

# The Falmouth Historical Society

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Zoom Meeting—August 3, 2021

The meeting came to order at 6:50 p.m. after some technical difficulties with Zoom meeting were resolved. Present were Betsy Whitcomb, David Farnham, Ron Scorsone, Sally Farneth, and Sue Farnham.

## **President's Remarks**

David began the meeting by thanking our volunteers for their herculean efforts to re-open the Museum while carrying on with the Society's other activities.

The Museum had been shut down for twenty months. The water and heating had been turned off. The office had been cleared for repainting. Artifacts had been stacked for accessioning. It took countless hours of work by all our volunteers to bring the building out of hibernation and give it a thorough cleaning.

At the same time, the Society was able to sustain its other efforts: responding to queries from the community, accepting donations of artifacts and documents, migrating our catalogs into an online database, creating Falmouth-themed merchandise for fundraising, and taking care of the administrative chores required of a small non-profit. We are accomplishing a lot.

Re-opening pushed the Society to its limits. Some of our work had to be placed on hold and is a reminder that we need to recruit more volunteers.

He observed that we are off to a good start after so many months of "online only" operation and again thanked our volunteers.

## **Secretary's Report**

Minutes. Minutes for the August Board meeting were accepted as written.

Membership. Our active membership is 88.

## Treasurer's Report

Administration. It's tax time! Our fiscal year ended June 30<sup>th</sup> and the books have been reconciled. The IRS requires that we be meticulous about tracking all income down to individual donors and amounts. We record donations and dues in both the membership database (WildApricot) and the ledgers (QuickBooks). Everything has been synchronized and cross-checked. The next step is to plug the numbers from the QuickBooks annual income and expense report into our home-grown spreadsheet. Then we copy the figures from the spreadsheet into the online Form 990-EZ for submission to the IRS.

Ron asked whether we could use the 990-N "postcard." The Society's income and assets are under the maximum for a postcard return but a substantial donation or revaluation could put us over the limit (in which case we would have to reconstruct the 990-EZ for the missing years. Unlike the Form 1040, the 990-EZ lists income for each of the past five years. Moreover, data on a 990-EZ is made public giving potential benefactors the ability to verify our performance as a public charity.

Now that the Museum has re-opened, we will begin tracking merchandise in QuickBooks as soon as the inventory is completed and updated pricing is approved by the Board..

Finances. The Society has a balance of \$2,650 in its operating accounts and \$20,377 with the Foundation. Our accounts payable is \$173.

We ended the fiscal year with income of \$4,515 and expenses of \$7,130 leaving a deficit of \$2,614. Expenses were only \$264 (or 4%) over budget.

Our operating accounts are sufficient to carry us through October. Based on our remaining budgeted expenses (\$8,745) and our estimated income (\$3,614), we will finish this fiscal year with a deficit of \$2,346.

Our most recent two withdrawals from the Foundation were for \$5,000 with the most recent draw occurring 15 months ago. A withdrawal of \$5,000 could last 18-24 months. We hope to increase income through donations, increased membership, and sale of merchandise. Owning a 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse in constant need of repair poses the risk of unexpected expenses. The treasurer's recommendation is that we withdraw \$5,000 from the Foundation which would leave a balance of approximately \$15,000.

The proposal to withdraw \$5,000 was moved and seconded. The Board, a quorum being present, voted unanimously to approve the proposal.

## **Committee Reports**

Programs. Work on educational programs was put on hold during the re-opening. Sally reviewed progress on assembling tangible items to support K-12 programs.

Carol is working on arrangements for an event with a talk by a distinguished member of the Falmouth community for October 12<sup>th</sup> at Ocean View. The Museum will still be open in October and holding our annual meeting on top of another event would overextend our volunteers. The consensus was to hold the annual meeting in January as we did this past year. We'll see if the meeting room at the library is available. We could then plan for another event with an outside speaker in April—perhaps on Native People in and around Casco Bay.

Museum Operation & Exhibits. We did it! The Museum has been open on Tuesdays and has been humming with activity. We've had a surprising number of visitors along with a surge in donations of artifacts and documents. Our volunteers have had their hands full.

One group of visitors were Leightons who now live in California but whose grandparents had lived in the house that is now the Museum.

## Collections.

*Acquisitions.* We had three major donations:

- Items recovered from the attic of the Old Parsonage (aka Giles Merrill House). We will seek assistance from Maine Historical on dating and preserving the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century artifacts.
- Assorted items from the estate of the late Ralph Bonville.
- Bell from the Graves School (purchased in 1910 from Sears) from the estate of the late Beverly Knudsen.

*Catalog.* The digital catalog continues to grow as Ron completed transcribing acquisition records from 2006 and is ready to start on 2005. He is still running into glitches with bulk imports. He had to manually correct many of the entries but now the items are categorized correctly.

Local History. We responded to nine queries from the community during the past month.

Expansion of Falmouth-related content on the website was put on hold due to the re-opening.

Communications. The summer newsletter will go out next month along with renewal reminders.

Betsy broached the possibility of having a table at the Cumberland Fair. The Board agreed that it sounded like a good idea. Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday would be the best days for us. Betsy will follow up.

We will decide later whether to have a table at the polls in November. There is only one item (a referendum) on the ballot and the expectation is that many people will vote absentee.

Merchandise.

*Cookbook.* There were no meetings. Editing of Volume I (Savory) was put on hold due to the re-opening. Transcription of the recipes for Volume II (Sweets) is underway.

Museum Buildings & Grounds. Ron is making arrangements for repairing the shingles on the barn's roof ridge and having the septic pumped. There was also a discussion about problems with the Museum door and lock.

Technology. The two desktop computers at the Museum are back in operation:

- Society Office (tied to the Society Office account)
- Collections (tied to the Society Archivist account)

Everything (including printers, scanners, and the credit card reader) is working properly. Software (operating system, applications, and security) on both computers is up to date. Some peripheral hardware was replaced. Regular backups have resumed. The collections desktop now sits on a much sturdier and more attractive computer desk. There was a brief discussion about software licensing. Most of our software is acquired at no cost or at substantial discounts through TechSoup.

Development. Nothing significant to report.

## **General Topics**

Some board members will be out of town for the Labor Day holiday and would have to return early to re-open the Museum the next morning. It was decided that the Museum would be closed on September 7<sup>th</sup> and the next board meeting would be postponed until the 14<sup>th</sup>.

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Suzanne Farnham, Secretary