

MYSTIC RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
May 18, 2009

The Board of Trustees of the Mystic River Historical Society met at the Downes Building on Monday, May 18, 2009.

Board members present were Lou Allyn, David Evans, Tim Evers, Sally Halsey, Jim Kimenker, Cathy Marco, Betty O'Donnell, Jane Preston, John Porter, Stephanie Thorp, and Kit Werner. Guests in attendance: Lois Glazier. Board members who were not present had been excused.

President Allyn called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm.

Minutes of the April meeting were accepted.

President (Lou Allyn):

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously passed to allow Louis Allyn to be authorized to sign checks, make bank deposits and otherwise fulfill the duties of the Treasurer whenever requested to do so by the Treasurer after the Annual Meeting (when he is no longer a Trustee). Furthermore, the motion also allows Louis Allyn authorization to sign checks, make deposits and transfer funds in the Mystic River Historical Society's mutual funds.

History of the Garrett Price drawing was shared with the board and the curatorial committee was authorized to work on this.

We reviewed the procedure for bulk mail. Our permit number is #17. Joe Sawacki (536-8143) is the contact at the Mystic Post Office to contact for our account balance. The steps for bulk mailing are (1) take mail and bulk mail form to the Post Office, (2) email MRHS Treasurer the cost of the mailing (which is calculated on the form), (3) the Treasurer makes a journal entry in Quick Books debiting postage expense and crediting the bulk mail asset account, and (4) when replenishment is necessary, the Treasurer will write a check to the Post Office with a debit to the bulk mail asset account.

The board discussed possible alternatives to Bulk Mailing (i.e. electronic newsletters); however, we must watch the numbers of our bulk mailings since under 400 will mean an increase to our postage rates. It was pointed out that our newsletter advertisers and patrons of the newsletter help significantly with our mailing costs.

Lou outlined the "Work to be Done List" for the board to work on in the future:

- (1) the positions which need to be filled (i.e. curatorial chair, program chair, corresponding secretary, hospitality chair)
- (2) the letter of agreement for employees
- (3) updating the Disaster Preparedness booklet for the Downes Building and Portersville Academy.
- (4) the Virtual Exhibit Project.

Who has keys to the Chamber of Commerce for our monthly board meetings? Lou will be passing on his key to Jim; however, Sally and John also have copies of the key.

Treasurers Report (Bill Everett, absent. Lou Allyn reporting): Things are going smoothly. We have profited by our trips. In September we will be sending out invoices to our newsletter advertisers. Dues are coming in nicely and there will be a follow up letter sent in September for those who have not renewed.

Corresponding Secretary (Kit Werner): There were 35 letters of thanks sent this past month: 20 related to membership renewals and to newsletter patrons; one to Nancy Steenburg, our April meeting speaker, 4 for the Patron Appreciation party, 8 for the annual cleanup of Portersville Academy, one to Joyce Everett for the MRHS trip to New York City, and one for a miscellaneous gift.

STANDING COMMITTEES

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS (John Porter): The Annual Grounds Cleanup was completed on Saturday, April 25. A rake and a dust pan/brush were left behind. If they are yours, they are next to the front door of the Downes Building. Minor repairs were made to the southeast corner boards of the Downes Building. This damage was noted by Simonds and Company during their power washing.

There will be a meeting with Dexter from Sound Insurance on Wednesday to discuss our insurance.

CURATORIAL (Dorrie Hanna, Collection Manager): Helen has been working hard on re-organizing and re-boxing photographs, which has been better for the photos and frees up shelf space. We are preparing to set up a separate designation for all material specifically related to the history and activities of the MRHS. Dorrie has been updating the PastPerfect database and is also working on a number of research queries. Louisa is scheduled to cover for Dorrie on Thursday, May 21.

The Virtual Exhibit software package was received. We are grateful to the Rotary Club of Mystic who has contributed \$350 for us to purchase this software. There was a discussion of the board on ideas for what to do first with this software. Ideas included our upcoming Rooms and Blooms event or Old Pictures of Mystic or One of our collections. It will be left up to the Curatorial Committee to decide. It was mentioned that we should watermark everything.

EDUCATION (Tim Evers): We have a full schedule of elementary schools coming. By June 10th we will have had 7 different schools with over 360 students. We are always in need for more volunteers. We will especially need to find volunteers in May 2010 when we have "Project Learn" when we expect over 200 students from area schools coming to visit us.

