

JERICHO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BOARD MEETING MINUTES | OCTOBER 12, 2023

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM.

Community comments – None reported

Recording Secretary's Report: Betty Koshinsky

Minutes for the meetings of August 10 and September 14 were submitted to the Board for comments and approval. The board agreed that the procedure should be to vote separately on approval of each report.

Motion to approve minutes for September by Sue Richardson, second by Shelly Dionne. Motion passed with 5 in favor, one abstention. Motion to approve minutes for August by Shelly Dionne, second by Sue Richardson. Motion passed with 5 in favor, one abstention.

Correspondence Secretary's Report: Cheryl Thomas published agenda and her report ahead of the meeting.

Committee Reports:

Events: Keiko Williams

Keiko reported on the upcoming October lecture series event to be held on Saturday October 28th. Vermont author Joseph Citro will feature stories from his series of Vermont stories. The lecture is co-sponsored by JHS and Deborah Rawson Memorial Library (acknowledgement to Sue Adams). His speaker's fee is \$250.00.

Event planning – Keiko will provide transportation for Mr. Citro to and from his home in Windsor. The setup crew volunteers for the event will be Ann, Betty, Cheryl. Shelly will provide a thank you gift for the speaker. Keiko will advertise the event on the website and on FB and on Front Porch Forum. All board members are encouraged to share and comment on postings to raise visibility for the event.

Treasurer's Report: Stacie Griffiths

Stacie reported that P&L reconciliation of financials for September is not complete. There is a problem obtaining data from the Square payment system. The inventory codes that track sales in Square will require work to make the sales system compatible with QuickBooks. Sue has worked closely with Stacie to find solutions. Sue may have other payment system options if the Square platform will not supply the data that is needed.

Stacie discussed inputting the JHS budget for calendar year 2024 into QuickBooks. She asked Board members to start thinking about budget needs for next year to help the Board create a proposed budget for voting at the annual meeting.

Keiko sent a note to Stacie asking that expenses and income for the Mill House property be accounted for in a separate dedicated account. Motion was made by Nancy Spier, second by Keiko Williams, to approve permission for Stacie to set up a separate bank account for Mill House finances. Motion passed unanimously. Stacie agreed and discussed the benefits of separating expenses in helping the Board track costs like utilities.

Vice President's Report: Sue Richardson

Sue reported that she is in communication by email with town Administrator John Abbott, requesting that we receive updates on the status of the engineering report on riverbank repair. The expected report by the geo-technical engineer will follow up on the 2022 evaluation and plan to move river boulders and lower river water level to better evaluate the Mill foundation.

The Board discussed actions to date by the Selectboard, and issues delaying the project. ECI was the only contractor that bid on the riverbank project. The response Sue received indicates that the work cannot begin until spring of 2024 at the earliest. Keiko requested filing of these email communications in the JHS archive in Teams.

She recommended as best practice that Board members are cc'd on emails and are given access to email correspondence for reference, when a Board member communicates with the community on behalf of JHS.

Sue reported on removal of trash items from recent cleaning of the back rooms. A discussion addressed questions of communication about the scope of projects such as cleaning and moving materials. The consensus was that the judgement of the project team is sufficient.

President's Report – Ann Squires

Ann reported on an email inquiry received from a community member regarding the Historic Preservation report (Sue Richardson's report earlier this year). There were differing views on the previous report from Preservation Trust of VT. Sue was the most recent contact with Preservation Trust of Vermont which acts as a referral source to the historic preservation specialist, Elliott Lothrop. He is expected to provide a full report after his visits.

The Board discussed ways to validate and acknowledge community input and will ask the Correspondence Secretary to reply to community questions.

Craft Shop Report: Sue Richardson

September CS sales were \$13,054.18, below September 2022 number \$15,906. Overall sales growth is steady – although bookkeeping for Q3 is not yet complete, YTD increased over 2022 by \$11,355.00. Sue reported strong overall sales, estimates October sales MTD are \$11,000 +.

Board discussed advertising strategies and potentially increasing Shop hours to attract more local buyers. Concern was expressed that working people cannot visit if the shop is closed before 5 PM daily – however, Saturday hours are available.

Advertising Report: Shelly Dionne

Shelly sent an email with a proposal for holiday advertising to WVMT radio. She proposes to run Craft Shop ads earlier this year to promote local business. She also emailed Priscilla at Smugglers Notch about a feature/advertising in their winter magazine. Shelly is working with Hall Communications about advertising on their local radio stations.

Other activities include new photos of Craft Shop merchandise to share on social media and moving toward a more upscale Gift Shop focus with higher-end vendors featured. Shelly felt that the shop having Sunday hours during the holiday season is a must.

Keiko brought up a suggestion from Cheryl that a security mirror be installed, so that guests of the shop can be seen from the sales desk area and discouraging shoplifting. The Board discussed strategies for customer engagement such as volunteers not sitting at the desk when visitors arrive. Sue's approach is more customer engagement. Ann agreed that if shoplifting does occur, we do not try to intervene.

Sue proposed that we upgrade the security camera system to allow for better surveillance of the shop area. She obtained a quote from the security company – for an outside camera only, \$727.88, and \$3,566.78 for a new system. Motion by Ann, second by Sue, to schedule expenditure on the security cameras. Action on the proposal was tabled and Stacie recommended that any upgrades should be moved to the 2024 proposed budget.

Nancy would like to see 2 people working in the shop daily from Thanksgiving until Christmas. Sue already has scheduled staffing by two people during holiday shopping season. Stacie asked if we have a second Point of Sale terminal available for busy periods so sales wrap-up can go faster. An extra terminal is already in the Shop and the device will be a hand-held card reader for credit card payments.

Website committee - Keiko Williams- no report, we are up to date. Shelly suggested adding an update to the JHS website about the completion of the Mill House rental.

The Board discussed policy and procedures for members with key access to the Mill building, responding to a member's questions about access rules and when it is okay to enter the building outside of regular Shop hours. Suggested solution: that access to the building be limited to Shop managers and volunteers based on need for a specific project – keys are turned in at project completion.

Other New Business:

Sue Richardson shared a thank you card received from two children in the community, and a donation to JHS with a letter of thanks.

She also reported that she received an interview invitation from Cross Country Skier magazine.

Stacie asked that any unreimbursed expenses be reported to her asap. She shared an Excel spreadsheet in Teams. Board members may submit receipts with a completed Excel form to document expenses.

Keiko reported that a rental agreement for the Mill House apartment is completed. Final work on renovations and cleanup will be completed over the weekend (10/14 - 10/15). Help will be needed to wrap up projects and volunteers are requested.

Motion to adjourn by Sue Richardson, second by Stacie Griffiths. Meeting adjourned 8:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Koshinsky

Recording Secretary