

**Lower Merion Historical Society
Executive Board Meeting
Lower Merion Academy
January 23, 2014**

Present: Jerry Francis, Ken Brier, Joanne Murray, Steve Selinger, Pete Hoskins, Bobbie McElroy

Excused Absence: Max Buten, Leon Levine.

Invited Guests: Brian McGuire, Sadie Francis, Patrick Doyle, Carole Strickland, John Hepp, Perry Hamilton, Martha Moffat, Louis Barson, Brandon Shuler.

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

The Minutes of the September 24, 2013 Board meeting were approved unanimously.

Reports: Jerry Francis reported that the draft of our Strategic Plan is a forward looking document and the theme for the evening's meeting is "A New Year and New Beginnings for the Historical Society."

Jerry asked that we go around the meeting table and introduce ourselves. The Board Members stated their position on the Board and the Invited Guests gave their names and the reason for their interest in the Historical Society. If the guests were interested in becoming a nominee for the position of Director, they should talk it over with Jerry and Ken. They would then be placed on the ballot at our April Annual Meeting and voted in at the election for the position of Director.

We currently have an opening for the position of Solicitor and Jim Ettelson has agreed to be our Solicitor. Jim will not be a Board member, but has agreed to be there when we need his services.

Regarding the Cynwyd Train Station, we still have a "Punch List" to complete. We only have a "Conditional" Certificate of Occupancy for the first floor rental area and we will be asking the Township for a final inspection to obtain our Certificate of Occupancy. The vestibule area will be used as a Trailhead for the *Cynwyd Heritage Trail*. A memorial plaque is being created that will list the names of contributors to our Capital Campaign for the *Cynwyd Station Revitalization Project*.

Sadie Francis discussed the *Cynwyd Station Café and Tea Room*. The Montgomery County Health Inspector has given approval on his pre-final inspection visit. Lease-hold improvements are on-going and the Café will also need a code compliant inspection by township staff. Sadie is hoping to open next month and will send out announcements as soon as there is a definite opening date. The Café's website is *cynwydstationcafe.com*. Also, there will be the 2nd Annual Craft Fair and Native Plant Sale on Sunday, April 27th in the Cynwyd Station Park.

Treasurer: Jerry reported for Leon Levine that on October 12th the Historical Society signed an engagement letter with Gary Kay of J. Bernard Kay & Company outlining the terms of his services as our Accountant and Bookkeeper. Copies of the letter of agreement were circulated to the Board. The *December 31, 2013 Statement of Financial Position* will be sent out at a later date.

Dean Dortone, Chief Financial Officer for Lower Merion Township has not yet completed the *2012 Financial Review* and that will be sent out at a later date.

Database Administration/Newsletter: Joanne Murray has been working on the *Vertical Response* service where we store contact information for our “Milestone” eNewsletter and our membership data. Combined, we have over 900 names/entities in our database.

Education: A report was circulated that listed the 16 lectures given in 2013. People just don’t seem to come out like they used to. We will investigate having our lectures video taped and making them available on our website.

Library: We have a very special library and need to share our information in as many ways as possible. We are also the depository of Bob Swartz’s photo collection, containing fantastic photos. Our goal is to educate. Last August we were audited by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Of the 44 libraries they did, we were ranked # 2 or # 3 and commended for being well organized.

Website/Facebook: A report was circulated that showed that our website had 159,415 visits in 2013.

Joanne announced that we moved to our new website platform earlier today...January 23, 2014! This was a soft launch to check for any problems. Everyone should try the website and look for problems. A formal announcement will be made in our in our March eNewsletter. To show our appreciation to Joanne, who was the team leader for the project, she was presented with a *bouquet of flowers* and congratulations from all of us.

Membership: On January 14th, mailed out via USPS, the 2014 *Membership Renewal Notices*. So far, we have 181 un-paid members and 690 Friends of the Historical Society.

Program: The Society is very active behind the scenes in several areas of the Township. Recently we helped facilitate the 50th *Anniversary of the Ardmore Avenue School* and are actively assisting the Cynwyd Elementary School with their year long *Centennial Celebration of Service to the Community*.

On March 13th there will be a program for the First Day of Issue of the Alfred “Chief” Anderson Postage Stamp. A program will be presented in the evening, at Goodheart Hall, on Bryn Mawr College campus, to honor the Tuskegee Airmen.

Along with the Township, a program is being developed for the dedication of the newly installed 22 *Preserve America* signs at the Cynwyd Train Station and along the Cynwyd *Heritage Trail*.

Property: Pete Hoskins is the Chair of this committee and Steve Selinger will assist. They will develop guidelines, including the care and maintenance, of our two historic properties (the Lower Merion Academy and the Cynwyd Train Station).

Publications: 74 copies of The First 300 book remain in the inventory. There are 71 copies of Lower Merion and Narberth remaining in inventory. Monies from these publications have been helping support the Society over the past few years. We now need to look for new revenues to replace this lost income.

Strategic Planning: Notes from the Strategic Planning Session, on February 9, 2013, were included in the packet for this meeting. New Committee Members will need to look over and possibly revise and update the project. We need to stay relevant and get into the electronic age. The Strategic Plan is a work in progress.

Old Business: In 1995, with a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the Historical Society identified and restored the 15 Historic Milestones located along Montgomery Avenue, Old Gulph Road and Lancaster Avenue. The Township agreed to protect these historic objects and take care of them, but they have not done so. In addition, there is no mechanism in place to protect the Township's the Historic Street Signs. Mid-Century architecture buildings were discussed, with various views and opinions expressed.

New Business: A Budget Committee will be formed to include Leon Levine and Jerry Francis.
A Financial Review Committee will be appointed.
The Nominating Committee will be Jerry Francis and Ken Brier.

The Meeting was adjourned at 9:07 PM

Respectively Submitted,
Barbara McElroy
Recording Secretary