

The Falmouth Historical Society

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Zoom Meeting—August 8, 2023

The meeting came to order at 6:30 p.m. Present were board members Betsy Whitcomb, Carol Kauffman, David Farnham, Rich Meserve, Ron Scorsone, and Sally Farneth.

President's Remarks

David observed that everything seems to be going smoothly this summer. We are getting a lot accomplished. We have a steady stream of visitors to the Museum. We are fielding a steady stream of queries online. There haven't been any calamities. We are doing what our community expects from its historical society, and we're doing it pretty well. We are even managing to stay on top of the items that fall between the cracks.

This is, of course, due to our volunteers. He offered his profuse thanks to all for the work they are doing.

Secretary's Report

Minutes. The July minutes were approved online.

Membership. Our active membership is 102.

Treasurer's Report

Finances. Excluding \$7,500 reserved for the scholarship, the Society has a balance of \$3,309 in its operating accounts and \$23,641 invested with Maine Community Foundation. Our accounts/tax payable is \$205. Our projected end-of-year balance is a deficit of \$2,402. Our actual expenses are \$263 under budget. Our net current assets (excluding long-term assets) have declined by \$391 this fiscal year.

The Audit Committee will conduct an internal financial review of the Society's finances for fiscal years 2021-22 and 2022-23 on August 14th at the Museum.

The Form 990-N (“postcard”) return for tax year 2022 (fiscal year 2022-23) was submitted. The IRS accepted the return and posted it on their Tax Exempt Organization website.

We posted the 990-N on GuideStar (a repository favored by potential donors) along with a copy of the Treasurer’s Report which provides financial details not in the 990-N. We also posted the 990-N on Impala (a repository favored by Maine Philanthropic Council). Our presence on these two repositories reflects our transparency (we have a “platinum” ranking by GuideStar) and our readiness to provide the philanthropic community with the information needed to make decisions on grants.

The proposed FY23-24 budget was presented. As with the past three years, it is an austere, zero-based budget. There were adjustments for inflation and the contingency for maintenance was retained. The proposed budget is \$1,364 (9%) Δ above FY22-23 approved budget, and \$929 (6%) Δ above FY 22-23 amended budget.

The budget does not include projected income. Carol asked about FY22-23 donations; the Activity Report (which shows income by category) was displayed.

Following a brief discussion, a motion was made to accept the proposed budget. The motion was seconded, and the board voted unanimously to accept the budget as proposed.

Committee Reports

Programs.

We had been awaiting word on the Community Wellness Annual Event planned for August 25th at Tidewater Farm. Carol reported that the event had been scrubbed for this year, but the Wellness Committee knows we would like to have a table at the event when it is held.

We also learned that we were unable to get a bus tour of Falmouth on the Falmouth Parks and Community Programs schedule for fall. We will get on the list for spring. That will give us additional time to update our tour materials.

Betsy will let Cumberland Fair know that we plan to have volunteers at our table in the exhibition hall on Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday (as we did for the past two years).

Museum Operation & Exhibits. We are continuing to see a steady flow of visitors to the Museum (when the weather is pleasant). We had 2 visitors on July 18th (rainy), 7 visitors plus an extended consultation by telephone on the 25th, and one visitor on August 8th (rainy).

Collections. Ron continues to edit or re-take photographs for inclusion in the digital catalog.

Lara (Hodgdon) Deritter donated Iverson family digital images including some we had not seen before.

The initial review of the Marge Merrill Devine Collection has begun. Both Wayne Cobb and Suzanne have boxes of unsorted material for review. They report that organizing the material is slow going.

Local History. We responded to seven queries during the past month. Our backlog is holding at seven.

A seemingly simple request to reconstruct the narrative for the Land Trust's barn at Hurricane Valley Farm was a major challenge requiring visits to town hall and a lot of time reviewing deeds on file at the Cumberland County Registry. The time period during which the barn was probably built didn't match the style of construction. The answer was found in our property files where a one-page manuscript was stuck onto the back of another document. The barn was originally built in Freeport. It was taken down, moved to Falmouth, and reconstructed board-by-board in 1940 to replace a barn that had been destroyed by fire earlier that year.

Communications. We have backslid a bit on communications (newsletter, social media) due to competing priorities.

Merchandise. The annual inventory is underway. The count is complete. Now it must be reconciled with the inventory in QuickBooks.

Museum Buildings & Grounds. Ron reported that the sump sensor has been calibrated. The pump and dehumidifier are working well. Rich was thanked for keeping the lawn looking nice.

John Henson reports that the knotweed infestation by the barn persists. He asked Sue whether he should use glyphosate to eradicate the invasive. She told him to proceed with cutting and painting.

Technology. The Society's digital systems are working properly. This technology report was delayed due to changes at Google Analytics and covers four months (April-July). Website activity is now being monitored by Google Analytics 4. The system status page has been changed. Twitter, Instagram, and Express Tax Exempt were removed because we no longer use them. We added the Maine Tax Portal.

Development. We are beginning the fiscal year with a projected deficit of \$1,242. This doesn't seem worrisome because we can receive a \$1,270 dollar distribution from the Foundation. Nor does the projection include profits from merchandise sales (and we made \$415 last year). Unfortunately, the projected income probably includes at least \$500 of directed donations, much of which is directed to unbudgeted expenses. That wipes out the profit on sales.

We ended FY21-22 with a balance of \$5,018. We ended FY22-23 with a balance of \$3,254; a reduction of \$1,764. Even if we make it through the year without having to use the \$1,000 contingency for maintenance, we're looking at a reduction of about \$2,250. We're burning through our cash.

We need to increase donation revenue by at least \$3,000. We are now at a point where our public record is a solid history reflecting competency and credibility. We will send tailored appeals, one-by-one, to local businesses. We will start with a corporate sponsor due for renewal.

New Business

There being no new business, the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Suzanne Farnham, Secretary