

RYE HERITAGE COMMISSION
Thursday, May 4, 2023, 5:30 p.m.
Rye Town Hall

Commission Present: *Chair Bev Giblin, Vice-Chair Gail Hughes, Peter White, Alex Herlihy, David Choate, and Selectmen's Rep Bill Epperson*

Not Present: *Member Frank Lagana, Alternates Elizabeth Sanborn, and Mae Bradshaw*

I. Call to Order

Chair Giblin called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

II. Review of Previous Meeting Minutes

- April 6, 2023

Motion by Peter White to approve the minutes of May 4, 2023 as presented. Seconded by Alex Herlihy. Vote: 5-0-1 Abstained: David Choate

III. Business

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

Treasurer White noted that the Heritage Commission has \$35,998 in its account. One more disbursement is going out in the amount of \$3,000 for the signs. This will still leave a nice balance of approximately \$33,000 in total. He also noted that the sign contributions are going to be about \$12,000., which would be earmarked for signs. Signs could be done for cemeteries and houses. There are a lot of things that can be done for signs. He continued the gazebo has \$2,000 earmarked from unrestricted funds, which brings it up to \$6,660. The unrestricted funds are \$8,462. The Town Hall restricted funds are \$5,440. If the Heritage Commission is going to contribute in a big way towards the windows, more money will have to be raised. Treasurer White pointed out that from an operating standpoint, the Commission has spent four percent of the budget for 2023.

- **Approval of Invoices**
None

- **Memorial Day Event**

Alternate Mae Bradshaw will be setting up the table for cookies and lemonade at the Memorial Day event. This will be a forthcoming expenditure to reimburse the cost of the refreshments. Members are asked to help volunteer at the refreshment table.

Treasurer White noted there is \$200 in the budget to reimburse Mae Bradshaw for the refreshments.

- **Demolition Review Committee**

Member Choate reported that the Demolition Review Committee hasn't had any applications before them recently of any consequence. The owners of 5 Cable Road will be before the ZBA for demolition. There is some confusion on whether the house fits demolition review criteria. The tax card says the house is old enough to meet the criteria; however, some people say it was actually rebuilt from the foundation up about twenty years ago.

- **Gazebo**

Chair Giblin noted that she is going to speak with her neighbor who may be able to do the work on the gazebo. At this time, he is out of the area.

Alex Herlihy reported that a quote came in since the last meeting from Unified Builders at \$19,000. The Committee agreed this is too much to spend for the gazebo.

Selectman Epperson agreed to speak with Bud Jordan again about the project, as he may know of someone who can do the work.

Member White commented that the Commission should resolve this project over the summer. The intent is to build a new base and put the top on the base. Anything under \$10,000 would work because the Heritage Commission has the money.

Member Choate will also follow up with TF Moran, as they were going to prepare a site plan pro bono. He will also follow up with Preservationist Steve Bedard to see if he knows of anyone.

- **Graveyard adoptions and plans for promotion program and event in October**

Member Herlihy stated that a multi-pronged publicity approach is going to be taken with the graveyard adoptions. The Commission will identify as many graveyards as possible and identify the ones that have official caretakers. The publicity will be "adopt a graveyard." This information is going to be put in the Town Newsletter, and Stroll Magazine. Starting in June, this will be a regular feature in the Rye Civic League's general announcements. An article will also be done for the Historical Society's Newsletter for June. Member Herlihy suggested a feature for the Portsmouth Herald.

The Commission agreed this would be a good idea.

Member Choate suggested signs on each adopted graveyard, similar to the Historic District signs.

The Commission agreed this would also be a good idea. The sign should be small; listing the name of the gravesite and the person who adopted the site.

Chair Giblin spoke about the idea of having a reception for people who have adopted a graveyard around Halloween time. The reception could be held at the museum.

- **Rye Advocates**

Member Choate reported that Rye Advocates met on Tuesday night. Another house seminar is going to be scheduled. The Advocates are still working on getting the website up and running. He also reported that the Historic District is working on expanding the District down Central. A CLG Grant has been applied for and it will be before the Select Board for support. The grant will be for \$20,000., which will be 100% funded by CLG. The grant will be used to hire a consultant to do the study needed in order to get the properties into the Historic District. He pointed out that a lot of the property owners of the properties being considered are on the Historic District Commission. At this time, there has not been a lot of resistance to the idea. A total of eight properties are being considered. He also pointed out that the study will give a lot of information about some of the old house in the proposed district.

- **Rye Signage**

There has been a slight delay with the signs; however, they will be up mid-June.

- **Pulpit Rock Tower**

Chair King noted that she and Patricia Weathersby are going to meet to discuss the Pulpit Rock Tower. She will also be attending the Commission's June meeting.

- **August 19th Rye400 Event**

Member Herlihy reported that Rye Day is being held at Parsons Field on August 19th. There will be food trucks, live music, and plenty of activities throughout the day. He has officially signed the Heritage Commission up for a 10 x 10 spot. The Commission will be selling the Town Hall merchandise on Rye Day.

IV. New Business

- *Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, June 1, 2023, 5:30 p.m., Town Hall*

Motion by Peter White to adjourn at 6:15 p.m. Seconded by Bev Giblin. All in favor.