

**HERITAGE COMMISSION  
TOWN OF KINGSTON, NH  
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
Kingston Community Library  
March 23, 2023**

**Members Present:**

Ernie Landry, Chair  
Bob Bean, Vice Chair  
Virginia Morse, HDC representative (left at 6:40 p.m.)  
Richard Wilson, BOS, ex officio  
Charlotte Boutin  
Eileen Clifford

**Members Absent:** Holly Ouellette

**Also Present:** Marissa Federico, Recording Secretary  
Walt Roy

**Call to order:** Mr. Landry called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

**HDC Update:**

Ms. Morse expressed concern about the passage of Warrant Article 12. The HDC is looking to increase communication with residents to inform them of the good work being done by the HDC. She hopes that the Heritage Commission will support the HDC in these efforts. Members were in agreement.

**Acceptance of Minutes:**

**MM&S:** Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve the draft minutes from the 1/26/23 meeting as submitted. Seconded by Mr. Bean. All in favor.

**Updates:**

***Stained-glass window project:*** Mr. Landry stated the work is ongoing, and the windows are to be installed around 5/15/23. He passed out a sponsorship flyer and form.

***National Register plaques:*** Mr. Landry shared that Ms. Morse completed the order for the plaques, and they have been manufactured and are being shipped. He noted the Seminary and the Church need to sign an agreement. Ms. Boutin noted the Church signed the agreement at their last meeting.

***Documentation project:*** Mr. Bean provided updates.

- *Peaslee Tavern:* Completed.
- *Sanborn Seminary:* This is completed. They are just waiting for some digital media to be added to the file.
- *Fire Station:* Work has begun on this project.

***Sandown roundtable meeting:*** There was a joint HC/HDC meeting with various representatives present from Kingston and surrounding towns. Steve Sousa did a presentation regarding the town's oral history

project. Mr. Landry shared that he appreciates the cooperation of Kingston's committees/commissions to serve the community.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Discussion of Projects for 2023:**

Mr. Landry distributed a list of possible projects to be completed in 2023. He stressed the importance of setting goals and that public engagement is important.

He reviewed the ongoing projects. The plaques and stained-glass windows will be completed in 2023, and they are working with Public Works to rehabilitate the Grace Daley barn this year. The lost history project will be ongoing throughout the year.

In reviewing ideas for new projects, there was a discussion about prioritizing the list with the aim of involving the community in the good work being done by the HC and generating volunteers to assist with preserving the history of the town. There was a discussion of how to prioritize the list of potential projects to make informed decisions on which ones to take on in 2023.

Detailed discussion of potential projects:

- *Former fire station/old fire station:* Mr. Roy noted the back of this building has been boarded up to keep out the elements and stabilize the condition of the structure. Mr. Landry had Public Works board it up.
- *Letters to owners of historic homes:* In an assessment completed in 1983 with the assistance of the Rockingham Planning Commission, 175 historic homes were identified excluding those in the Historic Districts. This list will need to be refreshed and updated. Mr. Landry noted there is money in the budget for mailings. This would involve some up-front work to update the list of properties.
- *Demolition ordinance review:* Mr. Landry said this was proposed in the past, but the ZBA and PB were not on board as it restricted property owners. The past proposal requested 60 days from the time of the demolition application for the HC to determine the historical value in the structure to be demolished and document it if needed. Mr. Bean noted there is something similar in place for structures in the Historic Districts. Mr. Wilson will discuss this with the Selectboard and the Town Planner.
- *Hearse House Easement:* This has been a longstanding plan. This property is currently privately owned and abuts the Plains Cemetery. The owner allows the town to utilize this structure. The long-term plan is for the town to obtain an easement to preserve and protect it due to its historical value. Mr. Wilson noted the town has open communication with the property owner, and in the event the easement can be procured from the property owner, the HC would be the backbone of this project with the rehabilitation work being done by Public Works.
- *Plains Cemetery:* The 300th anniversary is in 2025. There was a discussion about having a large celebration. Once the stained-glass window project is completed, planning for fundraising can begin.
- *Seacoast HC/HDC meeting:* This would involve coordination with other towns in the seacoast to share resources and will require a lot of effort.

Other ideas discussed:

- *Tour of historic homes:* Mr. Wilson noted homeowners may be concerned about liability, and Mr. Bean noted some of the older homes may not be best suited for the tour but thought this could be a

nice event. Ms. Clifford added that a house and garden tour would be nice, potentially coordinated with the Conservation Commission. This tour could include the Museum/Nichols Library.

- *Treasure hunt*: Mr. Landry suggested a treasure hunt to involve families.
- *Concert at the bandstand*: Mr. Wilson shared that a concert utilizing the bandstand on the Plains would be a nice opportunity. Members agreed that the bandstand is underutilized.
- *Halloween decoration contest*: Local businesses can decorate, and the public can judge the decorations.

Mr. Roy noted he has been to events at the library where Sanborn's Key Club members assisted with events, and they did a great job. That could be a valuable resource for HC events if volunteers are needed.

Members agreed that community involvement is key. Mr. Wilson noted the Recreation Commission has done a great job offering programs to adults, not just children, and emphasized that projects should involve the taxpayers, not just children. It was agreed there is a need for volunteers.

Mr. Bean emphasized that prioritizing the list is important and encouraged members to consider assigning numbered ranking for each project to assess complexity, cost, effort, and community impact.

It was agreed that for next month's meeting, members should prioritize projects and come ready to discuss.

**BOS Updates:**

Mr. Wilson provided the following updates:

- Recount for the Selectboard election will occur on Friday, 3/24/23, at 10 a.m.
- The monthly Department Head meeting with the Selectboard is on Monday, 3/27/23. He encouraged anyone who has decision-making ability on a committee/department/commission to attend to discuss purchase orders and other procedural matters.

**Next meeting:** Thursday, 4/27/23, in the library at 6:30 p.m.

**MM&S:** Mr. Landry adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

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*HC minutes are reviewed and approved (with or without amendments) at the next HC meeting. The original minutes are posted as submitted. Any amendments may be found in the minutes of the subsequent meeting in which the amendments were made.*