



Greensboro Historical Society

Meeting Minutes (November 12, 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, Skip Hoblin, Paula Harmon, Willie Smith, Leslie Rowell, Jan Terwiesch, Nancy Hill, as well as Nan Perron and Paul Fixx for part of the meeting.

To-Do in the Coming Months/Assigned Tasks

- ❖ *Everyone:* Attend potluck dinner at Nancy and Clive's house on December 10th @ 5:30pm, and please bring a dish to share.
- ❖ *BJ:* Write brief blurbs to serve as captions for Ice Cream Social and Book Sale photos in the newsletter.
- ❖ *Skip:* Order corkboards and install them in museum space when they arrive.
- ❖ *Renée:* Work with Kyle on Rails to Trails exhibit pamphlet; get a photo and a caption about Storykeeper's Program collaboration and submit to Jenny as soon as possible.
- ❖ *Kyle:* Work with Renée on Rails to Trails exhibit pamphlet; write newsletter article about the summer exhibit and submit to Jenny as soon as possible; send Jenny *Geology Rocks!* Annual Meeting photos; finish editing Snowmobiling Winter Meeting video and post to GHS website.
- ❖ *Leslie:* Purchase another dehumidifier for upstairs; submit report to Vermont Arts Council re. UV shades; review items that are in the outbuilding.
- ❖ *Lise:* Coordinate with Countryside Alarms regarding our alarm system problems.
- ❖ *Jan:* Continue looking into possibilities for reinvigorating and using the outbuilding space.
- ❖ *Jenny:* Look into fundraising options to hire an *HRD* editor.
- ❖ *Nancy:* Submit *HRD* newsletter article to Jenny as soon as possible.

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

Changes to Agenda: There were no changes.

History Moment: Paul Fixx (editor of *The Hardwick Gazette*) shared a brief history of *The Hardwick Gazette* with an engaging script from a dramatized autobiography of John Edward Appolt, who took over *The Hardwick Gazette* after Charles Laymon and who was the owner and editor until his retirement in 1948. The script was written by a Hazen Union student as part of a Drama Club assignment related to historical figure reenactments. Thank you to Paul for joining us today to present.

President's Report:

Halloween: BJ thanked Nancy and Clive for porch sitting at the GHS on Halloween evening to hand out candy to trick-or-treaters. She also thanked Renée for the Halloween (and now fall-themed) decorations at the museum.

Town Hall historical preservation status: BJ shared information from Polly Allen about the Town Hall's historic status as listed in the Historic Sites and Structures Survey from 1990--the building is listed as having State-level historical significance.

Secretary's Report:

Approve October Minutes: The minutes from our October meeting were approved as submitted.

Collect Volunteer Hour Estimates: Amelia collected volunteer hour estimates from over the course of the past month.

Treasurer's Report: Lise noted that the Vanguard Fund is doing well and that we are showing a positive net income at this point in the year. The group approved the financials from last month.

Follow-Up From Previous Meetings

Summer Exhibit Overview Pamphlet: Kyle and Renée will handle designing and writing this pamphlet, although there is no rush to do this right now.

Thank You Notes: Debbie clarified that Lise sends donation information to Debbie and/or BJ, and that Debbie writes thank you notes for donations less than \$100, while BJ writes thank you notes for donations larger than \$100. Amelia handles secretary-related thank you notes (for example, to various presenters or leaders involved in GHS events).

Visitor Data in Docent Records: Renée provided the group with a useful summary of the visitor data from the docent records for the 2024 Summer Exhibit. Not counting the perhaps 80-100 visitors that came to the GHS Open House at the beginning of the summer, we had a total of 269 visitors, with 244 of them during our regular hours (including 46 at the Ice Cream Social) and 25 people at the fall open house. She noted that the three days that we were open (Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday) seemed just about equally popular, although during the week there were generally many more visitors in the afternoon than during the morning hours. There were usually about eight visitors per day. The group discussed possibly shortening our morning hours and extending our afternoon hours but did not make any concrete decisions regarding this.

GHS write-up about history of the Town Hall: Renée submitted the brief description of the history of the Town Hall to the Greensboro Selectboard, and this document is now available on the Town website.

Committee Reports

Building and Maintenance: Lise reported that she has been working with Jan on assessing the building behind the museum. She has also been talking to Countryside Alarms regarding our alarms sounding unnecessarily and constantly buzzing in the exhibit space. She also noted that we will soon need to install the window inserts for the winter (and to this, Renée added putting the drop cloths over exhibit materials and artifacts). Leslie reminded the group to take a look at the new UV shades in the Hill Exhibit.

Bulletin Board in Museum Space: Skip reported that the two main options that he found for the bulletin board to go above the rectangular glass display case in the exhibit space are (a) 4' x 6' (~\$200) or (b) 4' x 8' (~\$300). The latter dimensions would require the hutch to the right of the glass case be moved slightly, so the group decided that 4x6 would be preferable. The group also decided that a wooden frame would be preferable to an aluminum frame. Skip will most likely install the corkboard using heavy-duty picture hangers that can be removed from the wall and only leave small holes. The group voted to proceed with the purchase and installation of the 4x6 corkboard with an oak frame.

