

The Falmouth Historical Society Board Meeting

Falmouth Heritage Museum—December 4, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 PM.

Present were Betsy Whitcomb, Fred Howe, Erin Cadigan, Rich Meserve, Rick Parker, Ron Scorsone, David Farnham, and Sue Farnham.

Treasurer's Report

Expenses are tracking about \$380 above budget due to the surge of maintenance work. The budget was updated to defer \$3,614 for Past Perfect and the new sign that were originally projected for November. Our cash accounts have declined to \$2,538 which is perilously low as winter expenses approach.

Dave proposed that we move \$9,000 from the Foundation to replenish our operating accounts. This was followed by discussion of the Society's financial state and the path forward. We need at least \$15,000 in annual revenue to stay financially stable. The Board voted unanimously to withdraw \$9,000 from the Foundation.

The Board thanked Fred and Ron for the work they have done to maintain the Museum and barn.

Old Business

Erin reported on Falmouth300 activities. The Incorporation Day ceremony was held at Falmouth High School. Ocean View choir performed, a video created by 2 Falmouth High School students was shown, and Chellie Pingree and other dignitaries attended. The town honored the 106-year-old Boston Cane holder from Falmouth, Florence McCann.

A "Very Merry Falmouth" also went well. The turnout at the closing festivities and fireworks was very good. The race tripled their numbers of participants and the cookoff was well attended.

This month the Falmouth traveling exhibit is at Town Hall. There is a drop off box there for Toys for Tots.

Upcoming events: The library has postponed the Volunteer Fair until January or February.

An idea for an FHS winter event would be to show short film clips about Falmouth.

Cataloging. Erin and Ron report that, based on initial efforts, PastPerfect collection management software is a good match for our needs. Ron is ready to go and Erin loved it. There was a discussion about the prudence of proceeding with acquisition of a full license in light of the Society's limited finances. The consensus of the Board is that we should. Building a digital catalog was identified as a priority by the Board three years ago. It is key to the Society's core missions of preserving artifacts reflecting the heritage of Falmouth as well as improving outreach to the community. A full license will be purchased once the operating accounts are replenished.

There was a discussion about data storage and access with PastPerfect. The primary copy of the catalog will be stored on a dedicated desktop computer (that was recently donated to the Society) but it will be accessible from the administrative desktop and the laptop computers.

Between the catalog, our ledgers (as we revert to the desktop version of QuickBooks), and the growing collection of media, data essential to the Society will be stored on the computers at the Museum. We will also purchase a license for Carbonite Safe Backup Pro software so that the data will be replicated into the cloud.

There was a discussion about next steps in cataloging and digitizing. Erin has already begun the process of matching the existing card indices to our collection artifacts. As we proceed with cataloging, David suggested that we look at the South Portland Society's catalog which has been published using PastPerfect.

David mentioned that he had copied Falmouth town reports for 1853-1919 from UMaine's Digital Commons to the Society website. He was surprised, while searching for historical information about Falmouth, to have Google point to the copied documents on our website. We have many of the other years in hard copy reports. It would not be arduous to scan the hard copy reports, which would comprise unique content and attract more traffic to our website. This raised a

question about how much web traffic we experience today. David said he would obtain the statistics and report back.

There was a brief discussion about opportunities to obtain grants to underwrite our digitization efforts.

Maintenance. Fred and Ron reported on upcoming improvements to the Museum.

1. The ramp and stair project will not be done until spring due to the early arrival of winter weather.
2. The sign company had planned to install the sign before the ground froze; we may now have to wait until spring.
3. We will wait until spring to pursue reclaim for the driveway.

We briefly revisited the necessity of replacing the sign. We have received donations expressly for the sign. There is no shortage of anecdotal justification for better signage. Moreover, the new sign has already been made.

Fire Truck. Rick Parker has found someone in South Portland who has offered to repair the firetruck at no cost but would need to have it transported to his shop. Fred will explore options for moving the truck.

Collections. Erin will review the current policy and update it where needed.

1. The Danish ship model remains in the barn. Rich will make inquiries to find a more appropriate home for it.
2. Robert Hooper offered to donate two pianos and a Victrola. It is the consensus of the Board that we will graciously decline the items as we have neither the space or the resources to care for them.
3. The Girl Scout dolls will be returned to the family.

New Business

Winter Hours. The Board agreed that we will continue with our current hours (Mondays and Tuesdays) for the winter. The Museum will be closed the weeks of Christmas and New Year's. The website lists scheduled closures and reminds visitors that we observe Falmouth town/school closure for inclement weather.

Betsy will be going back to work at Town Hall and will be inventorying all the old records there. This is great news for us.

Rick Parker announced that he was stepping down from the Board due to the press of other responsibilities. The Board thanked him for his service.

Fundraising and FHS Shop inventory. The FHS cookbook and the Wallace (Falmouth history) book need to be reprinted; we are out of cookbooks and almost out of the Wallace book, both which continue to be popular items. Erin and others will hunt for an affordable printer.

There was a brief discussion about updating the throw blankets and the potential of offering Christmas cards by a local artist.

The meeting was adjourned at 8 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Farnham, Secretary