

# The Falmouth Historical Society

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Zoom Meeting—December 6, 2022

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

## **President's Remarks**

David was amazed as he made a list of the Society's accomplishments for the year. We completed substantially more than in 2021. This is all due to hard work by our most dedicated and active volunteers—the Board members. Everyone pulled more than their own weight. Thank you!

David recalled where we three years ago. The Museum had been open year-round since 2016. The number of visitors had been growing slowly but steadily. Faced with the high cost of keeping a 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse open during Maine winters, the Board made the hard decision to close the Museum for six months of the year. We hoped that our growing online presence would allow us to sustain our level of activity during winter. Then Covid arrived. This year our tempo has rebounded to (or exceeded) pre-pandemic levels. Will our workload drop off now that the Museum is closed for the season? Based on the projects now underway and the volume of requests arriving every week, there will be no "winter break." We can expect to be busy year-round.

Betsy mentioned a call from a member of the community who wanted to visit the Museum for research. We will arrange to make the material available at Falmouth Memorial Library.

## **Secretary's Report**

Minutes. The draft minutes for the November Board meeting were distributed for review.

Membership. Our active membership is 104.

## **Treasurer's Report**

The Society's charitable organization license has been renewed for 2022-23.

Finances. The Society has a balance of \$9,257 in its operating accounts and \$21,538 with Maine Community Foundation. Accounts payable is \$1,136 and sales tax payable is \$49. Our operating accounts contain 195 days of cash. Our estimated end of year balance is \$268. Our net current assets (excluding long-term assets) declined by \$1,498. Our actual expenses are \$102 over budget. Our net operating revenue is a \$2,035. Taken together, these numbers tell us the balances in our operating accounts are about \$500 below where we would like to be and will be much lower next month due to our expenditures for merchandised.

There followed a short lesson on accounting. When the Society purchases merchandise, such as the Arcadia book, the purchase is not treated as an expense. Instead, it is a transfer from a cash account to inventory. The bottom line on our balance sheet (“Statement of Financial Position”) is unchanged.

With the cookbook, the Society is purchasing material, such as binders and paper, and creating the products to be sold. These appear as expenditures under “Merchandise.” Once cookbooks are assembled, the expenditures will be reduced by the cost of materials used and inventory will be increased by the same amount for cost of goods.

Over the next couple of months, this process will create distortions in our financial reports. The projected cost for 48 pairs of cookbooks will be about \$2,100. Some of this is already reflected in the higher-than-usual figure for Accounts Payable. When the dust settles, the Society’s liquidity will drop until we replenish the till through sales.

## **Committee Reports**

### Programs.

#### *Recent Events.*

- Election Day. Our table was set up under the canopy by 9:15 a.m. and we closed at 5:30 p.m. Fortunately, we had brought a bright lantern to illuminate the table. It was busy day with lot of engagements, several of which resulted in follow-ups. It was very breezy, so we put out only the most popular merchandise; sales were minimal.
- Merry Mix ‘n Mingle at Legion Park. Our table was set up under the tent before 5:00 p.m. We packed up after the fireworks. Attractions were

distributed around the parking lot this year and fewer people stopped by our table. We had a handful of engagements, some of which resulted in follow-ups.

This brings the number of public events during 2022 in which we participated at locations other than the museum to eight.

#### *Upcoming Events.*

- Annual Meeting. Betsy has reserved the council chambers at Town Hall for January 18<sup>th</sup> with the 25<sup>th</sup> as a snow date. We have blocked 6:30-9:00 p.m. for a 90-minute meeting at 7:00 p.m. Just in case there a conflict arises, we have a backup reservation (late afternoon) for the Russell Room at Falmouth Memorial Library.

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

Collections. Ron reported that once he is finished winterizing the Museum, he will resume work on the catalog.

Our most recent acquisition is a vintage recording microbarograph donated by Paul Cousins, a prominent meteorologist who has lived atop Blackstrap Hill for 35 years. Artifacts and documents to be accessioned are accumulating on the table at the Museum.

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

Communications. No activity this month. The next newsletter, accompanied by the tax letters, will go out in early January.

Merchandise. Should we boost online sales by placing a link to the “bookstore” on the front page of the Society website? The consensus of the Board is that we should. We will add mail order for Maine (where we are set up for sales tax) and New Hampshire (where our merchandise isn’t subject to sales tax). Sue will process the orders.

The cookbook is undergoing final editing. There should be a final proof this week. Material is on hand or on order for 48 pairs.

The cookbook will be “low margin” due to the cost of materials. We will be lucky if we make \$5 per book. A proposed price list (tax included) was presented. The proposal was accepted with small adjustments.

	Volume I (Savory)	Volume II (Sweet)
Individual Price	\$27	\$30
Member Price	\$25	\$27
Bundled Price	\$52	
Member Bundle	\$50	

Museum Buildings & Grounds. Ron said that he plans to install the sump sensor and complete winterization shortly. There was a discussion about obtaining a grant for the painting and septic work.

Technology. Nothing significant to report.

Development. The Perkins family contributed another \$2,500 towards the 2023 scholarship. Unless Falmouth Schools suggests otherwise, the award will be \$2,500 for two years.

**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 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Suzanne Farnham, Secretary