

RYE HERITAGE COMMISSION
MEETING
Thursday, May 13, 2021
5:30 p.m.
Via Zoom

Present: Chair Phil Walsh, Vice- Chair Gail Hughes, Peter White, Alex Herlihy, Bev Giblin, David Choate, Frank Lagana and Selectmen's Rep Bill Epperson

I. Call to Order

Chair Walsh called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom teleconferencing.

II. Attestation

Statement by Phil Walsh:

As Chair of the Rye Heritage Commission, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

- a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video and other electronic means. We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone number: 646-558-8656 with meeting ID number: 883 6292 1558 Password: 751953 or by participating via Zoom: www.zoom.com.
- b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the Town of Rye website at town.rye.nh.us
- c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access. If anyone has a problem, please email Becky Bergeron at bbergeron@town.rye.nh.us

- d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting. In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

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Roll call attendance:

- Gail Hughes
- Peter White
- Alex Herlihy
- David Choate
- Frank Lagana
- Bill Epperson
- Bev Giblin
- Phil Walsh

Note: The members noted that they were the only ones present in the room for the meeting.

Chair Walsh announced that Anne Richter- Arnold will be stepping down from the Commission, as she is starting a new business and will have a busy schedule moving forward. He commented that she has been a great member and this will be a great loss for the Commission. He thanked Anne for her involvement and commitment to preservation in the Town over the years. She will be missed.

III. Review of Minutes:

- March 18, 2021
- April 8, 2021

Motion by Gail Hughes to approve the minutes of March 18, 2021 and April 8, 2021 as presented. Seconded by Bev Giblin.

Roll Call: Phil Walsh – Aye; Peter White – Aye; Alex Herlihy – Aye; Gail Hughes – Aye; Bev Giblin – Aye (for 4/8/21); David Choate – Aye (for 4/8/21); Frank Lagana – Aye; Bill Epperson - Aye

Motion passed.

IV. Business:

1. Treasurer's Report – Peter White

Treasurer Peter White reported that the Commission's account balance at the end of April was \$20,589., which is consistent with the balance at the end of March. Of that balance, there are restricted funds for Town Hall use of \$14,569. There is also \$2,000 allocated for the gazebo, which the Commission spent \$1,500 in December to effectuate the move. That leaves \$4,020

unrestricted in the account. He continued that the mailer went out a couple of weeks ago. The mailer and postage cost about \$1,600 which will be hitting the budget soon. He will be processing the checks that have been received so far from the mailer. He will send out an email to the Commission after the first round of checks are processed with the amount received at this point from the fundraiser. He will also be sending thank you letters to people who donated as well.

Member White noted that the budget for 2021 has not yet been approved because of the delay in the Town Election. The proposed budget is \$4,300. Of that, the Commission has spent \$357 of that proposed amount. The mailer will be another \$1,600., which is one of the big items in the budget. He expects the Commission will be under budget at the end of the year.

Vice-Chair Hughes asked about the expenses for the gazebo.

Member White explained that back in December, the Commission allocated \$3,500 from the unrestricted funds. So far, \$1,500 has been spent to effectuate the move. This leaves an allocated earmark of \$2,000 for the gazebo project, which will be supplemented by the fundraiser. He pointed out that the fundraiser usually takes two to three months for all the funds to come in. The first wave of donations will be processed within the week. He also pointed out that the Commission still has an inventory of hats that will be converted to cash when there are town events. The Commission's financial condition is solid.

Member Giblin asked if there is a goal for the fundraiser.

Member White replied that the fundraisers typically bring in a range from \$4,000 to \$5,000. The mailer is the Heritage Commission's brand and people are accustomed to seeing it. Generally, the same people are contributing. He commented that he is optimistic.

Motion by David Choate to approve the Treasurer's Report for May.

Seconded by Gail Hughes.

Roll Call: Phil Walsh – Aye; Gail Hughes – Aye; Peter White – Aye; Alex Herlihy – Aye; David Choate – Aye; Frank Lagana – Aye; Bill Epperson – Aye; Bev Giblin – Aye

Motion passed.

2. Demolition Review Committee

Member Choate reported there have not been any meetings since the Heritage Commission last met. There are a couple of properties that he expects will be coming before the committee in the not-too-distant future.

3. Rye Advocates Update

Member Choate noted that people who live in a 1901 or earlier house should have received a mailer from Rye Advocates asking for the survey to be filled out. There have been about 43 responses so far, which is about 10%. The information is being collected and collated. He continued that the Advocates are also working on the beginnings of a realtor outreach program

through Chelsea Conley with Jen Madden Real Estate. The Advocates have also reached out to U.N.H. for interns to help with creating a website and correlating information.

V. Old Business:

1. Gazebo Fundraiser Mailers Sent: Follow up on Carpenter

Chair Walsh stated that he talked to a third carpenter who was recommended by N.H. Historic Preservation Society. He looked at the gazebo over the weekend and his thoughts were pretty much what the other carpenters have said. There is a lot of work that has to be put into the gazebo. He didn't want to be tied down to a firm price because the Commission is really not ready to do anything yet. It was felt that to do the project right, about \$15,000 would be on the low end of the spectrum.

Member White asked the components of the \$15,000.

Chair Walsh explained that part of it would be the labor aspect. Another part would cover the reattachment of the top and roof. He found there was a lot of rot issues around the base, which would have to be completely stripped and built from scratch. There are also costs for renting machinery that might be needed for the project. Another cost that might be involved would be for lead paint, if that were to be found.

