

The Falmouth Historical Society

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Zoom Meeting—December 5, 2023

The meeting came to order at 6:35 p.m. Present were board members Betsy Whitcomb, David Farnham, Ron Scorsone, Sally Farneth, and Sue Farnham.

President's Remarks

David observed that the Society has entered its quiet season after a very busy summer.

There is still plenty of work to be done but at a more deliberate pace. We have the annual meeting in January. Winter is when we make progress with ongoing work in programs, collections, and local history. We will also take new steps to fundraise and attract volunteers.

Secretary's Report

Minutes. The November minutes were approved online.

Membership. Our active membership is 108. The numbers are stable with a steady flow of renewals coming in.

Treasurer's Report

Finances. Excluding \$7,500 reserved for the scholarship, the Society has a balance of \$3,778 in its operating accounts and \$23,252 invested with Maine Community Foundation. Our accounts/tax payable is \$398. Our projected end-of-year balance is \$978. Our actual expenses are \$1,088 under budget (counting two items budgeted for November whose bills didn't post until the beginning of December). Our net current assets (excluding long-term assets) declined by \$159 this fiscal year as we skate along the line between red and black. Our projected year-end loss is \$1,311. The financial picture is improving in small increments.

Committee Reports

Programs.

Presentation on the Penobscots. This event was hosted by Falmouth Memorial Library who invited us to co-sponsor. It was well-attended with the audience including several schoolteachers who had questions about the Aucocisco.

FHS Table at the Merry Mix and Mingle. This seasonal celebration hosted by the town was another “show the flag” event, and our last public opportunity to sell merchandise this year. It was well attended. We brought in \$256. We talked to a few townspeople about local history.

2024 Annual Meeting. We were bumped from our planned date of January 17th. After a short discussion, the board decided to move the meeting to Tuesday, January 23rd. Sally mentioned that she will attend online since this takes place shortly after she will have undergone surgery.

Winter will give us time to update the bus/self-guided tours and to make progress on history products for Falmouth Schools.

Museum Operation & Exhibits. The Museum and Barn are closed until May.

Collections. Ron reported that he is continuing to refine the material in the digital catalog. Come spring, our volunteers will verify locations for artifacts in the Museum using the Boy Scout project spreadsheet as a starting point. Ron said that the database contains multiple fields for location. David suggested that we use the Dewey Decimal System for books and periodicals since that appears to be preferred by Maine libraries. He has also gotten guidance from Falmouth Memorial Library on cataloging serials. Ron plans to use the laptop donated by Betsy to house a copy of the full catalog. David suggested surfacing high-level location and library catalog numbers in the online system to make items easier to find.

David will resume work on getting the 1957 town plat posted in the Maine Memory Network.

Local History. It was a quiet month with only 8 queries and the backlog holding at 6. There were no additions to the website.

Communications. We will publish the winter newsletter after the annual meeting date is confirmed by the town. Announcements will also be made on social media and via email.

Merchandise. Sales brought in \$940 during 2023. There will be a limited run to replenish the inventory following a large sale of volume I cookbooks. We will also run additional pairs to replenish any holiday sales.

Museum Buildings & Grounds. Ron reported that the water is off and the heat set just high enough to keep the interior from freezing.

Technology. David reported that our hosting provider “reminded” us that we are required to post privacy policies on the Society website. This was a major oversight on our part. He will cobble together proposed policies for review by the Board.

Development. Nothing significant to report.

New Business

AASLH Virtual Summit on Small Museums. David is attending a series of presentations by the American Association for State and Local History. Some of the talks are relevant to all-volunteer nonprofits with a seasonal museum such as ours. He will arrange for Board member to view presentations of interest.

There being no additional new business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Suzanne Farnham, Secretary