Museum barn use and tools: Jan Terwiesch (a Greensboro resident and recent graduate with a degree in architecture) reported to the group about his ideas regarding the outbuilding/garage/shed behind the main GHS building. Originally built by Donald Drown to store his equipment, it is now being used by the GHS to store large items such as the carriage and sleds, and Jan said that this space could be very valuable. He imagines perhaps some sort of interactive museum space “*en plein air,*” or perhaps a repository for old farm equipment and tools historically used in Greensboro.

Nancy mentioned a disappointed donor who no longer wants to donate to the GHS because the sled she gave to us has just been stored in the outbuilding; possibly displaying more of the items from this outbuilding could make donors happier and allow us to display more of our collection.

The building would need significant renovation, insulation would likely need to be installed, and the items inside would need to be organized, taken out, and cleaned. Jan noted that perhaps the first step in the process could be to contact someone such as John Mackin to assess the building itself and determine what would need to be done to it (and how much it might cost to do so).

It was mentioned that the GHS only owns the land about 2 feet beyond the garage doors of the outbuilding, but that the adjacent landowners have been very generous about letting us walk through their land.

Nancy made a motion that Jan continue to look into the possibility of the outbuilding being a more active part of our museum. The motion passed with no oppositions or abstentions.

Archives:

Dehumidifier: Leslie did not order another dehumidifier, and it is not necessary immediately at this point as we head into the winter. However, Renée encouraged her to purchase one soon rather than later, as it would be ideal to still have it on hand for when we need it.

GFL Storykeeper's Program Collaboration: Leslie reported very positively on the collaboration between the GHS and the GFL during the library's Storykeeper's Program with Natalie Kinsey Warnock this fall. Children participating in the program were told how to access the resources in the GHS collections and archives to support research into their family histories during the program. Renée agreed to try to get a photo for the newsletter about this collaboration.

UV shades & Vermont Arts Council Grant Money: The shades are installed in the Hill Exhibit and are working perfectly. Leslie is going to submit a report to the Vermont Arts Council to receive 50% of the money back from our purchase of these shades.

Newsletter: Jenny requested that those who have volunteered to write articles for the newsletter to please submit articles to her *as soon as possible*, as the requested deadline has already passed. Kyle will handle the article about the Rails to Trails summer exhibit, and he will also send Jenny a photo or two to include from the annual meeting. BJ will write captions for the photos of this summer's Ice Cream Social and Book Sale.

Website and Tech: Kyle reported that he has almost finished editing the presentation video of the Annual Meeting, and that the video will soon be available on the website. He will also soon finish editing and post the video from our last winter meeting about snowmobiling in Greensboro and the surrounding areas. Kyle has not yet ordered a clip-on microphone for GHS presentations at Fellowship Hall; the church needs to fix their speaker system first in order for the clip-on microphone to be useful. Leslie mentioned that several people have called her with inquiries related to the videos that Kyle has posted, so it is good to see this interest.

Hazen Road Dispatch: Nancy reported that the *Hazen Road Dispatch* Advisory Group met this past month (Clay Simpson, Tim Breen, Stephanie Crevadi, and Nancy) to discuss the future of the *HRD*. It seems very likely that we will need to hire an editor and pay a stipend of perhaps \$10,000 - \$20,000. Renée pointed out that we could make an effort in this year's newsletter to raise money to hire an editor and continue with the *HRD* publication by, for example, inserting a notecard specifically to solicit *HRD*-related donations. Because we do not frequently do that sort of specific fundraising drive, it could be successful. We will keep this in mind as a possibility, as well as keep in mind the possibility of writing a call-to-action in the newspaper.

Other Business:

Updates for Rails to Trails Exhibit: BJ briefly mentioned that a list of exhibit contributors will be added to the exhibit, along with other additions such as a possible display about robotic technology that allows remote identification of problems on the rails.

2026 Exhibit Ideas: The two main ideas for the 2026 exhibit are Wildlife in Greensboro and Greensboro Services.

Winter Meeting: Erika reported that she and Jane worked on gathering information about the possibility of having the Winter Meeting be about the history of Greensboro High School. She reported that there are plenty of Greensboro graduates still around to do a panel discussion for our Winter Meeting. BJ moved to accept “The History of Greensboro High School” as the topic for the 2025 Winter Meeting. The motion passed.

December Potluck/Informal GHS Meeting: Nancy graciously invited the GHS group to her and Clive’s house on Baker Hill Road on December 10th at 5:30pm for a potluck dinner. This will replace our official December meeting. Please bring a dish to share.

President BJ Gray adjourned the meeting at 12:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Amelia Circosta (Secretary)

***Please join us for a potluck dinner at Nancy and Clive’s house: December 10th @ 5:30pm
NEXT OFFICIAL MEETING: January 14th, 2025 @ 10:30am at the GHS Museum and on Zoom***