

Lower Merion Historical Society
Executive Board Meeting

Thursday, June 18, 2015
The Lower Merion Academy
(Revised August 26, 2015)

Present: Jerry Francis, Carole Strickland, John Hepp, Leon Levine, Perry Hamilton, Ken Brier, Martha Moffat, Bobbie McElroy

Excused Absences: Joanne Murray, Lou Barson, Max Buten, Ted Goldsborough, Pat Doyle, Pete Hoskins

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the April 26th Board Meeting were unanimously approved.

Jerry reported that the Nominating Committee of Jerry, Lou Barson, and Ken Brier met to interview candidates for the open position of Corresponding Secretary to replace the late Steve Selinger. Five people have been interviewed, with two people are still on the list to be interviewed. The Committee will take their time to be sure they get the right person.

The Bala Cynwyd Middle School recently installed 91 security cameras, both inside and outside the building. A new fence and gates will be installed around the school play grounds and will be kept locked during the school day.

Treasurer's Report: Leon reported on the Balance Sheet of the Treasurer's Report he sent to the Board, showing the increase in the net worth of close to \$5,000, as a result of having rent at the Cynwyd Train Station. Transparency is important in the use of public funds and we have a pretty good set of controls. Any expenditure in excess of \$250, the President and Treasurer must cosign that expense. In 2014 we would have been in the hole, if we had not had the book income and the rent at the Train Station. The book "The First 300" is sold out. We are on target for the first 7 months of 2015, but we will still owe federal taxes on the Train Station income. We should consider eventually replacing the endowment we spent on the Cynwyd Train Station. The motion to approve the 2014 and to date 2015 Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved.

Jerry reported that he has discontinued the sale of "The First 300" book. The last 5 copies will be stored in our archives for historical purposes. We printed 4,500 copies, which sold at a net profit to the society of over \$200,000 and our thanks go to the late Dick Jones for all his efforts. Jerry was able to get grants when the book was printed, so all revenue from sales came to the Historical Society. All pictures and text from the book are available on-line.

Financial Review: Carole Strickland and Perry Hamilton will do the Financial Review of the Historical Society and present their report in September.

Database Administration Review/Newsletter: Joanne continues to work on the database. To date we have 921 listings, 66 paid members for 2015, 21 life members, 728 Friends and 99 members have been sent 2nd notices.

Education: Ted, Max and Jerry spend a lot of time answering emails and opening the Academy to library patrons who are looking for historical information. Jerry believes that our special library collections fulfill the Historical Society's primary mission.

Website: Joanne is almost finished upgrading the Website. She has installed an enhanced search capability that now includes the "building photos" database. Joanne will be moving, so we are looking for a new Web Master. Ken reported that Charlie Davidson is trying to help us find a new Web Master. We do have 8 other databases that we would like to add to the website.

Membership: Jerry has mailed 2nd notices to Members who have not yet paid for 2015. Pat Doyle will be taking over the Membership Programs.

Programs: So far this year 11 programs have been completed. There are 7 more programs on the agenda scheduled for later in the year. Jerry hopes to have some presented in the Cynwyd Station Park on its railroad history.

Property: Ken Brier reported that the current second floor tenant, Doug Bagley as of June 30th, will be vacating the Cynwyd Train Station and leaving his caretaker position. He will be leaving in order to move in with and take care of his mother at the Thomas Wynne Apartments. Geoff Forney, a lawyer, is interested in the 2nd floor apartment and signing a one year lease, year to year, with a 60 day written notice to leave. It would start on July 1st at \$900 a month rent, plus utilities, plus caretake responsibilities. Jerry then recused himself from the discussion and left the room. Ken then assumed Head of the Board for the discussion. Leon made a motion, which Perry seconded, that Jerry signs the lease for Geoff Forney, with the rent the same \$900 a month plus utilities. The motion was unanimously approved.

Public Relations: Jerry noted that the Historical Society is in the press a lot lately. For example, Ted and Jerry are doing programs with Mark Murray at LMTV. A recent show was about Jim Easter and Cynwyd Train Station while another show was about the Ned Stumpo and his work at the station. Also, "Spoke" magazine interviewed Jerry about the trails in Philadelphia and the Manayunk Bridge.

Strategic Planning: The Key Man Insurance agent, Charlotte Stellwagon, is getting bids on the policy for Jerry. She is working with the various companies seeking competitive rates.

The collaborative agreement between Lower Merion & Narberth Community Television and Radnor Studio 21 is still being worked on. In the meantime the Historical Society (Jerry and Ted) will use LMTV for their programs.

Joint meetings have been held, chaired by Christian Busch, with Lower Merion Historical Commission, the Historical Architectural Review Board, the Lower Merion Conservancy, and the Lower Merion Historical Society. The goal is to form a Lower Merion Preservation Trust.

Ken Brier, as Chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee, requested that Jerry leave the meeting to allow discussion of a personnel matter concerning Jerry. Ken then presented a recommendation of the Strategic Planning Committee that, considering the extraordinary number of hours Jerry has been volunteering to Society business and our

desire for the continuation of that level of service to the Society, the Society contribute a monthly sum to Jerry as a consulting fee, stipend or other appropriately titled amount which will enable him to continue this level of activity with the Society.

After discussion by the Directors present, it was recommended the the Strategic Planning Committee prepare a formal proposal to be considered by the Board at the September meeting.. Jerry returned to the meeting at the conclusion of this discussion.

Old Business:

Historical Commission Collaboration: Jerry reported that the efforts to save the William Penn Inn are moving toward success.

“Roberts III, John (1724-1778) Manuscript Memorandum and Account Books” were auctioned off at Skinner’s Auction on June 7th and sold for \$10,455.

Andy Amsterdam (Franklin Maps) is scanning an oversized illustration of “1881 Manayunk and West Manayunk” print and he will then provide copies for our collection.

Jerry has sent a letter to the Georgia Historical Society and to the Daughters of the American Revolution inviting them to our November 1st re-dedication ceremony. We will be replacing a brass plaque at St. John’s Episcopal Church at Levering Mill Road in Bala Cynwyd. The plaque commemorates the 4th Battallion of Georgia Centennials who camped at this location back in August 1777.

We are supporting the change in the Township Ordinance that will designate historic objects and protect such objects such as our Milestones and the Keystone Markers.

Eight Sleeper Stones are being moved to the Cynwyd Station Park and installed with a sign designating their history.

The owners of the Bala (Egyptian) Theater are currently going through the “discovery” phase of litigation, which will probably take over a year to complete. There is ongoing concern in the community about the future of this building.

New Business:

Jerry is working with an estate-planning attorney for a Bala Cynwyd neighbor who wants to set up an endowment for the Historical Society.

Carole Strickland reported about a meeting at Bryn Mawr Collage with Amtrak over electrification of their Main Line tracks. She noted that Merion and Wynnewood train stations are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

The Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara McElroy

Our Next Executive Board Meeting is
Thursday, September 10, 2015
at 7:30 PM at the Academy