

The Falmouth Historical Society

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Zoom Meeting—March 7, 2023

The meeting came to order at 6:35 p.m. Present were board members Betsy Whitcomb, David Farnham, Rich Meserve, Ron Scorsone, Sally Farneth, Sue Farnham. Also present were society members Polly Burke and John Horton.

President's Remarks

David observed that the Society has entered its brief and (relatively) quiet season. Barring a repeat of last year's calamity at the Museum, we should have time to catch up on the work put on hold during our December and January surge of activity.

Publishing the cookbook and preparing for the annual meeting stressed our limited pool of volunteers. Information technology made it possible for us to continue meeting the expectations of our community despite the pandemic and closing the Museum during winter. As a small nonprofit, we benefit from having free or heavily discounted access to many of the same digital tools used by larger organizations. We now depend upon these tools to conduct local history research, manage our collections, communicate with our community, operate the bookstore, and perform Society administration. Technology helps us accomplish our mission, but few of our volunteers have the digital fluency needed to use these tools—especially tools used for digital publishing and communications. The skill level is a “half-step” above what students use when writing papers for science courses. We need to attract more tech savvy volunteers to eliminate the tech bottleneck slowing our work today.

Secretary's Report

Minutes. The minutes for the February board meeting were reviewed online.

Membership. Our active membership is 99 reflecting six members whose membership lapsed; we hope they will respond to the spring mailing. There was also one death (Mary Honan) plus one new member.

Treasurer's Report

We filed our annual report with the state.

Finances. Excluding \$7,500 reserved for the scholarship, the Society has a balance of \$5,097 in its operating accounts and \$22,041 with Maine Community Foundation. Our operating accounts contain 291 days of cash. Our projected income is \$860, projected expenses are \$4,660, and accounts/tax payable is \$500. This leaves an estimated end of year balance of \$798. Our actual expenses are \$79 under budget. Our net current assets (excluding long-term assets) have grown by \$1,022 this fiscal year.

Committee Reports

Programs. Work is underway on producing a pre-colonial map for Falmouth Schools. We're using Willis' "1690" map as the base and are removing everything (including place names) related to English settlement. We will add Aucocisco names for places and people. We hope to find someone fluent in Abenaki and familiar with Native history who can validate or correct what we have drawn from contemporary western sources.

Rich will coordinate details for this year's Marion Perkins Memorial Scholarship with Falmouth Schools.

Carol will work with Falmouth Community Programs to schedule guided tours. We will update the guides to fix some minor errors and reflect feedback from members.

Museum Operation & Exhibits. The Museum and Barn are closed for winter.

Collections. Ron has begun working on merging last summer's inventory and photographs into the catalog. In hindsight, illumination for the lightbox could have been better. Many photos have shadows or parts of the box are visible. These will require retouching of the photos. There was a discussion about photo editing products via email. Ron will subscribe to the Adobe Creative Cloud Photography Plan.

Local History. We responded to seven queries during the past month. We are still working on a backlog of three queries from January and February.

Communications. It's time to assemble the spring newsletter to be mailed in April. We will devote one of the four columns to local history. The suggested topic is "Falmouth's Mystery Grave," based on the research done last year in response to a request from the community. Other topics will include a short item on the annual meeting, the upcoming bus tour (assuming that arrangements have been made), and last year's award of the scholarship (now that we have a good picture of the recipient).

Merchandise. There have been no events for in-person sales and no mail-order sales this year. The cookbook is ready for another "press run" of sixteen pairs. Once those are ready, we will elevate the visibility of mail-order on the website.

Museum Buildings & Grounds. Ron reports that collection of material for the warranty return of the old sump pump is nearly done. The sump sensor went silent; it may have lost its connection during a power outage. He plans to visit the Museum on Wednesday.

Technology. Nothing significant to report.

Development. A printed annual report is being drafted. It will be a single sheet with the front containing an illustrated narrative of the Society's condition and accomplishments—both mission and business. The back will be a collection of charts supporting the narrative for those who want to see facts and figures. The material is drawn almost entirely from the annual meeting. We will insert the report in solicitation letters as evidence of our competence and credibility.

New Business

There being no new business, the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Suzanne Farnham, Secretary