

The West Brookfield Historical Commission met on Monday, February 3, 2020 in the Commission office in the Town Hall. Attending were Dan Hamilton, Anne-Marie Nolan, Rob Lyon, with Dick Rossman presiding. Byron Aulick of eWide Technology Solutions, Inc. attended and presented information on his company and services, See below.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Town Hall Maintenance: Dick reported receiving email communication from Bob Haveles of Architectural Insights which include a second draft of the report with the financial estimates of each item now included and specified.

After receiving the final report from Bob Haveles in the coming month, the Commission will review these priorities again considering the cost factor of each. The details of each item are found in the report which will be presented to the Board of Selectmen prior to their regular meeting with Mr. Haveles and the Commission attending. Hopefully this will occur in April. Dick has written a cover letter to be included with the report.

Website: The website and the calendar of events are continuously updated as needed. Dan confirmed the successful transfer of the site to IONOS, the new Internet Service Provider. He noted that he had not received a response from Douglas Sumner who had been notified of the change in providers. Dan also reported that the new site is now a secure site and is accurately addressed as:

<https://www.westbrookfield.org>

The Domain Name registration for the year is included in the cost of the ISP. A motion was unanimously passed to reimburse Dan in the amount of \$12 from the England Fund. This amount is the total payment for the year ending January 2021. Future payments will be \$9 a month, paid annually.

A summary of the new website with all pertinent passwords, accounts, levels of access, and tech support was provided to Dick and Anne-Marie for their files. A copy will be given to any other interested members at the next meeting. Incoming emails are currently automatically forwarded to personal email accounts of Dick and Dan.

Treasurer's Report: Anne-Marie submitted a financial report as of January 2020.

H.S. Scholarship: As Louise was unable to attend the meeting, Dick will contact her to confirm copies of the application have been sent to the press. Anne-Marie reported receipt of incomplete documentation from one of last year's winners and will respond with a request for the remainder. After discussion, it was decided to amend next year's winner's verification instructions to specify a return deadline of mid-February for copy of first semester transcript and proof of second semester enrollment. This allows time necessary to issue a check to the scholarship winner without delay.

Lucy Stone Nomination: Amy Dugas has completed the revised application and it was mailed on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019. We now await a response from the State.

Old Indian Cemetery: Phase 3 has been completed and phase 4 will commence in the Spring.

Methodist Cemetery: Dan will visit the Boston University School of Theology Library on February 19<sup>th</sup>, which holds some 1843-1880 records for the Brookfield Methodist Episcopal Church. He will look for any

references to the earlier Ragged Hill Methodist Church hoping to gain more information on the ownership question.

Demolition Delay Bylaw: Rebekah DeCoursey will arrange a meeting with Jesse and the building inspector to go over the bylaw.

Master Plan Implementation: ; Dick reported that key objectives were recently reviewed now that Town Center Bylaw draft has been completed. Louise prepared a large map outlining the Center Historic District & Center Historic District Expansion boundaries. Boundaries of new Town Center District are slightly different and will only be confirmed when the new Bylaw is approved. At that time a new map will also be prepared.

The Master Plan Committee is hoping to develop a CPA (Community Preservation Act) to aid in funding future programs and needs of our community. Dick had provided information to the Commission members about a scheduled webinar given by the State. Dan was able to participate and received a PDF document containing the slides used in the presentation. Dan will forward that PDF to the Commission Members. He has also obtained a recording of the presentation. If you are interested in receiving that recording on a DVD, contact Dan.

Library Programs: The Commission will solely financially support Dennis Picard's presentation of *History of New England Maple Sugar Harvest* on April 30, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. at the Library. A motion was unanimously passed to provide \$200 as an honorarium, paid from the England Fund. Future discussion with the Library staff and Town Accountant will determine the best path and process of payment for this and other future programs.

The library will also present a program on August 18<sup>th</sup> entitled *Suffragettes in Corsettes - The Evolution of Underwear & our 19th Amendment*; A Centennial Tribute to the Suffragettes performed by Mother/daughter duo, Velya Jancz-Urban & Ehris Urban of Grounded Goodwife. The cost of presenting is \$300 including travel. At the next meeting, on March 9, the Commission will determine the amount of our financial support.

We had previously approved the amount of \$200 towards the Susan B Anthony program the library will present on August 26<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 P.M.

A resource to consider for future program idea is Susan Ashman at the Springfield Armory as well as her colleague Tom Kelliher.

Local Historical Memorials and Sites: Dick will check with Louise on the status of development of the spreadsheet table. Rob reported preliminary discussion on the existing hitching posts with resident Bill Jenkins revealed that some of them are not original but brought onto the properties at a more recent date. Rob said individual inventory will wait for Spring and Summer weather. Dan will assist Rob by taking photos of the posts.

Professional Book Scanning: His wife April being ill, Byron Aulick of eWide Technology Solutions, Inc. in Sturbridge, presented an informative summary of his company's scanning, OCR (Optical Character Recognition), and Searching capabilities. General cost estimates for both flat sheet documents and bound books were given and discussed, as well as the time taken for different size projects. Items would be taken off-site to their facility in Sturbridge. It was noted that discussion would be needed with

the Town for such movement of items. Mr. Aulick presented an impressive and professional line of services with samples of scanning and searching on his laptop computer.

An inventory of candidate items will need to be completed, discussed and prioritized prior to engaging E-Wide for their services. Competing companies should be evaluated as well.

Mass Preservation Seminar: Dick spoke with Jennifer Doherty, Historic Preservation Planner on Jan.17 and requested an approximate cost of a plan for W. Brookfield.

Town Report: Dick has submitted an article for the 2019 Town Report on the proceedings of the Historical Commission.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The Asparagus Festival will be held on May 16<sup>th</sup> on the Town Common. The Commission will rent a space and participate.

Dan announced that the posters of significant figures used in our Lucy Stone Bicentennial Celebration in 2018 have been given to Pamela Bobay and will be shown in the Blackstone Heritage Corridor Visitor Center at Worcester during celebration of 2020's anniversary of the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

Meeting adjourned ca. 9:04 p.m. Please note that due to member scheduling conflicts, the next meeting will be held on **Monday, March 9, 2020**, at 7:00 P.M. Historical Commission Office, Town Hall. The Public is welcome.

Respectfully submitted, Dan Hamilton, Secretary