

**RYE HERITAGE COMMISSION  
MEETING  
Thursday, August 12, 2021  
5:30 p.m.  
Rye Town Hall**

**Present:** *Chair Phil Walsh, Vice-Chair Gail Hughes, Treasurer Peter White, Frank Lagana, David Choate, and Selectmen's Rep Bill Epperson*

**Also Present:** *Mae Bradshaw*

**1. Call to Order & Introductions**

Chair Walsh called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. and led the introduction of members.

**2. Frank Lagana – new full member to RHC**

Chair Walsh welcomed Frank Lagana as an official full member of the Commission. He thanked Member Lagana for volunteering to fill the seat.

**3. Review of minutes from July meeting**

**The following was noted:**

- Page 2, 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph from bottom should read: **It was agreed that Member Choate should speak with Gregg Mikolaities, who is a former engineer, to see if someone from Tighe and Bond Engineering would be willing to review the most recent evaluation report to confirm the information.**

**Motion by Peter White to approve the minutes of July 8, 2021 as amended. Seconded by Gail Hughes. All in favor.**

**4. Treasurer's Report: August 2021**

Treasurer Peter White reported that the balance in the Commission's account is \$24,654. The Town Hall restricted fund balance is \$14,548. The Commission has raised \$4,085 from the mailer, plus another \$2,000 in restricted funds earmarked for the gazebo. The total amount available for the gazebo project is \$6,085. (Balances as of July 31<sup>st</sup>.)

Member Choate asked if the fundraising has pretty much trickled out.

Treasurer White confirmed. He noted that \$550 was spent on printing and another \$837 on postage. The Commission spent \$1,400 to raise approximately \$4,100. This is average to a bit below average, in comparison to fundraising mailers over the past few years.

Chair Walsh asked if this could be due to the fact that it's for a specific project.

Treasurer White replied that specific projects have done better than a general fundraiser. He pointed out that the Commission did one in the past with three projects and that brought in the least funds out of all the mailers.

**Motion by David Choate to approve the Treasurer's Report for the month of July.  
Seconded by Frank Lagana. All in favor.**

## **5. Demolition Review Committee**

Member Choate reported that there are two applications before the Demolition Review Committee. One is the trolley barn on Central Road. The Committee has held an initial meeting and met on site with Bruce Valley. Mr. Valley is trying to figure out a way to reuse the beams in the building. The rest of the structure is not worth saving. Mr. Valley is a preservationist by heart and would like to come up with a use for the beams. At this time, a survey is being done of the property, as the property lines are unclear. Member Choate noted that the application is pending at this time and no decisions have been made.

Member Choate continued that the other application before the Committee is for 1 Locke Road. The owners want to tear down a small barn. The application will be before the Committee within the week.

## **6. Rye Advocates Update**

Member Choate noted that Rye Advocates held a meeting on August 9<sup>th</sup>. The Advocates are still focused on trying to get histories of the pre-1901 houses. A job description has been submitted to the U.N.H. Intern Program to try to get one or two interns to work on collecting this data. The ultimate goal is to get the information digitized to keep a record of the home's history. He noted that Lydia Tilsley has done one for her house, which is being used as a sample.

Member Choate continued that the Advocates also discussed establishing a preservation award, much like what the Portsmouth Advocates do. The idea is to get criteria established so people can be rewarded for good stewardship of their properties. He emailed Anne Richter about getting an article into Rye Magazine. He wonders if there is a way to tie this together with the plaques. The other topic that was discussed at the meeting, was how to get all this information into binders. He noted that they are trying to get realtors who are selling the pre-1900 houses to get information from their clients about the house, before they sell and move on. Some have been helpful and some have not. Ultimately, it would be nice if the realtor gave the buyer a Rye Heritage Commission plaque, as a housewarming gift.

The Rye Advocates meet monthly via Zoom and anyone is welcome to join the meeting.

## **7. Fundraising Subcommittee**

Chair Walsh reported that Member Bev Giblin is working on a possible date for the fundraiser. She is working with Abeniqui and it might be possible for March. Member Giblin will have more information next month.

## **8. Zoning Amendment Updated for Rye; input sought for town boards/commissions Rye Master Plan Survey**

The Long Range Planning Committee, of the Rye Planning Board, has asked boards, commissions and committees to articulate the important things they see going on in Rye. The boards and commissions are being asked to fill the survey out as one entity and those answers will be uploaded into Survey Monkey online. The answers to the survey will be used to help form topics and questions to be discussed at a public visioning session, which is being planned for October. Information from that visioning session will be used to create a Vision Chapter for an update of the Rye Master Plan.

