

RYE HERITAGE COMMISSION
Thursday, January 5, 2023, 5:30 p.m.
Rye Town Hall

Commission Present: *Acting Chair Gail Hughes, Treasurer Peter White, Alex Herlihy, David Choate, Frank Lagana, Alternates Karin Nelson, and Elizabeth Sanborn*

I. Call to Order

Acting Chair Hughes called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. and led the member introductions.

II. Review of Previous Meeting Minutes

Approval of minutes tabled.

III. Business

- **Treasurer's Report** – Peter White

Treasurer White reviewed the year end Treasurer's report. The Heritage Commission has \$43,517 in the bank. The fundraisers were highly successful. The amount of \$23,190 is earmarked for the town sign program. An amount of \$4,360 is earmarked for the gazebo. There is also money earmarked for the Rye400. Restricted funds in the amount of \$5,440 are for the Town Hall with an additional amount of \$10,276 in unrestricted funds. The unrestricted balance is extremely strong and will be used for the Town Hall windows.

The Heritage Commission had a budget in 2022 of \$9,500., which included a grant writing project that was not done. The Commission has spent only 25% of the 2022 budget and is turning back to the Town of Rye 75% of the budget. A total amount of \$2,400 was spent, which included the \$1,100 spent on the mailer. The mailer generated over \$23,000. The Commission's budget of \$4,800 for 2023 has been accepted by the Select Board and the Budget Committee.

- **Approval of Crown Trophy Invoice**

Motion by David Choate to approve the invoice from Crown Trophy in the amount of \$80.00 for the Louise Tallman Award. Seconded by Peter White. All in favor.

- **Demolition Review Committee**

Member Choate reported that no significant properties have been brought before the Demolition Review Committee recently. The Committee has been focusing on process. There was a

roundtable meeting with Town Administrator Matt Scruton, Planning Administrator Kim Reed, the two building inspectors, and Land Use Assistant Kara Campbell. The group discussed ways to get an early warning system in place to be able to talk to people before they spend money and time on a new design for their property when they might be convinced to save the structure. This discussion is ongoing.

Member Choate also reported that any changes to the Demolition Review Committee Ordinance were tabled by the Planning Board until the next ordinance amendment cycle, as board members had questions.

- **Gazebo**

Member Herlihy gave a quick update on the gazebo project. The construction company doing the work would like to first determine that the upper section the gazebo does not have lead paint.

Alternate Sanborn noted that Bill Epperson has sent the name of a company to Bev Giblin who could validate if it has lead paint or not. She suggested that the Commission think about what the options would be if the gazebo does or does not have lead paint, in order to keep the project moving forward.

Member Herlihy pointed out that if there is no lead, the construction company needs to give an estimate on what it will cost to reproduce the bottom and connect it to the top.

Alternate Sanborn explained there are two steps if there is lead paint; finding remediation and contacting the company who will do the work.

Treasurer White pointed out that if the project is not done, the donations that are earmarked for the gazebo will have to be returned to the donors.

Alternate Sanborn agreed to follow up with Bill Epperson and Triple Construction. She will also contact Building Inspector Chuck Marsden about vendors who are able to remediate lead paint. Alternate Sanborn will find out from Bev Giblin if she has contacted the company who can validate if it is lead paint.

Acting Chair Hughes commented that supposedly this is a historic structure from the Ocean Wave Hotel. However, anyone could put a gazebo on the site where the hotel was located. The point is whether this is authentic. If it's not authentic, then the Commission is wasting their time and money.

Alternate Sanborn pointed out that the project is already underway. The roadblocks at this point are the paint and the cost. If it's going to cost \$5,000 to remediate the lead paint, and there is only \$4,000 in donations, the money can be given back and the Commission can move onto other projects.

- **Graveyard Adoptions**

No updates or new information.

- **Rye Advocates**

Member Choate reported that Rye Advocates met recently and are back to regular meetings. At one of the Heritage Commission's recent meetings, they voted to grant the funds to pay for a website domain for the Rye Advocates. More follow up is needed on this vote. Member Choate also reported that the Advocates are in the process of setting up more workshops to do house history searches. They are also continuing to collect information from people that may have scrapbooks and pictures.

Member Herlihy noted that there was a media blitz in December to let people know about Rye Advocates. There was an article in Stroll Magazine and the two monthly newsletters that people subscribe to in Rye. He also noted that recently three documents were created that reflect the facts of pre-1901 houses. These documents are very helpful for the public to access information.

- **Rye Signage**

Member Herlihy reminded the Commission that the seven signs, which are fully funded, are for Goss Farm, Brown Lane Farm on West Road, Pulpit Rock Tower, Brackett Burial Ground, Rye Center, Trefethen's Corner, and the historic hotels. The signs are very close to being ready.

There was some discussion about the location of the signs.

IV. New Business

- Alternate Nelson spoke with Frank Drake in October about the Rye Beach Precinct setting up a Heritage Commission or becoming part of Rye's Heritage Commission. Frank Drake agreed to set up a meeting with the Rye Beach Precinct Commissioners to discuss the idea with a representative from the Rye Heritage Commission. Mr. Drake is now waiting for a call from the Heritage Commission to set up that meeting.
- Member Herlihy spoke about the Civic Fest being held by the Rye Civic League at the Deliberative Session on February 4th. All commissions have been asked to participate. The Civic Fest will be held at lunchtime in the junior high cafeteria. Food will be available and tables will be set up for town groups to hand out information about their organization to the public. The intent of the event is to encourage more participation in the town meeting. Member Herlihy noted that he would be happy to run a table for the Heritage Commission. It was agreed that the Commission's merchandise could be sold at the table.

Adjournment

Motion by Peter White to adjourn at 6:10 p.m. Seconded by Alex Herlihy. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted: Dyana F. Ledger