

Exeter Heritage Commission

December 20, 2017

Final Minutes

Members present: John Merkle, Chairman, Julie Gilman, Mary Dupre, Kelly Bergeron, Maura Fay

Chairman Merkle called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Wheelwright Room in the Exeter Town Office Building.

Business: Approval of the June minutes. Mary had a few changes. Julie made a motion to approve the June minutes as amended. Pam seconded. All were in favor and the minutes were approved. John then asked the commission if they had a chance to look at the November minutes. John then stated that there was not a quorum for this meeting. Mary had a few changes again. Julie stated that the minutes do not really have to be approved because there was not a quorum. They will be used just for the commissions use.

John then asked Julie to update the commission on the LCHIP for the cemetery. Julie stated that it went out in the paper. They will be getting \$13,000 which is great because the commission only asked for \$10,500. They gave them the extra funds in case they needed to do archaeological research. This led to a discussion that the commission has to have an extra \$2500 matching in some way. Julie then stated that they do because for 2017, the commission has the \$2500 budgeted for the Heritage Commission anyway. The next step is that they gave a letter outlining the details. The biggest thing is a scope of work, which the Town Planner is working on. Julie stated that there is a NH Cemetery Society and Pam agreed that there was. Julie then stated that they will be working with them to figure out what they want to do. The other question the Town Planner had was about a stewardship Plan. Julie stated that it is pretty simple. They have to talk about their plan on maintaining the property after the stones get fixed. Pam then stated that they need to talk about the Recreational Department going in and mowing with those big machines and knocking the stones over again. Julie agreed and stated that this is part of the Stewardship Plan, to either get a different program going for mowing or having them use a weedwacker instead. The commission then tossed out the idea of using goats. Julie stated that there are a couple of farms, but this is not something that could be done every week.

Julie stated that Pam's point is very good about training the staff who are maintaining the cemetery. John then asked if there was anything they could do about the trees. Julie stated that it is a hard place to get a truck into. The tree company that Julie met with were going to speak with their engineer and get back to her. They have not done so yet. There are some dead trees that are an issue also. Some dead trees have no bark on them and cannot be cut down. Some of these will need to be maintained because there is no way to get at them. John stated that the commission will have the winter to put the scope of work together. Julie stated that it is a two-year program so they do not have to rush. Pam asked if Julie wanted her to call the cemetery people. Julie stated that Dave Sharple, the Town Planner is taking care of that. John then asked if the commission has to accept anything, or have the selectmen already done that. Julie stated that the selectmen have to accept the grant and everything has to be ready before they accept the grant. This means the scope of work, the timeline, budget and the Stewardship Plan. Mary asked when the deadline was and Julie stated January 9th. Julie then stated that there are no trustees for the cemeteries. The Board of Selectmen can take on the duties of the cemetery trustees and this has to be voted on by the people. This will be done in March and then when the selectmen become the trustees, the commission will have access to the cemetery trustee fund,

which actually has some money in it. Julie then asked the commission to please contact her or Dave Sharple if they have any ideas about the Stewardship Plan.

Julie stated that she will be sending out the scope of work for comments. She then stated that one of the things in the Grant application is that they have an educational component. She was hoping that whoever was working on the stones would give the commission a few lessons, but probably not. Therefore, the educational component is going to be the commission observing the work and showing it on Channel 22. Pam stated that the Historical Society has a program that they sometimes do with the school kids. Julie thinks this is a good idea because it brings in the Historical Society too.

John then stated that the next item on the agenda is discussion about the possible video tour. Pam stated that before her knee surgery, she talked to Andy and Barbara and they were going to get together and that never happened. Pam then stated that the Historical Society has several walking tours. Andy was going to video Barbara and put that on Channel 22. Pam will talk to the both of them again. Julie stated that she would like members of the Heritage Commission to participate with this as well. Laura stated that she had talked about this back in June, SST does video production. Laura stated that her friend who teaches in that part of the program, said they start their video production in January. She will get in touch with her and find out more details about exactly what they do. John stated that it would be good for them to have a script that they could elaborate on. John then asked where they were going with this. Julie asked Pam to bring the scripts from the Historical Society to the next meeting and Laura will find out information as well. John then stated that the commission has a starting point to organize some of the topics for the video.

The next item on the agenda is a possible grant to continue the town wide survey. John stated that the area would be around Park Street and Oak Street. Pam stated that Cass Street is about as old as it gets. John stated he rode through there as well. Julie stated that she thought they would start at Cass Street and then go up around the park. She brought some old maps for the commission to see. Julie thought these maps might help to define where the commission wanted to go. Julie stated that she will call Lynn Monroe and ask her opinion. John stated that he thinks that would be a start because January 20th is the application date. When Julie speaks with Lynn, she will ask what the cost might be. Pam stated that she knows the commission cannot do all of it. John stated that the commission needs to talk with Lynn to get an idea of what the cost would be. Pam asked who would be giving the commission this money. Julie stated the DHR. They have already accepted the commission's letter of intent.

Julie stated that she does not think the application will be too difficult. She stated that the one thing they all need to agree on is the amount of money they will be asking for and the area want. She suggested that the commission might want to have a special meeting before the 20th, or just change the date of the January meeting. Julie stated that they can pass the information around, but the commission cannot really vote on it now. Julie stated that if the commission can meet on the 13th, she can meet with Lynn and get a lot going. She can get the quote from Lynn, put it all together and then distribute. John stated he is around then and would be willing to help Julie with it during the day. The commission has decided to meet on the 13th at 3 pm. Pam asked where this meeting would be taking place and Julie said here.

John then asked if the commission needed a formal vote on anything and Julie stated that they did. Julie then stated that they have \$10,500 grant match for the LCHIP. This money has just been sitting in the general fund and it is the end of the year and they still need the commitment of the \$10,500. There is no contract or any kind of agreement with a contractor and that is the only way you can uncover the funds from general fund one year, to general fund the next year. However, the Heritage Commission has a Heritage Fund which they have not taken advantage of really. So, Julie made a motion for the commission to vote to appropriate the 2016 Heritage Commission appropriation of \$10,500 into the

Heritage Fund. Laura approved this. Kelly seconded. John then asked if there was any further discussion and Julie stated that she would like to amend her motion. She would like to say instead of putting the \$10,500 in there, she would like to say they move the 2016 appropriation into the Heritage Fund. She wants to leave out the \$10,500. John asked if they had a second on this. Kelly seconded. All were in favor.

John stated that he does not have anything further on the demolition update. He stated he got the letter from the Town on the Portsmouth Ave. property. There has not been any activity on that as of yet. John stated that he had an observation of a dumpster outside of Halls. He asked if anyone knew what was going in there. Julie stated that she is not sure, but she thinks it is a women's clothing store.

Other Business: Pam stated that the Master Plan for Exeter Committee met this morning. There is going to be a public workshop on January 25th at the high school cafeteria. They would like a lot of people to come and impress them that saving historic Exeter is something that should be a huge part of the master plan. The time will be 6 pm to 8:30 pm. There will be registration and refreshments the first half hour. The consulting firm will then discuss what they have worked on thus far and then it will break out into small groups.

Pam stated that there is going to be an All Boards Meeting on Wednesday the 11th. John asked what time this meeting was going to start. Julie stated it would begin at 6 pm. Julie stated that there is no place for it yet.

With no further business, Julie made a motion to adjourn. Pam seconded. All were in favor and meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick
Recording Secretary