

## **Hooksett Heritage Commission**

**Tuesday, April 23, 2024**

**5:00 PM**

**Hooksett Public Library, Village Depot Meeting Room**

**31 Mt. St. Mary's Way, Hooksett, NH 03016**

**Attendance:** Tony LaCasse (Chair), Stephanie Perry (Member), Dena Vaudrien (Member), Abby Milonas (Member), Vickie Desharnais (Alternate Member), Jane Martina (Hooksett Heritage Commission Staff Support)

**Members of the Public:** Melissa Moore (Independent Contractor)

**Tony LaCasse called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.**

**Tony LaCasse made a motion to approve the March 26, 2024 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Stephanie Perry. Motion carried 4-0-0.**

**Tony LaCasse made a motion to approve the April 11, 2024 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Stephanie Perry. Motion carried 4-0-0.**

### **Hooksett History Book Update:**

Melissa Moore asked the Commission if they had any questions about her report. Tony LaCasse asked Melissa Moore if she had received a response from the Department of Transportation (DOT) on her inquiry. Melissa Moore confirmed that she hasn't heard back, but she is planning to check the library's collection for relevant information. Dena Vaudrien also volunteered to help by looking at a Hooksett Photograph Book and forwarding any significant information to Melissa Moore. Tony LaCasse further suggested that Melissa Moore contact Roger Hebert about his knowledge of the bridge and Hooksett History in general. This discussion inspired Tony LaCasse to propose creating a local folklore section in the new Hooksett History Book, which was well-received by the Commission members.

Melissa Moore provided an update, detailing her positive conversations with Carrie Hyde and Robyn Boyd regarding Old Home Day. One key topic that emerged during her conversation with Robyn Boyd was the Hooksett Entertainers. Melissa Moore plans to learn more about the Hooksett Entertainers in an upcoming interview with Carolyn Schroeder. Additionally, Abby Milonas mentioned that the library has relevant information on the Hooksett Entertainers within the library's collection.

Melissa Moore informed the Commission of her goal to complete a draft of the Community Celebrations chapter by the end of April. Melissa Moore inquired about the most appropriate recipient for the draft. The Commission suggested Vickie Desharnais and Stephanie Perry

review it first, followed by sharing it with the Hooksett History Book Group. Melissa Moore then outlined the celebrations planned for inclusion in the chapter. Tony LaCasse sought clarification on whether the Strawberry Festival would be featured in this section. Melissa Moore explained her intention to cover that event in the section on Churches due to its historical association as a church event.

Melissa Moore conducted a brief oral history interview with Tony LaCasse, focusing on Light Up the Village. During the interview, Melissa Moore sought clarification on the specific location of Hooksett Village. Tony Lacasse acknowledged the challenge of defining it precisely but described it as the historical heart of Hooksett. He explained that Hooksett Village represents the birthplace of commerce in the town. Despite Hooksett's growth and increased commercialization, this area has managed to retain its small-town character. Following their conversation about the historical significance of Hooksett Village, Melissa Moore sought clarification from Tony LaCasse regarding the lighting schedule. Tony LaCasse confirmed that the lights in Hooksett Village do remain illuminated until March 1<sup>st</sup>. To conclude the interview, Melissa confirmed that 2023 marked the second year of Light Up the Village. Tony LaCasse enthusiastically confirmed this and proceeded to share the event's origin story. He elaborated on how Light Up the Village has evolved over the past two years.

