolfe

- 1.) The committee met with Sarah at the Mansion to go through the exhibits and determine which pieces of furniture needed repairs and a professional cleaning/waxing.

- 2.) Betsy spoke to John Robinson and as he has done in the past, he offered to repair the Eli Terry and Sons clock for free.

F.) Garden: David Scheid

- 1.) David will be coordination with the Town and Country Garden Club to do a clean-up in April, including trimming more of the boxwoods.
- 2.) David commented about the removal of the hemlocks and stumps and wants to add edging to keep gravel from spilling into the grass.

G.) Budget & Finance: Sharon Murphy

- 1.) Sharon presented a draft (version 2) of the annual budget. Loudell asked about publicity for the teas. Sarah addressed her questions and Carol also tried to address her concerns. Loudell's question was more centered around the Tea with Santa and wanted to know if there was something special to add to the publicity for the event. Jeanne responded that the Friends have a beautiful Christmas tree with the Holiday Pickle tradition and there are families and kids who come every year to find the pickle. Sarah also mentioned that children always receive a special goody bag. Carol also talked about how the City also wants to be sure the Mansion is doing community outreach and offering free events in addition to fundraisers.

VI. Old Business

- A. Carol and Tom completed the inventory audit. All is in order with the exception of one missing piece, a silver chased candy dish, which Sarah thinks based on the location on the inventory list was part of the Gunby collection. Sarah will continue looking for the missing dish. Betsy asked if there was a photo and unfortunately there is not. Betsy recommended that photos be taken of all the items and Sarah responded that that is already being done. Carol and Tom will be meeting with Sharon to go over the financial records next week.

VII. New Business

- A.) Ginny is having arm surgery on April 29 and her arm will be in a cast.
- B.) Sarah announced that the LESHCH will be having their annual luncheon on May 15. She commented that last year the Friends bought a block of tickets so several members could attend since the Friends won an award. She questioned the Board if they would like to do the same this year and also buy a block since Sarah has been told that the Friends are once again winning an award for Best New Heritage Initiative. David made a motion to buy a table of tickets. One ticket is comped, so there will be a purchase of 7 additional tickets for a total of \$210. Loudell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Adjourn:

The Chair asked if there were any further business. Hearing none she called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sharon made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Betsy. The meeting was adjourned at 1:01 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sarah Meyers
Curator
Recording Secretary