

January 6, 2025

West Brookfield Historical Commission Minutes

Attendees: Louise Garwood, Anne-Marie Nolan, Heather Walker, Rachel Gulen, Jesse Morrison, and Dan Hamilton

Agenda

December meeting minutes approval

Pending Business:

Treasurer's Report

Jacob Knight Planning

Demolition Delay seminar report

Climate Controlled Room

HC Website - Dan

Tabled Business Old Methodist Cemetery 4/2025

New Business

Meeting Opened: Louise called the meeting to order on January 6, 2024, at 7:06pm

December Minutes Approval:

Minutes approval of December meeting minutes as written. Motion raised by Heather, seconded by Jesse and carried by members w/o discussion.

Pending Business:

Treasurer's Report: Heather gave account balances and reviewed approved expenditures. Louise raised the motion to accept the Treasurer's report, seconded by Rachel and carried by members w/o further discussion. Louise will check the mailbox for the England Fund check. Ionos bill needs to be submitted by Mike Sroka.

Jacob Knight Planning: Heather contacted the Ruth Wells Center about signing a contract and set opening and closing dates but has not heard back. Heather went over the timeline for January and February. Rachel will have the mailing list finalized by 1/31/2025 once she receives Ruth Wells and Commission lists. Postage and other expenses will be voted on at the February 3rd meeting. Heather will work on the inventory and dimensions of the prints to determine the layout in the room. Louise showed the postcard on her phone. Suggestion: put Ruth Wells' street address on the front and mention that parking is limited. Edits will be ready for the February meeting. Programming for the event was discussed: reception 2pm to 5pm, ask Stephen DiRado to be the welcoming speaker (speaker fee?), self-tour, interviews by Dan, a continuously playing DVD that cycles showing Jacob Knight's other works, a kid's craft area with repurposed objects at opening event (Holly Garceau?), a guestbook (sketchbook) for visitors with space for comments, and request stories of Jacob Knight from his friends via Facebook (Louise) and website (Dan).

Demolition Delay: Jesse attended 'Determining Historical and Architectural Significance' virtual workshop. The link was sent out to members. He reported that workshop offered practical means of assessment, especially regarding Demo Delay work. He will continue working on the demolition delay process with a 2026 goal.

Climate Controlled Room: No update. More information to follow.

HC Website: Dan can make additions and changes to the website such as meeting minutes, but not to structure of emails. There should be two people capable of managing the website. History of West Brookfield by J Fiske is listed as having copies for sale. That is no longer the case. Dan will make the change.

New Business:

Inflow/Outreach: Dan mentioned that we have been collecting material from the past but not the present. How much responsibility does the Commission carry to collect flyers, obituaries, articles about the town etc. as custodians of town history? Dan suggested bringing in our own items in the next month and delegating the task to family, friends, or others to spread the word. Discussion ensued as to the mission of the Commission vs the Society. A goal would be to publicize what the Commission is doing currently and to recruit volunteers through mailing and on the website.

Digital Permission: Since Dan is scanning and digitizing material and putting it on the website, he needs to draft a document giving him permission to do so as he is not the owner. Books, audio histories, and photos need signed permission to protect all parties. Jesse will look over this draft.

Office record digitizing project: Dan suggested that he be hired to do more in the office re scanning/digitizing documents and photos. He will provide a fee schedule.

Dan is willing to take over as website manager. He will submit fee schedule. A letter will be sent to Mike thanking him for his time on HC.

2025 Goals: Louise reviewed goals for 2025, similar to 2024 goals. It was suggested to send a letter to the new Town Administrator Theresa Cofske introducing ourselves.

Virtual Workshop The January 13, 2025 webinar's topic is "Best Practices for Developing a Strong Local Preservation Program".

Other: Special Election; Brochures to Book Bear, Senior Center; Correspondence re: Lucy Stone letter.

Motion to adjourn the meeting: Meeting ended at 8:47pm. Next meeting is scheduled for February 3, 2025.