#### **Community Roundtable:**

Shifting gears, Vickie Desharnais steered the conversation towards the upcoming Community Roundtable the Commission plans to host. Tony LaCasse proposed creating a task list to ensure a smooth event. The Commission identified the need for a contact list for invitations. Vickie Desharnais offered to share her existing list with Tony LaCasse and they agreed to collaborate on finalizing it by the next meeting. This is in preparation of having a working session at the next monthly Commission meeting. Regarding the Commission's question of the event timing, Jane Martina suggested waiting until September or October, considering that more people travel in the Summer. The Commission agreed on October as a good time, allowing the Commission additional time to identify the book chapters and complete moderator training. Melissa Moore then presented a list of potential discussion topics provided by George Robie. This sparked a brainstorming session, and the Commission collaboratively generated a comprehensive list of potential topics for the Roundtable Discussion. After brainstorming, Melissa Moore shared that she felt confident that she could have list of chapters to share by May 10<sup>th</sup> to be discussed at the next meeting.

#### **Demolition Permit Updates:**

Tony LaCasse shared with the Commission that he signed off on the two most recent demolition permits that the Commission has received.

#### **Lambert Park Historical Marker:**

Abby Milonas reported finding a valuable resource that sheds light on pre-European settlement, a crucial piece of information for the marker's text. Abby Milonas asked the Commission to see if there were any additional research findings to share and if she could move forward with drafting the text. Tony LaCasse offered a two-prong approach: a concise summary for the marker itself, and a more detailed account with citations accessible via a QR code linked to a webpage. To ensure consistency with other historical markers in the area, Tony LaCasse suggested that Abby Milonas reference their citation format.

### **Head School Update:**

Vickie Desharnais provided an update on Head School. Unfortunately, due to funding limitations, the visit from the fourth graders was cancelled. However, Olli is still planning to visit Head School on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vickie Desharnais shared that the main focus of the Head School meeting was brainstorming ways to rebrand Head School in light of declining student participation. A range of ideas emerged, including: transforming it into a museum, hosting a reunion of past attendees, consolidating monthly events into 2-3 larger offerings throughout the year, partnering with Hooksett schools to integrate Head School into local history curriculum, collaborating with Old Home Day for a school-related contest, and even implementing a story time program at Light Up the Village.

### **Native American Mural Update:**

The Commission tabled this topic for further discussion at their next meeting.

### **Heritage Commission Laptop:**

Jane Martina presented a proposal to improve the Commission's workflow. Jane Martina and Tony LaCasse discussed the idea of acquiring a laptop for the Commission. This centralized device would serve as a dedicated storage location for all Commission files. Additionally, Jane Martina proposed establishing a Google Domain for the Commission. This would allow all commissioners to access shared documents, fostering collaboration and streamlining communication. The Commission expressed enthusiastic support for this initiative.

**Tony LaCasse made a motion to approve the expenditure of \$749.00 to purchase a Dell Laptop for the purposes of Heritage Commission Work. The motion was seconded by Vickie Desharnais. The motion passed 5-0-0.**

### **Historical Trolley Tour for Old Home Day:**

Tony LaCasse presented a collaborative effort between Light Up the Village and Old Home Day. Carrie Hyde expressed an interest to Tony LaCasse about offering a historical trolley tour. Tony LaCasse suggested to Carrie Hyde that she use a Trolley Service. Further discussions between Tony LaCasse and Carrie Hyde, led Tony LaCasse to propose a 30 minute route featuring three stops and narration along the way. The proposed locations aim to create a rich historical

experience. Vickie Desharnais enthusiastically offered her assistance in helping Carrie Hyde and Tony LaCasse plan the Trolley Tour.

**Review Town Owned Properties:**

Tony LaCasse asked if any commissioners had questions about the properties since the last meeting. Dena Vaudrien inquired about the location of the Chester Turnpike property and the acreage of each property. Tony LaCasse addressed her questions and emphasized the fiscal responsibility of auctioning off the listed properties.

**Additional Business:**

Uncertain of Pike Industries' progress, Dena Vaudrien asked if anyone had received updates. Since the Commission hadn't heard back either, Dena Vaudrien volunteered to email them about the cleanup timeline. Additionally, Vickie Desharnais offered to drive by the property and check if visible work had begun.

**Tony LaCasse made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 PM. The motion was seconded by Dena Vaudrien. The motion passed 5-0-0.**