

Rye Heritage Commission  
Meeting  
Thursday, May 5, 2022  
5:30 PM – Town Hall

***Members present: Chair Phil Walsh, Vice-Chair Gail Hughes, Peter White, David Choate, Bev Giblin, Frank Lagana, and Alternate Elizabeth Sanborn and Mae Bradshaw and Selectmen's Rep Bill Epperson.***

**Welcome/Call to Order:**

Chair Walsh called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. and led the pledge of allegiance.

- **Member Introductions**
- **Review and Approval of April Meeting Minutes**

**Motion by Peter White to accept the meeting minutes of April 7<sup>th</sup> as presented. Seconded by Frank Lagana. Vote: 6-0-2 Abstained: David Choate and Bev Giblin**

- **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Peter White noted that the commission has a balance in the checking account of \$19,250, which is the same as March 31<sup>st</sup>. There is a total of \$7,912 for town hall restricted funds. Gazebo restricted funds are \$6,160. Unrestricted funds are \$5,179. They have spent only 9% of the 2022 Budget so far this year.

Member Bradshaw asked about the \$10,000 that was set aside for the windows.

Treasurer White responded that they would take the \$7,912 from the restricted funds and the balance from the unrestricted funds.

**Motion by Gail Hughes to approve the treasurer's report as presented. Seconded by Frank Lagana. All in Favor.**

- **Demolition Review Committee Update**

Member Choate reported that the Demo Review Committee has a meeting tomorrow to discuss a building on Jenness Ave. It is a non-contributing building.

Member Choate also noted that 0 Brackett Road sold. It is on the corner of Brackett and Sagamore Road. He reached out to the selling agent and the buyer. The buyer is very much a preservationist and wants to restore the building. The Conservation Commission has purchased that other parcel that has the billboard on it. Member Choate told the new owner if he runs into any code or building issues that makes restoration or renovations unfeasible, to please let the Heritage Commission know as soon as possible, so that they might be of some help.

- **Rye Advocates Update**

Member Choate reported that Rye Advocates met the other night, which was a restart after a few months of hibernation. There were two requests that came out of that meeting. They are actively involved in trying to digitize all the information they have of pre-1901 structures. They have a lot of good survey information. Part of the survey was that if the property owner could answer three questions they would be put into a drawing for a prize. The winner was a property on South Road. He asked the Commission to approve an expenditure of \$65.00 to pay for the plaque.

Chair Walsh stated that he saw no objection to the expenditure.

**Motion by David Choate to approve the expenditure of \$65.00 for a plaque for the winner of the Rye Advocates Survey Contest. Seconded by Bev Giblin. All in Favor.**

Member Choate also reported that they plan to schedule a series of DYI historical house research forms.

Member Sanborn explained that the forms will help to build a narrative around these older homes giving its history. If any of these homes come up for sale, the potential buyers would have the history of the house, which may be more of an incentive to protect the house instead of tearing it down. Lydia and Chelsea will lead three small sessions (June, July, and August) at the library, to learn how to research and write these narratives.

Member Bradshaw pointed out that the New Hampshire Division of Historic Resources has an inventory form that they recommend the Heritage Commission use. It would be a good format to use.

Member Sanborn asked Member Bradshaw to send her a link to the NH Division of Historic Resources website.

Member Choate reported that they do not have a representative from the Heritage Commission on the Rye Advocates Committee. Frank is a rep but they are trying to have two members from each of the historic groups. He asked if anyone is interested. He suggested that if not he would reach out to Karin Nelson and Tim Durkin (the two new members).

All agreed that it would be a good way to get the new members involved. Member Choate will follow up with Karin Nelson.

- **Fundraising Subcommittee Update**

Chair Walsh noted that the Fundraising has been put on hold during Covid. Ideally, this would be something that could be picked back up soon.

Member Giblin reported that she was planning to start up again next spring. She explained that it takes several months to get the committee reestablished and working.

## **Old Business:**

- **Gazebo Update**

*No News; will discuss next month*

Member White recommended grading the land area as the first step. He asked if the Public Works Department could help in this respect.

Selectman Epperson pointed out that the DPW is busy right now getting the preparations done for the delivery of the salt shed, but he would ask. He has a meeting with PWD Rucker in the morning.

Member Choate agreed with Member Sanborn that there needs to be a Master Plan. He stated that he would reach out to Ann Weidman that works for JSA Architects. She is not an architect. She is a business development person. He will see if they will give them some free advice, in terms of the layout.

- **Memorial Day Table**

Chair Walsh stated that the Heritage Commission has been asked to staff a table to serve cookies and drinks. He suggested having some of the hats and other Heritage Commission merchandise there to sell.

Member Bradshaw explained that the Recreation Department provides the table. Member Bradshaw will get the cookies and lemonade. Member Hughes helps at the table on the day of the event.

Member White volunteered to take the lead on selling some merchandise.

**Motion by Phil Walsh to reimbursement Mae Bradshaw up to \$175.00 from unrestricted funds get the necessary provisions for the Memorial Day Table. Seconded by Peter White. All in favor.**

- **Masterplan**

Chair Walsh reported that he has taken everyone's edits and suggestions that have been sent in over the last month and compiled them into a draft document.

