



Greensboro Historical Society

Meeting Minutes (September 10, 2024)

10:30 am @ the GHS Museum

Attending: BJ Gray, Erika Karp, Lise Armstrong, Amelia Circosta, Renée Circosta, Debbie Kasper, Jane Johns, Kyle Gray, Jenny Stoner, Leslie Rowell, Jane Mercaldi, Nan Perron, Jan Terwiesch, and Nancy Hill (via Zoom).

To-Do in the Coming Months/Assigned Tasks

- ❖ *Everyone/anyone:* Attend upcoming LLHSM workshops (Oct. 7 in Barre); bring ideas for 2026 summer exhibit to our meetings; volunteer to be a docent for our special museum opening on Saturday, October 12th; bring ideas for our 2025 Winter Meeting presentation to our October meeting; write an article about the eclipse in Greensboro for the fall newsletter.
- ❖ *Amelia:* Write thank you notes to Bob Merrill, Steve Leach, and Stefanie Crevadi; make advertising flyer for special museum opening on October 12th.
- ❖ *BJ and Erika:* Go to Town Hall to check if there are any historical documents/photos still being stored there.
- ❖ *Lise:* Move Toad Bag line item out of marketing/advertising section in the financials to programming.
- ❖ *Renée:* Write the town appropriation request for \$6,000; send out publicity for October 12 open house; write blurb to send to Selectboard about historical value of the Town Hall in the context of the recent discussions about converting the Town Hall to apartments; wash the big window out back before Gordon Windows installs UV-blocking film; work with Kyle on exhibit summary pamphlet for next year; continue work on Hill Exhibit timeline; after the last fall open house, gather and summarize visitor data in docent records; write article about the Annual Meeting for the fall newsletter.
- ❖ *Leslie:* Write newsletter article about community outreach through helping people with research in the archives; research and buy a dehumidifier for upstairs in the museum; go to Town Hall with BJ and Erika if necessary; check for old photos of the Town Hall in the digital archives and send them to Renée.
- ❖ *Kyle:* Think about potential content for pamphlet with a brief overview of the content of our summer exhibit for next year; incorporate slides into video of Annual Meeting; research/buy clip-on microphone.

President BJ Gray called the meeting to order at 10:30am.

Changes to Agenda: Renée wanted to add a discussion of the historical society's potential role in highlighting the historical value of the town hall in light of the ongoing plans to convert the town hall and Town Green to affordable housing. Add topic to Other Business. At this point, BJ also introduced Jan Terwiesch, who attended part of our meeting today.

History Moment (Erika): Erika shared a lovely newspaper article about Willie Smith's numerous contributions to preserving Greensboro's history and shaping the town--from writing an entire book

about Greensboro history, to donating countless volunteer hours, to helping to secure funding to renovate the town hall in the 1980s, to being the President of the GHS for many years.

We also briefly discussed whether there are still historical society materials and documents being stored in the town hall. BJ, Erika, and Leslie said they would go to the town hall to check on this.

President's Report (BJ):

League of Local Historical Societies and Museums Fall Workshops: There will be two informative classes (“Building Your Local History Presence” and “Active Collections Mini-Workshop”) on Monday, October 7, at the Vermont History Center in Barre. Please contact BJ for more information.

Our Mascot Elliot is a fox terrier.

Summer Publicity: Amelia was thanked for making the colorful flyers and posters to advertise this summer's various GHS events and *Rails to Trails* exhibit.

Secretary's Report (Amelia)

Approve Annual Meeting Minutes: The minutes from the Annual Meeting were approved as submitted.

Collect Volunteer Hours: Volunteer hour estimates for the entire summer (June through this meeting) were collected.

Thank you notes: Amelia will write a thank you note to Bob Merrill for presenting at the GHS Annual Meeting this past August. The group decided that because Martha Niemi can no longer be in charge of writing thank you notes to various presenters, donors, etc., this will now become the responsibility of the Secretary.

Treasurer's Report (Lise)

Quickbooks Difficulties: Lise had trouble getting into Quickbooks, which is why we didn't have access to the most up-to-date financial reports for today's meeting.

Certificate of Deposit: Our certificate of deposit rolled over from 5.1% interest to 0.55% interest. Lise has talked to the bank to get out of this CD and start a new one. The new CD has 4.1% interest for 7 months.

Hazen Road Dispatch Sales: Revenues from the HRD sales this year haven't all been entered into the financial reports. But, sales were almost twice as much as last year.

Toad Bags: Renée pointed out that the toad bags were an almost \$700 expense this year and thinks that there should be in-meeting voting such big expenditures in the future. BJ said that she will cover any additional costs for the toad bags after sales are subtracted. Renée also noted that toad bag expenses and profits should be moved out of the marketing/advertising section of the

financial report to programming because the entire project was in effect a program for the Lakeview Students. Such reporting is more accurate and more useful to highlight in grant submissions.

Approve financial report: The financial report was approved as the best available information given the Quickbooks problems.

Follow-Up From Previous Meetings

Summer 2024 Exhibit: BJ shared a letter from Jan Travers describing a very positive experience at the GHS Exhibit Opening. Kyle said that exhibit went up with a good final push. He is working on digitizing everything. This exhibit will stay up next year, and he will expand the exhibit with more graphic design elements to create more cohesive themes. The group discussed possibilities for what to do with the space over the glass display case; suggestions included installing a corkboard or bulletin board, adding a larger sign directing visitors to the Hill Exhibit, or leaving the space open. No decision was reached, though those in favor of leaving the space open and flexible seemed more numerous. Kyle also reminded the group to start thinking about our 2026 exhibit, which will coincide with the state-wide 250th celebrations.

