

The Falmouth Historical Society

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Zoom Meeting—January 3, 2023

The meeting came to order at 6:35 p.m. Present were Betsy Whitcomb, David Farnham, Ron Scorsone, Sally Farneth, and Sue Farnham.

President's Remarks

David shared his “take-away” after viewing this month’s reports. There was nothing exciting or dramatic which he views as good. The reports tell the story of a small nonprofit doing pretty much all the things it is expected to do and doing them well.

He has observed a trend in which work in some areas slows while work picks up in others. This is partly due to numbers. We have a dedicated but small team of volunteers and there is only so much they can do. It is also due to “serialization” of functions requiring special skills or knowledge. As the scope of Society activities expand, some work is delayed because volunteers with the necessary skills are busy on something else. This is especially true with projects requiring expertise in computer applications. We need more volunteers because we are doing more.

We have discussed ways to attract and recruit more volunteers. We should seek out people—such as those at OceanView—with the skills, experience, and time we need. First, we need to develop a systematic plan to recruit more volunteers. Second, this plan needs to have a structured process for welcoming new volunteers into the Society and teaching them about the things we do. At the recent Maine Archives and Museums conference, there was a good presentation by a trolley museum in Massachusetts about how to go about this. For now, David is looking for a board member to step forward and take the lead.

Annual Meeting

Betsy has reserved the council chambers at Town Hall for January 18th with the 25th as a snow date.

The agenda follows the usual formula: the business meeting consisting of officer and committee reports (in round-robin) followed by two presentations based

upon recent local history research. David proposed we talk about work done on (1) the Casco Terrace-Amerescoggin neighborhoods, and (2) the Brackett family. In both presentations, we will share what we learned as well as how we overcame the obstacles we encountered.

Betsy commented that most of the events took place in Portland. David agreed, pointing out that the events occurred while Falmouth Neck and Deering were still part of Falmouth. We respond to queries about present-day and colonial Falmouth (up until the time other parts peeled off to form their own towns).

Secretary's Report

Minutes. The minutes for the December Board meeting were reviewed online.

Membership. Our active membership is 105. It grew by one and a lapsed member renewed.

Treasurer's Report

As described in a lengthy email sent to the Board, the Society's books now correctly reflect the cost of material and inventory for the cookbook. We handled the sales of four books last year on a consignment; we need to reexamine how we did that.

As discussed during the December Board meeting, liquidity dropped while inventory assets grew. Liquidity will improve as cookbooks are sold.

Finances. The Society has a balance of \$8,664 in its operating accounts and \$21,538 with Maine Community Foundation. Accounts payable is \$518 and sales tax payable is \$68. Our operating accounts contain 196 days of cash. Our estimated end of year balance is \$127. Our net current assets (excluding long-term assets) declined by \$412. Our actual expenses are \$439 over budget. Our net operating revenue is a \$2,386 but \$2,500 of income was in a restricted grant leaving a deficit of \$114. We need to recover \$1,689 from sales of new merchandise before we break even and recoup the cost tied in material and inventory accounts.

Committee Reports

Programs. There hasn't been any follow-up from Falmouth Schools. Sally noted we still need to provide a period map showing the presence of the Aucocisco band of Wabanaki in pre-Colonial Falmouth.

Programs.

Upcoming Events.

- Annual Meeting.

Museum Operation & Exhibits. The Museum and Barn are closed for winter.

Collections. Nothing significant to report.

Local History. We responded to six queries during the past month. There were no additions to reference materials on the website.

Communications. The winter newsletter with tax receipt and membership renewal letters will go out soon. It will be followed by an email blast and Facebook post.

Merchandise. We did it! There was an initial run of eight pairs of cookbooks before Christmas: four pairs were sold, one pair is the proof copy, another pair is on display at Town Hall, and two pairs are in stock for sale

A banner for the “Falmouth Heritage Bookstore” was added to the front page of the Society website.

Sue is conducting another review of Sweets after a typo was discovered. The illustrations and captions require some minor adjustments. Then we will make a second run of 16 pairs.

Mail order delivery will be added to the online bookstore next month. Sue will handle sales fulfillment.

Museum Buildings & Grounds. Ron reported that winterization of the Museum is done. The water is shut off and drained. Signs announcing winter closure are posted.

Ron had good news: the sump sensor is working! It is now connected through the Museum wi-fi network. Alarms will trigger email and text alerts. Early warning should reduce the likelihood of calamities such as last spring's flooding when the sump pump and servicing breaker suffered catastrophic failures.

The Board applauded Ron's hard work cleaning and sanitizing the basement; it hasn't looked this good in years.

Ron also reported that the town allows up to ten years to migrate from septic to sewer. When a new line goes in, the town wants new connections to be made within 90 days but requires connection within ten years. This will allow us to pursue grant funding for the sewer and other major facility improvements in a more deliberate manner.

Technology. Nothing significant to report.

Development. We received another \$750 from the Perkins family. The scholarship for 2023 is fully funded. We anticipate an additional donation to support the Society.

New Business

Rich raised a question leading to a short discussion about the volunteer workload and avoiding burnout.

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Suzanne Farnham, Secretary