Member Bradshaw stated that she has done that also.

Chair Walsh commented that he would send his document to Member Bradshaw so that she can combine their efforts. Once that is completed, they will send it over to the committee as the Heritage's recommended suggestions.

Member Bradshaw pointed out that after going over the document again, after everyone put their input into it, she found the document to be very verbose and would benefit from a lot of excision. It would make it crisper.

Selectman Epperson explained that the Town has an RFP to hire an expert consultant to do the Master Plan, so there will be a lot of editing done.

### **New Business:**

Member White reported on the Signage Subcommittee:

- They have met twice
- There are five members
- They have discussed the type of signs, the materials, the costs
- They had identified about twenty locations and themes
  - They have narrowed it down to five to seven locations and themes
- They are planning to develop some proto types on paper.
- They will be visiting the appropriate Boards involved to review the appeal of the project.
  - Select Board
  - Public Works
  - Historic District Commission
- They plan to have a definitive project to present to people that is finite and funded, before they go for approval.
- The timeline is that it will take another month or two to get this much accomplished.
  - It would be put into effect next year.

Member White summarized that they have a good committee that is making progress.

Member White asked to talk about the fundraiser. He explained that in the past they did a mailer to all three thousand addresses in Rye. It cost about \$600 to \$700 in postage and printing. This year the costs have increased to around \$1,500 to \$1,600. He and Member Hughes decided to take the people that contributed to the Heritage Commission in recent years and compile them into a list. They have a list of sixty to seventy names. A letter that has been composed, along with envelopes with postage. The idea is that they divide the names among the members. Each member will take a letter and signs it and send it out to each of the names that they are assigned.

Member Choate suggested that members should send them out to the people that they know from the list.

Member Sanborn asked how they would get the message out to any new person in town. This discussion led to the reasons why the Heritage Commission hasn't raised much funding in the last few years. Member Bradshaw stated that other organizations have raised more money during the pandemic than any other time. She said that besides the pandemic as an excuse, the Heritage Commission did not have a compelling story. She felt that they have a compelling story right now, in that the window project is frozen because of the lead paint mediation.

Selectman Epperson noted that the project is on three of the windows are done and ready to be installed, as soon as they remediate the lead problem at the cost of \$3,800. He is not sure what will happen with the other windows. There are a total of eleven windows involved.

Member Bradshaw pointed out that the \$3,800 is to remediate just the lead in the area of the three windows. They need to raise money to remediate the remaining lead around the other

windows. She stated that she is sure that the 'Friends of Town Hall' would match any funds that they could raise.

Selectman Epperson explained that they are going to have the three windows put back in. Then they have a lead remediation company coming in to tell them what the hazards are of removing the other windows without sanding, just chipping the paint.

Selectman Epperson suggested trying to isolate the people in town that are new within the last twelve months and add them to the mailing list.

The members agreed to go through the list and take the people that they know first then divide up the rest of the names.

- **Graveyard Adoption #33**

Chair Walsh reported that he has received a grave yard adoption request from a Kristen Jensen for graveyard #33 (corner of Woodland and South Road). They live near the graveyard on South Road. Mrs. Jensen has already taken on the weeding and cleaning of the site.

**Motion by Phil Walsh to approve the adoption of graveyard #33 on South Road by Kristen Jensen. Seconded by Mae Bradshaw. All in Favor.**

- **Open Discussion**

Member Choate asked to talk about RSA 79-D. The Select Board has adopted it. How does the word get out so that people can apply? They must apply by April 15<sup>th</sup> and then there is an annual renewal.

Selectman Epperson responded that they have a list of eligible properties and there are not that many of them.

Member Choate pointed out that the Preservation Alliance has a full information package with the application forms. It was agreed that the eligible property owners should be notified. Member Choate said that he would get a package from Beverly Thomas at the NH Preservation Alliance and then the Commission can talk about how they will get the information out to the property owners.

- **Announcement**

Chair Walsh announced that tonight will be his last meeting with the Heritage Commission. He has come to this decision due to a recent health issue with his grandfather. He felt that he has to put family matters first. He added that his decision comes with a heavy heart. He has thoroughly enjoyed his time on this Commission in the last four years. He is very proud of the work that has been done and knows that this Commission will have much more success in the years ahead. He went on to thank Treasurer Peter White. He thanked Mae Bradshaw and Bev Giblin for their support. He also thanked Gail Hughes for everything she has done as the Vice-Chair. Vice-Chair Hughes will be the acting chair at the June meeting.

Member Bradshaw recommended that Bev Giblin step in to finish out Phil's term, as she has successfully done it before.

Member Giblin stated that she loves this commission and the work, but her only concern is that she is going to become a grandmother for the first time in July. They live in Vancouver British Columbia, so she will be an absentee person a lot. She would accept the position if everyone wants her to.

**Motion by Bill Epperson to appoint Bev Giblin as chair to the Heritage Commission to finish Phil's term. Seconded by Mae Bradshaw. All in Favor.**

### **Adjournment**

**Motion by Phil Walsh to adjourn the meeting at 6:29 p.m. Seconded by Bill Epperson. All in Favor.**

- Next Meeting: June 2nd, at 5:30 p.m., Town Hall

Respectfully Submitted  
Dyana F. Ledger