Chair Walsh asked the members to email their thoughts to him. He will consolidate those thoughts on behalf of the Commission and send it in.

## **9. HB 164**

Member Choate read HB 164, which was adopted by the NH Legislature:

*The select board shall have the authority to acquire or sell land, building or both and to demolish or otherwise dispose of buildings provided; however, that they shall first submit any such proposed acquisition, sale, demolition or disposal to the planning board, the conservation commission, the heritage commission and the historic district commission, if the building lies within the defined district, for review and recommendation by those bodies where such boards and commissions exist.*

He noted that this will be going into effect on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **10. RHC Merchandise update: Election Day sales Goss Farm Event**

Chair Walsh reported that the Commission sold \$40 in merchandise on election day. They are now in the process of getting all the related merchandise under one roof.

Mae Bradshaw noted that she owes \$40 for two hats that she purchased for the Senator and former Senator.

Treasurer White stated that Janice Ireland (Selectmen's Executive Assistant) is going to maintain the merchandise in her office. He and James Tegeder will be bringing the merchandise to the Town Hall.

Chair Walsh stated that next month they will have a better idea of what they have for inventory and that will coincide with the Goss Farm Event. There will be a table at the event in conjunction with Rye Advocates. The Heritage Commission will be present to sell hats and umbrellas. Any member who would like to be involved with working the table can let him know.

**11. Rye Magazine article submitted** re: house plaques; further advertising/marketing

There will be an article regarding the house plaque project in the September issue of Rye Magazine. There was a piece in the Portsmouth Herald online. Chair Walsh noted there has been some interest in the house plaque project. Information about the plaques can be found on the Commission's page on the Town's website. The plaques may be ordered online as well.

Treasurer White reported that they have received their first request for a plaque for 234 Washington Road (Varrell House).

**12. Parsonage items**

Chair Walsh pointed out that all the items from the Parsonage building are being stored in Rye. He has made contact with the organizer. The Commission can arrange a time to go over and take an inventory. The idea will probably be to put them in the museum. The first step will be to see what is there and how much space they may need at the museum. Once a date is set, he will let the Commission know.

**13. Mae Bradshaw, open alternate position**

Mae Bradshaw expressed her interest in serving as an alternate on the Commission.

Chair Walsh welcomed Mae back, as she has always been a great asset to the Commission.

**Motion by Gail Hughes to recommend Mae Bradshaw, as an alternate to the Heritage Commission, to the Select Board. Seconded by Peter Hughes.**

**Vote: 5-0-1 Abstained: Bill Epperson**

**14. Gazebo Repairs Update**

Chair Walsh reported that Alex Herlihy knows a carpenter who has expressed interest in doing the work; however, it's been hard to get people committed. The Commission is now back to trying to find someone to do the work.

Member Lagana stated that his friend has expressed interest in the project. He is a very good carpenter and has done this work his entire life. The gentleman is now retired, so he has time to do the job.

Selectmen's Rep Epperson stated that his opinion is that they need to get the gazebo up off the ground. They should put out an RFP to get someone to at least make a concrete pad or some kind of base for it.

The Commission agreed.

Member Lagana agreed to contact his friend to confirm his availability.

There was some discussion on the RFP process.

Ms. Bradshaw pointed out that the library is looking for ideas for their park and want to coordinate with the commissions and committees in town. She suggested contacting Jeff Ross to see if they have an interest in the gazebo. They have talked about having such a structure.

The Commission agreed this was a great idea. Chair Walsh confirmed that he will reach out to Mr. Ross.

#### **15. Pulpit Rock Tower Inspection; Follow up**

Member Choate stated that through Gregg Mikolaities' contacts, they were in touch with a firm that sent two people to the site to inspect the tower. They did not think the tower is as bad as some people think it is. The main piece is the roof, but the rest of the structure is in pretty good shape. The report is due August 27<sup>th</sup> and it will be circulated to the Commission. He pointed out they were not as negative as other reports.

- **Next Meeting – Thursday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 p.m., Rye Town Hall**

#### **Adjournment**

**Motion by Gail Hughes to adjourn at 6:32 p.m. Seconded by David Choate. All in favor.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dyana F. Ledger