

Wilmot Historical Society
Board Minutes
December 8, 2022

President Liz Kirby opened the meeting at 5:10 p.m. in the Town Office.

Present were board members Judy Hauck, Carolyn Rayno, Heather Mather, Bruce Sanborn, Catherine Stearns, and Mary Fanelli. David Janas was also in attendance.

The focus of the meeting was to elect officers for the board and then discuss plans for the future of the WHS as it relates to its physical needs.

The first order of business was to accept the resignation of Bill Chaisson from the board. The board voted to accept his resignation with regret. Bill had been serving as secretary, and he said he would finish up the project that he started on the reprint of the LeVarn book.

Election of Officers

Liz Kirby was unanimously elected to continue as president.

Catherine Stearns was unanimously elected to continue as vice president.

Heather Mather agreed to take over the duties of the treasurer and was unanimously supported.

Mary Fanelli agreed to take the position of secretary and was unanimously supported.

Treasurer's report

Ledyard Checking: \$5,120.85; Money Market: \$38,233.32 with \$1.57 interest Total: \$43,354.17
Encumbered: Vet. Mem. \$1,942.56; Bldg \$21,153; TH \$10,000; Grants \$750. Total 33,095.56
Funds available: \$9,508.61

Liz opened the discussion about a future home for the WHS by presenting some input from SCORE, a non-profit consulting firm. This info was gathered in 2019 when the board was pursuing the idea of purchasing a building to house the historical society. The bottom line was to do a feasibility study to assess the needs of the society and the ability to support the idea of going forward with the purchase of a new home. Lack of space is the main reason for pursuing this idea.

Much discussion ensued including some history for those who were not here in 2018 when the first real efforts were made to find a building to house the WHS. We talked about the cost of maintaining a building and how to provide funds to do so. One idea was a rental space. Another was to have an annual fund drive.

After talking over many ideas, it was decided that the best option might be to ask the town if they would be willing to donate some of the space across from the town hall complex to be used as a building site for a new home for the WHS. Judy suggested that everyone give a couple of reasons why this site would be ideal and why the Select Board might want to allow the WHS to have this land.

Some of the reasons were:

1. WHS is the only entity in town that preserves town history. The town history committee has been inactive for quite a while. [per Liz: since the publication of Home to the Mountain in 2007/2008]
2. The town needs space to keep its archival materials.
3. The town hall is right across the street.
4. Moving out of the town office would give them more space, which they have been needing.
5. A presence in the Wilmot Center Village would contribute to the historical feeling of that area.
6. The WHS could include in their plans a climate-controlled space to preserve all town archives/documents.
7. An historic reproduction that would house the WHS would add to the historic look of the area.
8. Tourism might be encouraged by making an historic center of the Wilmot Center Village.
9. There are people who have historically significant documents and artifacts who are waiting for the WHS to have a safe place to keep them.

Some ideas bantered around were:

1. Add some space behind the building to make a climate-controlled room to house Town documents, and archival materials.
2. Make a space for the police department to set up an office.
3. Build a barn-like structure to rent out for vehicle storage.
4. Add a small apartment for rental income.

Ultimately, Judy (who had done a lot of work on the 2018 efforts to procure a building), asked Bruce if he would be willing to sit with her and draw up a building plan of what would be needed to both launch a campaign for a new home, and/or convince the select board to lease the 14 North Wilmot Road space to the WHS. Mary offered to turn over all the files that she had accumulated when she and Judy made the effort to find a place in 2018.

We went through the Action Items

- Crossed out the pavers that Bruce had installed at the Veterans Memorial. Liz said there are 36 more large pavers available.
- Bruce got the scanner printer to print. He was going to research a new printer. He will look into this further and try to get the Epsom back into printing mode.
- Bill will continue to try to upload the Levarn files to print a copy of the book.
- Mary has not finished editing the transcriptions done by Kim of the audio tapes.

The next meeting of the board will be held in the town office on January 12, 2023 at 5 p.m.

Liz closed the meeting at 7:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Fanelli, secretary