



Town of Middlefield Historical Commission

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 11, 2024

The meeting opened at 4:15 P.M. at the COA.

Present were members Doreen Black, Louise Harlow and Howard Knickerbocker. Also present was Maureen Longobardi who is awaiting appointment.

Howard informed the new members of the State Ethics requirement. Also informed that the Commission has a \$600 yearly budget and a backup donations account. Louise volunteered to pick up a storage tub at Home Depot to test for document storage use after discussion.

Tamarin had questioned whether John Savery was re-appointed. Doreen will contact John and see if he wishes to continue and if so, will have the Selectboard re-appoint from the original date if required.

The Commission does not have an email account as cell phone ownership was required for some security procedure. Doreen will query the Selectboard as to how the Commission can obtain an email account.

Maureen presented her independent investigation of the Mack cemetery. The Commission complimented her for her investigative diligence.

Howard discussed his digitization efforts. He recently scanned four very early photo albums and obtained 75 newly identified images of mid-19th century citizens. He is working on creating a very basic inventory of the digital holdings using only a word processor and spread-sheet. He feels simplicity is needed if the inventory is to be continued and maintained. He feels the existing inventory should be divided between the museum artifacts (static – paper based) and the digital imaging portion (very dynamic - electronic). Howard mentioned that early photographs are appearing on the internet. Louise expressed an interest in our wide-ranging archival activities.

Howard will provide his "living will" commentary to the new members. This is an effort to provide continuity to the Commission's activities. He then went on to inform that he would be donating a flat bed scanner, a collection of almost 100 Middlefield glass magic lantern slides, a collection of Coats' family documents including an original Revolutionary War pension application and a collection of local history books - in support of starting a historical research library.

We had an extensive discussion on the new Selectboard requirement that volunteers provide a resume to the Selectboard detailing relevant experience before being considered for appointment. The Historical board felt that this is counterproductive as it might discourage novice historians from applying. The Selectboard has no expertise to evaluate the candidate - nor do they know the Commission's needs. The

only requirement that we would put forward is an interest in Middlefield history. This is a volunteer position and not a paid job.

Agreed that Howard will provide a letter to the Selectboard in support of Maureen's appointment to this Commission.

Maureen expressed an interest in creating a historic homes database. Howard will provide his preliminary list and backup documentation.

The Town Administrator is creating "job descriptions" for all the town activities. Howard will respond.

Doreen and Howard agreed to serve for another year as Chair and Secretary.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 P.M.

Respectfully,
Howard Knickerbocker, Secretary