

Revised 7/18/2023

JERICO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES | JUNE 8, 2023

Board members present: Ann Squires, Stacie Griffiths, Shelly Dionne, Keiko Williams, Betty Koshinsky, Cheryl Thomas. Members absent: Sue Richardson, Nancy Spier

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM.

Agenda: Old Business:

Approve Minutes of April and May Board meetings; Reports from Committees:

Property Issues- Riverbank status & Mill House rental; Internet service; Historic Preservation report; Disaster Plan; Essex Historical Society event; Contract with Ray and Vermont Snowflakes; Craft Shop report; other old business.

New Business – LED Lights repair/replacement; Planning for 6/22 lecture event at DRML; Community members to be heard.

Secretary's Report: Minutes for prior meetings to be approved. Motion to approve revised minutes for April 13 meeting by Cheryl Thomas, second by Stacie Griffiths. Motion passed. Motion to approve revised Minutes for May 11 meeting by Keiko Williams, second by Cheryl Thomas. Motion passed. Finalized reports will be posted in Teams for archive and available to the community.

Riverbank report: Stacie reported on All Phase's inquiry about removing orange mesh fencing at the riverbank collapse area and replacing it with wire fencing. Discussion involved which party placed the orange fencing and the concrete barriers – the fencing was erected by the Town / ECI, and the barriers were placed by JHS. Discussion was around liability that JHS might take on by removing barriers. The extra barrier tape was felt to be a deterrent against visitors entering the dangerous area of the bank collapse. A suggestion was extending the hazard tape to the Mill's front porch as an extra barrier. Steven G. will try to fix the tape barrier so that it is not falling, and the hazard area is clearly marked.

Mill House rental update: Shelly reported on efforts to rent out the Mill House apartment to traveling nurses, not an option because most traveling nurses are being laid off at this time & will not be interested in a rental commitment. The goals are – find a local tenant to rent the apartment; renovate the kitchen to rental-ready condition; and make an inventory list of work to be done and the time limit for completion of the cleaning, painting, and repair work. Start date will be Monday June 19. The Board agreed to aim for a completion date of August 12, and a move-in date for a tenant August 15 – Sept. 1st. Stacie will supply the tax-exempt number to use for buying materials without sales tax.

Stacie also reported that the house's wastewater permit was changed previously, to allow the apartment kitchen to be permitted for commercial kitchen use with 2 employees. An engineer will need to file a revised permit with the State to change the permitted use back to residential status.

Internet access: Stacie reported that Comcast completed the necessary work to increase Internet access; the Mill now has the highest speed service available. Due to the non-profit rate offered by Comcast there is no increase in cost for Internet service.

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Mill lights: Shelly reported on the replacement of light bulbs in the hallway and in the track lighting in the Archives room. Purchasing lightbulbs for specialty fixtures is sometimes cheaper using a supply company that sells to electricians, depending on the type of fixture. LED bulbs are variable and the correct bulb for the type of fixture is one reason the replacement is not always a quick fix.

Tom Joslin sent an email to Ann requesting to change over older fluorescent fixtures to more efficient LED lighting. He wanted to let the Board know that a grant was available for LED lighting upgrades. The grant/subsidy offer may no longer be available. Sue spoke with Tom, explained the process and the costs for full conversion to LEDs in the Archive building - about \$300.00, and offered that we would split the cost with him. Tom told Sue that he would let us know what he wants to do.

Disaster committee: Shelly reported that JHS is now on a once-yearly schedule for fire extinguisher inspection / recharge with Impact Fire. The cost for the most recent inspection was \$1,000 – old fire extinguishers could not be recharged and needed to be replaced. It was recommended that Disaster Committee documents/ fire-prevention related information is archived in Teams- Disaster Preparedness folder. No fire department visit has been scheduled.

Updates on Town's plan to restore/repair the Riverbank issues: No updates have been received.

Preservation Trust of VT visit: Sue recently met with an advisor from Preservation Trust of VT. PTVT will provide us with the name of an appropriate engineer/expert to conduct a Condition Assessment. Once the scope of repairs/restoration is assessed, PTVT will pay 50% of the assessment cost and JHS funds pay for the remainder. Sue plans to write a grant for the JHS share of the cost. The Board would like to be kept informed of the follow up meeting with PTVT, and Keiko suggested that Gary Irish be included in the next phase of preservation review.

Sue also met with Lori Dykema from the Town Lister's office on May 19, 2023, regarding the tax exemption application.

Contract with Ray on VT Snowflakes: Keiko reviewed governance documents for JHS based on an email request from Louise to revisit the prior contract's terms. The contract terms need to follow JHS Bylaws. Board members discussed aspects of the proposed contract. There was consensus that terms in the proposed contract should also protect Ray's interests, and the Board wishes to keep open communication between Ray and JHS.

The Board would like a report from Sue about how the ordering of VT Snowflakes merchandise for the 2023 holiday season is being handled. The ordering process will be documented within 90 days to ensure readiness for peak season (October – December).

The Board discussed community concerns recently heard about JHS governance, particularly the departure from the Mill property of Saxon Hill School. The perception that JHS did not renew Saxon Hill's lease does not reflect all the facts of the situation. There were issues that surrounded the nonrenewal of the lease to Saxon Hill School.

- The Society was concerned about the extended use of the septic leach field which was then over 15 years old, because the two rental units in the house, the craft shop, and the water district office were added to the Saxon Hill building's leach field. The leach field failed from overuse, two years before the contract renewal.

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- The Saxon Hill School used the upstairs in the building as an office, and this location was not part of the rental agreement, for safety reasons.
- There was only one exit from upstairs which was in violation of the fire code.
- Saxon Hill's use of equipment upstairs caused the electric panel to shut off from time to time.

When JHS decided not to renew the Saxon Hill lease it was not an eviction. They were given the option of using the first-floor space as their school, as long as they vacated the upstairs until they found a suitable location. They said they could not operate without the upstairs, which they used as an office and meeting place. They chose to leave then.

The Board agreed to invite community members who have expressed interest to attend a meeting with the Board, to allow for dialogue and to clear up misconceptions about the Board's actions and mission.

Upcoming events:

Lecture at DRML by John Crock from UVM on the ancient Champlain Sea and archaeology of the Champlain Valley region – will take place on June 22nd. Board members will supply refreshments. Advertising will include an announcement on FPF and posting at local libraries and merchants.

Other events planned are a walking tour of Jericho Corners, to be held in August or September. Gary Irish has graciously agreed to lead the tour. A lecture by Joe Citro is a possibility.

Craft Shop volunteers: Cheryl reported that Sue plans to take over volunteer recruiting for staffing the Craft Shop. Cheryl hasn't received updates from Sue on the recruiting plan.

Other new business:

Ann reported for Sue that the State Archivist offered to visit the JHS when we are ready. Keiko asked that Sue notify us if a date for the Archivist's visit is scheduled.

Ann reported for Sue that the Craft Shop will begin using Square for credit card transactions July 1.

Keiko is updating the JHS website to include links to the YouTube videos on Red Mill history, as well as links to nearby historical societies' websites to give site visitors more information on nearby history.

Rick Heh- Underhill Historical Society- is looking into a statewide history archive for sharing documents.

Keiko is working with Ann Squires on updating contacts and JHS documents into archives. Board members are looking for information on the whereabouts of Blair's typewriter.

No treasurer's report was presented; Stacie will email the board with Craft Shop sales figures for May.

Motion to adjourn by Stacie Griffiths; second by Shelly Dionne. Meeting adjourned at 7:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Koshinsky | Secretary

Jericho Historical Society