Tim identified handicap accessibility as something we may need to address, particularly since schools are mainstreaming. Sally mentioned that some photos of the school groups participating in our program would make great marketing in the paper. Tim will let her know possible dates.

OUTREACH: Nothing

FINANCE (David Evans): Nothing

IT COMMITTEE (Stephanie Thorp):

Barry performed the monthly system update and file backup tasks on May 2. All systems were verified to be in good operating condition and functioning properly. Updates included Windows XP, Microsoft Office, McAfee Internet Security. He updated Adobe Acrobat Reader to V9.1, verified that no Past Perfect updates were required, and performed a virus scan of all hard drives. He also performed a Past Perfect External Backup. Barry's detailed reports are available on request.

Barry installed an updated read-only copy of the current membership list, one that opens with Adobe Acrobat Reader and requires no knowledge of the database.

Barry processed CSIR-0004, dealing with very slow operation of the system. As a result, he uninstalled Windows Live Essentials software, which appeared to be a factor in the problem. In troubleshooting this problem, he power-cycled the DSL modem and router. He configured Internal Explorer to open with the Sonic Solutions add-on disabled on all three computers. These actions seemed to result in all computers operating at a normal speed. Computer 1, the one for which the complaint was lodged, started from a cold condition to full operation 2 minutes, with Internet connections off. MS Word opened in 15 seconds.

As a reminder, the computers are set up to download and install the high priority Windows and Office updates automatically as they are announced. When updates are available, the updating process will make the computers behave sluggishly. This process should not occur too frequently and usually does not last very long before completion. On occasion, the computers will shut down automatically and restart. When this happens, the computer will start up with the previous applications open and the files saved, minimizing disruption to the operator.

Per the request of staff members, Barry installed Mozilla Firefox.

Stephanie performed monthly update to the website. She added the May Portersville Press and updated the Events Calendar.

MARKETING (Sally Halsey): The Press Release has been sent out for the Annual Meeting. There was a nice spread in the Mystic Times which came from Zip06 input.

MEMBERSHIP (Cynthia Allyn): We have two new memberships to report: Mr and Mrs. William Duff are Contributing Members and Mr. and Mrs. William Foster are Family Members. The renewal membership list will be published in total in the September Portersville Press

NEWLETTER (Jennifer Pryor): The newsletter copy deadline is in August for the September newsletter.

NOMINATING (Tim Evers): The following nominees will be submitted to the membership for vote at the annual meeting: Betty O'Donnell, Tim Evers, John Porter, Kay Janney, and Lois Glazier.

PROGRAM (Paul Ingle): The Annual Membership and Pot Luck meeting is Wednesday, May 27 at 6pm.

SPECIAL EVENTS (Joyce Everett, absent. Lou Allyn reporting): The Spring trip was a success!

HOUSE TOURS (Sally Halsey and Joyce Everett): Rooms and Blooms is coming along. One garden is being taken off due to a broken hip. Ticket sales are going well, have sold over 225. We need someone to sell them at the Annual Meeting. Cam Bertsche has them, and we can give some to whoever will take it on. We also need volunteers to man the MRHS table at the Boutique. A preview party is planned for June 14 at the Kimenker's home for homeowners, sponsors, and committee members. Thanks to Jim and Jen for agreeing to host this!

Dorrie is working on booklet with Blue Moon printer. We have sold over \$5000 in ads. On May 25 on Channel 12 at 8:00pm there will be a promotion for Rooms and Blooms

WALKING TOUR (David Evans): We are in the process of restocking our various outlets for the Gravel Street tour.

OLD BUSINESS

Ashley Halsey Project: Tim reported that the idea of commissioning Ashley Halsey to do a Historical Guide of Mystic Homes is still being researched. He estimates that the total cost for doing a 20 page brochure/book similar to the one Ashley did for Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation would be \$10,000-16,000 (Based on printing of 5600-6000 brochures). If we want exclusive rights then cost would double. Writing and Design are \$1000 of that amount while illustrations are \$450 each. It is estimated that it would be a six month project to complete. The board had a number of questions and opinions. It was decided to ask Bank Square Books about the feasibility of such a brochure/book.

NEW BUSINESS

None

Next Board meeting is June 15th when we elect new officers.
The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Marco, Recording Secretary