



OWOSSO HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
THE CURWOOD COLLECTION

**Regular Meeting of the Owosso Historical Commission**

**Minutes of February 8, 2021 – 6:00 P.M.**

PRESIDING OFFICER: Dave Acton – Vice Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice Chair Dave Acton, Commissioner Mark Erickson, Commissioner Gary Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem Susan Osika

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Betsy Galloway, Commissioner Sara Adams

VICE CHAIR ACTON CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6:02 P.M.

**APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Pro Tem Osika to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion supported by Commissioner Erickson and concurred in by unanimous vote.

**ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

1. Appointment of Officers for Calendar Year 2021: City Manager Henne suggested appointing three officers: Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Henne explained that he understands finding a Secretary has been difficult and that the reason he arranged the packet for this meeting was to help him in the event he would have to take minutes. Commissioner Erickson asked about the possibility of nominating “yourself” for a position or if that was not allowed. Henne explained that with so few members, this was inevitable but not an issue.
  - a. MOTION: Erickson moved to nominate Dave Acton as Chair, himself as Vice Chair, and Henne as temporary Secretary. Acton explained that the Secretary can be an employee of the city according to the bylaws. Supported by Wilson. Henne requested an updated copy of the bylaws for the City Clerk’s records.
  - b. Motion carried unanimously through voice vote.
2. Reopening of Curwood Castle: City Manager Henne updated the Commission on what City Hall has been doing in light of the State Health Department’s order that all workers who can work from home shall work from home. He went on to say that this is no longer working for City Hall because some residents can only pay their bills in cash and do not feel comfortable using the drop box for that. So City Hall is open to those residents and by appointment only for other

business. Osika explained that the Castle is usually closed during January, February, and March anyway. There was further discussion about the timing of the Castle reopening and the decreased potential of making money in sales if the Castle is opened in the winter and that now there is further cost with opening because of cleaning and sanitizing needs.

- a. MOTION: Wilson moved that this question be brought back to the Commission at their regular March meeting. Motion supported by Osika.
  - b. Motion carried unanimously through voice vote.
3. Approve the OHC Section of the City's 6-Year Capital Improvement Plan: City Manager Henne and Commissioner Wilson outlined 2 changes that were necessary to correct typos. Henne explained that this year it will be pretty simple city-wide because everything will just be moved back by one year because of initial COVID-19 uncertainties at the beginning of the fiscal year. Commissioner Erickson pointed out that \$25,000 has been budgeted this year for the Gould House roof.
- a. MOTION: Wilson moved to accept the 6-year OHC CIP with the corrections noted. Motion supported by Erickson
  - b. Motion carried unanimously through voice vote.

### **FINANCIAL REVIEW AND DISCUSSION**

City Manager Henne updated the commission on the January Revenue and Expenditures report, the cash balance report as of Jan 31, 2021, and the revised budget projections with no Executive Director position filled for the remainder of the 20-21 fiscal year.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

No public present

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Erickson had a question about the revised budget projections to make sure that the new reality of not having to pay an Executive Director for the remainder of the year was factored in. Henne explained that it was and that the Jan 31, 2021 cash balance report is misleading because of the timing of the remaining General Fund transfer to the OHC. Henne said there will still be a need to utilize some fund balance even with the Director position not being filled.

Vice-Chair Acton asked about the future of fundraising, sales, and events. Henne commented there may be an opportunity to begin selling Castle merchandise and books online. The commission also discussed the potential of holding a home tour amid the challenges of post-COVID life. Osika brought up the possibility of having a booth at the Farmers Market when it returns. Erickson cautioned to be vigilant with the Curwood book collection to be sure the rare copies were kept. Wilson agreed commenting that most Curwood book collectors are local and there may not be the large market online that would make a large revenue difference for the commission. Commissioners agreed that an inventory of current books and merchandise was needed.

The Commission agreed to discuss the Commission's involvement in the Farmers Market at the next meeting to give Osika the opportunity to speak to the market manager. Wilson detailed past efforts to create an inventory of Curwood books from 10 years ago.

### **STAFF REPORT**

Henne updated the Commission on the MCACA grant process, the need for community input regarding what should be done with the Gould House 1<sup>st</sup> floor, an update on the two upstairs apartments, and a recap with Erickson regarding the meeting on February 4 with the Gould House architects.

The Commission asked to have a community survey drafted before the next round of water bills so that it can be mailed to get ideas for the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Gould House. Henne stressed his desire to apply for MCACA this year even if the Commission is not completely ready to submit an application to the MEDC to build those relationships and get feedback. Erickson asked if we need a grant writer. Henne said no. Erickson and Henne said a special meeting might be necessary if the Commission wanted to review the survey draft.

Wilson and Acton discussed the possibility of the Commission working on an inventory of historical homes/structures in the community with specific histories. Wilson also stressed the need for a possible do-it-yourself guide to historic home preservation and restoration because Owosso has a lot of historic homes.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Osika moved to adjourn the meeting. Erickson supported. Voice vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 P.M.