The Commission agreed that it is better to do the project right, if they are going to move forward with the rehab of the gazebo.

Chair Walsh stated that once they get to the point where they feel they have the capital to do something, they can always reach out to other carpenters. However, this gentleman seemed knowledgeable and understood the care that is needed in undertaking this kind of a project.

Member White asked if it can be done in stages. Maybe something could be started with \$5,000 to \$6,000 with a second stage to do other enhancements.

Chair Walsh replied he didn't ask; however, it would be worth investigating.

Member Choate pointed out that Steve Bedard's opinion is that it should be able to be done for under \$10,000.

Member Herlihy agreed. He thinks there are ways to protect the gazebo right now, so no more moisture can get to it. The Commission should then get advice from Steve Bedard.

Member Lagana asked if they are limited to people who live in N.H. to work on this project. He knows of a contractor in Massachusetts who is pretty reputable and would love to take on a project like this.

There was agreement that there would be no issue with him looking at it.

Selectmen's Rep Epperson suggested Bud Jordan, who restores historical wagons, etc. He agreed to reach out to him.

Member Choate stated that the only reservation he would have about a contractor from Massachusetts is if they don't do preservation work, they might say to throw everything away and just build a replica.

The Commission will discuss this project further at next month's meeting.

VI. New Business:

1. House Plaques

Chair Walsh stated that he sent out a draft application for the house plaque program. He asked if there were any issues or edits with the draft.

Member Herlihy explained that he created a letter and an application that would go out to the perspective customer. It was based off the model that the Historical Society had. He noted that they used to have hard copies at the library, the Town Hall and other public places to get people's attention. He pointed out that Chair Walsh is going to create a tab for the house plaque program and application on the Heritage Commission's website. People will be able to pay online or send in a check. The Commission will need to be sure the online payment is setup correctly. He also pointed out that Timberline will be making the plaque and doing the lettering once the order is received.

Chair Walsh explained how the information and application will be posted to the Heritage Commission's page by Janice Ireland, Selectmen's Secretary.

There was some discussion on how the orders will be handled, which should be done by two or three members of the Commission. Chair Walsh noted that he and Member Herlihy can work on the management details.

Motion by David Choate to approve the house plaque application draft.

Seconded by Bev Giblin.

Roll Call: Phil Walsh – Aye; Gail Hughes – Aye; Peter White – Aye; Alex Herlihy – Aye; David Choate – Aye; Frank Lagana – Aye; Bill Epperson – Aye; Bev Giblin – Aye

Motion passed.

2. Graveyard Adoptions: Kevin and Linda Gordius (#4 & 9), Carla Cole (#37)

Chair Walsh reported that two graveyard adoption requests have been received. Kevin and Linda Gordius would like to adopt #4, Brown burial ground on West Road, and #9, Dow burial ground opposite 1159 Washington Road. Carla Cole would like to adopt #37, Varrell burial ground on Sagamore Road.

Motion by Gail Hughes to approve the adoptions of the Brown, Dow and Varrell graveyards sites. Seconded by Peter White.

Roll Call: Phil Walsh – Aye; Gail Hughes – Aye; Peter White – Aye; Alex Herlihy – Aye; David Choate – Aye; Frank Lagana – Aye; Bill Epperson – Aye; Bev Giblin – Aye
Motion passed.

3. Fundraising, Plaque Ceremony; Subcommittee: Bev Giblin

Vice-Chair Hughes stated that she believes that Dennis McCarthy (Public Works Director) brought in the backing to the Town Hall that will be attached to the building which will hold the plaque. She does not have any further information. She thinks it will be very important to take advantage of publicity when the plaque goes on the building.

Selectmen's Rep Epperson will follow up with Mr. McCarthy and the Town Administrator.

The Commission thanked Vice-Chair Hughes for her attention to the details of this project.

In regards to fundraising for not only the gazebo but also future Town Hall projects, Chair Walsh noted that Member Giblin has expressed an interest in forming a subcommittee for this purpose.

Member Giblin stated that she has ideas of ways to raise money for Town Hall and other projects the Commission is working on. A subcommittee is something they don't have that they may want to consider. In order to raise more money, there is nothing more powerful than an event. She has several ideas for an event. She thinks the timing is important and may be something they can do in the fall or next spring.

Member Giblin spoke about the idea of having an event at Abenaki Country Club. She stated that they have not really tapped into the population in Rye that attend a lot of social events. There is a large number of people who live in Rye that will spend money for these things. It is a source that the Commission has not really reached. She pointed out that to do an auction, the Commission would have to start a year out, in order to do it right. They should start thinking about these things now.

The Commission agreed that Member Giblin has some great ideas. Chair Walsh gave his permission for a subcommittee to be formed. Members who are interested in helping on the committee should reach out to Member Giblin.

Member Herlihy congratulated the Heritage Commission on its tenth anniversary. He also encouraged the members to watch Resident Craig Musselman's presentation 'Old Mills of Rye'. The Zoom presentation can be accessed through the Historical Society's website.

No further business came before the Commission.

- **Next Meeting June 10th, 5:30 p.m.**
(potentially to be held at the Town Hall)

Adjournment

Motion by Peter White to adjourn at 6:40 p.m. Seconded by Gail Hughes.

Roll Call: Phil Walsh – Aye; Gail Hughes – Aye; Peter White – Aye; Alex Herlihy – Aye;

David Choate – Aye; Frank Lagana – Aye; Bill Epperson – Aye; Bev Giblin – Aye

Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted, Dyana F. Ledger