

West Newbury

Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting date & place: 7:00 pm, January 9, 2024, Town Offices, 1st floor

Members Present: Chair Bob Janes, Elisa Grammer, Jennifer Munson.

Cemeteries

Regarding the status of an application to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for \$3,100 to remove the trees/limbs in the Quaker Cemetery that threaten the remaining gravestones, *Mr. Janes will submit the application documents to the CPC this week. Ms. Grammer will be in touch with Butch Hills at the Department of Public Works to make sure that the DPW budget includes funding for spring & fall clean up of the Quaker & Almshouse Cemeteries.*

Mr. Janes had asked the Town about taking responsibility for abandoned cemeteries. The Town had asked for a report of cemeteries with over 10 burials. The information is in Susan Follansbee's book, and *Mr. Janes will provide it.*

Ms. Grammer commended Mr. Janes' work on cemeteries (including stories of the people buried there) and the Town's veterans. She suggested that some way should be found to have the materials preserved and shared into the future. She said that the Town Archives have recently been organized and there would be room for these materials. *Mr. Janes will look into this.*

Historic Sites Survey

Ms. Grammer noted that all of the Historic Sites Survey forms are now up on the website and she has developed a list of addressees for the letter to be sent to property owners. She said the Commission should agree on the text of the letter (and Ms. Conway had provided a draft), and then she could do a mail merge to the letters so that they are individually addressed. Then the address labels and letters will need to be printed. *Ms. Grammer will send out a draft of the letter for any edits and then when everything is ready, we can set a date for stuffing envelopes. Ms. Grammer will update the first page of the Historical Commission website to note completion of the Historic Sites Survey and will send out an email blast and publicize this on facebook, etc. Ms. Grammer will also contact the Historic District Commission to note that that Commission may want to pursue recommended Historic Districts in Town.*

Ms. Grammer said that it would be good to have the final Historic Sites Survey bound into a book, but that it involves over 1,630 pages and thus would be expensive. We may want to use CPC funding. *It was agreed that this could be brought up for a later Town meeting than the spring meeting.*

Ms. Munson said that she will look into having the Town offer standard historic plaques for historic buildings.

Digitizing

Ms. Grammer suggested that the Commission consider digitizing at least some of Adelaide Janes; scrapbooks, as well as Select Board minutes, which are in the Town Archives. This, too, could be CPC funded in a future town meeting.

FY2025 Budget

West Newbury Historical Commission

*Minutes January 9, 2024
Approved February 6, 2024*

It was agreed that the current \$600 in annual funding is sufficient. This year funds will be spent on the Historic Sites Survey Mailing. Mr. Janes will so inform the Town Manager.

Firefighter & Schools

Deferred

Native Americans

Ms. Munson reported that there was nothing new, but in checking the [About Our Town](#) posting on the website, she noted some outstanding edits. *Ms. Munson will contact Town staff about getting the edits incorporated.* Ms. Munson also discussed seeing Native American artifacts in a museum in Oxford, England.

Monthly Minute Histories & Town Office Stories

By unanimous vote the Commission approved the draft stories about the Artichoke River and about E Moody Boynton.

Other Business

Oral History:

The Commission unanimously endorsed and supported Mr. Belmont's proposal for an oral history project.

Massachusetts Historical Commission grants:

Mr. Janes said that he received a reminder that requests about projects in this round are coming due. *The Commission identified no new projects at this juncture.*

Minutes

The Commission unanimously approved the minutes of August 1, October 24, and November 14.

Adjournment

8:21 pm

Meeting Documents

- Draft Minute Histories
- Budget materials
- Draft letter to property owners

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa Grammer