The group discussed the appeal of moving the Rails to Trails exhibit to the Depot in Greensboro Bend after 2025. The Bend Revitalization Committee also might want a portion of it for display at a kiosk in the Bend. We would have to talk to Mark Snyder about options for placing materials at the Depot and decide on specifics later.

BJ mentioned that some visitors were curious about who was behind the many different parts of the exhibit, so we will make a list of exhibit contributors (without specifying who exactly did what, because many tasks were shared).

BJ also mentioned that a museum visitor named Tay Lyman requested that we make a pamphlet with a brief overview of the content of our summer exhibit--he thought it would be helpful to give to others to inspire them to come see the exhibit. The group agreed that this would be a good addition to our general exhibit publicity for next year.

Leslie mentioned that the walk through the Bend with Steve Leach was very enjoyable and informative. Amelia will send a thank you note to Steve.

There was a reminder to make sure all of the docent hours get tracked and aggregated somewhere. BJ shared humorous anecdotes that docents wrote during their volunteering time this summer.

It was suggested that we open the museum for an afternoon or two in mid-October for visitors who could not make it to the GHS in the summertime. We decided we will open for several hours on Saturday, October 12th. Amelia will make an advertising flyer for this special opening. We need to find docents for this day as well. Renée will do it if absolutely necessary.

Annual Meeting: Renée said that about 80 people attended, and that Bob had a nice slide presentation. Attendees seemed to particularly enjoy watching the video of the shifting tectonic plates and other geologic movements that created the pattern of continents, oceans, and mountains we see today. The audience had so many questions that the questions had to be cut off at the end of the evening. Kyle took a video of the presentation and will incorporate the slides into the video. BJ mentioned that we might want to look into a clip-on microphone for next year, as the audience had more trouble hearing the presenters with the hand-held mic. Renée will write an article in this fall's newsletter about the Annual Meeting.

Committee Reports

Building and Maintenance (Lise): Nothing new to report.

Archives (Leslie): Leslie is still anticipating the installation of the UV-blocking film on the windows in the Hill Exhibit. She reported that she has worked fewer hours lately but is still checking the phones, notes, emails, etc. She has supported people with various research requests by providing them with archive materials. The group agreed that an article about this support from the archives for interested people would be good for the newsletter. Leslie will write the article.

Leslie is going to research a dehumidifier for upstairs in the museum.

Newsletter: We will discuss the fall newsletter more in October. Before we send out the newsletter, we need to decide on the subject of our Winter Meeting (*Ghosts of Greensboro* was one idea--discussing the darker side of Greensboro history). We will also discuss this more in October, so everyone should think about it in the meantime.

Website and Tech: Kyle is going to look into getting the clip-on microphone for future GHS events and presentations. He will check if the GUCC would like to split the cost with us to have the mic available at Fellowship Hall for other presentations.

Hazen Road Dispatch (Nancy): We still do not have an editor lined up for next year's HRD. We might want to advertise that this task is available, possibly with a stipend or support with grant money. Finding content for next year will not be a problem--there are already several good articles in preparation. Sales were successful, thanks in large part to a 300-copy order from Jasper Hill Farm. Amelia is going to send Stephanie Crevadi a thank you note for her work on the HRD editing this past year.

Hill Family Timeline (Renée): This is still being entered into electronic format. Renée said she likely won't be able to make substantial progress on it again until around February.

Other Business:

Town Appropriation Request: This is due soon. The group agreed to request \$6,000 again. Renée will draft the request.

VT 250th Anniversary: We don't need to do anything with this right now, but there might be grant money available for projects or events. We could also do our 2025 Winter Meeting in conjunction with something related to the 250th.

Fall Museum Clean-Up and Shut Down: We will leave everything intact as is until our special opening in October. We will paint the front steps next spring, and Renée will wash the big window in the back of the building before the UV-blocking film is installed.

Eclipse Documentation: Leslie has started a file documenting what happened in Greensboro for this year's total solar eclipse. Someone should write an article about it for the fall newsletter.

Historical Status of Town Hall: Renée reported that she has been asked whether the historical society has anything to say about the historic town hall/Greensboro High School being converted into apartments. She suggested that as the historical society interested in preserving town history, we should consider writing an informational piece about the historical significance of the town hall to send to the Selectboard and perhaps to post elsewhere, such as Facebook or on the bulletin board on the front of the museum. The group agreed that would be appropriate, as long as the piece doesn't state the historical society's position on the debate over whether the project should happen or not, but rather on the building's long historical presence and uses in the town. Renée will write something and circulate it to the group. Leslie will look in the archives for old pictures of the town hall.

Erika added that it could be valuable for someone to be keeping rough track of what is going on with the developing town hall discussion. Current events of today will soon be history.

Bend Mural Unveiling: Jane Johns invited the group to see the Bend mural unveiling Saturday 9/12 at 10:00 am.

President BJ Gray adjourned the meeting at 12:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Amelia Circosta (Secretary)

NEXT MEETING: October 8th, 10:30am @ the GHS Museum