

MINUTES OF THE OWOSSO HISTORICAL COMMISSION

JULY 14, 2014

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Joni Forster at 7:00pm at the Gould House. Present as guests were Mayor Ben Frederick, Becky Hoddy Smith, Gary Wilson, Heather Deason, Bozena Bienias, Lori Bailey and Gordon Pennington.

Commission members in attendance were Sue Ludington, James Gutting, Lorraine Weckwert, Elaine Greenway, Jennifer Adams-Mahoney, Joni Forster, Sue Osika, and Kerry Baker.

Being that the former Director of Historical Properties had just resigned, we were without Minutes, Director's Report and a Treasurer's Report for the month of July.

Guests Ben Frederick and Gary Wilson and Becky Hoddy Smith were in attendance to address the issue of the Seegmiller House. The Seegmiller House was scheduled to be demolished by Baker College until a group of people protested the destruction of an 1860's significant house in Owosso history. Frederick, Wilson and Hoddy-Smith are heading up that group to save the Seegmiller House. A plan for usage of the property is an essential component of this effort. Bila Construction has been contacted for a necessary cost assessment for restoration, due by August. In July, Gary Wilson, as president of Preservation Owosso, has engaged the services of an architectural historian to also contribute a considered opinion on the condition and salvation of this historic house. Wilson is quoted as saying this is an opportunity for Baker to develop a partnership with the community as never before with the Hoddy Block becoming a true neighbor, with all considerations. Becky Hoddy Smith said it was never her father's intent to tear down the Seegmiller House, but rather to preserve it. The OHC appointed new member Jennifer Adams as their representative to this preservation group.

The Castle floors will be repaired and restored by Mr. Dick Martin beginning July 21. Castle will be closed on July 19th, with plans to reopen on August 5th. DPW will aid by removing the furniture. Lorraine Weckwert was appointed to be in charge of this project including replacement and relocation of display and furniture.

Lorraine brought up the topic of the north and south porches of the Gould House which are in desperate need to replacement. The topic of the infestation of honey bees within the walls of the Gould House also was brought to the floor. Mayor Frederick reminded the OHC that we have "tens of thousands" of dollars available for such maintenance of the Gould House. Jennifer volunteered the services of her husband who is a professional building inspector to give us a report on needed repairs at the Gould House, including the porches. Lorraine had been appointed to seek reputable contractors for bids on repair.

There was a motion from James Gutting to do an interior and exterior assessment of repair of the Gould House and Carriage House and was seconded by Elaine Greenway. Motion was voted on and passed.

Sue Ludington reported that she had inspected apartment #2, which is currently rented by the RESD for \$720.00 per month, although they actually pay just \$600.00 because of a long term rental agreement. She reports that there are plumbing issues with little water pressure, the windows are painted shut in violation of safety codes, but that the apartment is a lovely space needing some updating. Apartment #3 is rented by City Manager Donald Crawford, which is actually a larger apartment for \$650.00. Both apartments include cable, phone, water, garbage. Sue Ludington moved to repair the plumbing in the kitchen and bathroom in apartment #2, with costs not to exceed \$1000. Second by Kerry Baker. Motion passed.

Elaine Greenway reported for the 2014 Home Tour that there are 15 committed buildings and Oak Hill Cemetery with sponsorships thus far of \$1825 and \$750.00 for the booklet

We discussed hiring our summer intern Michael Gute to be a paid docent as well as his internship duties for a few weeks before he departs on August 25th for Eastern Michigan University, Historic Preservation Masters Program.

Kerry Baker said that the Mitchell Museum had many items relating to Owosso history including some Tom Dewey items, and recommended that at least one member of the Acquisitions Committee attend. All recommend that Gary Wilson attend the auction as the Acquisitions Committee representative with his entry fee paid by the OHC.

Kerry also brought up the fact that the Owosso Carriage, which was donated to OHC by Bill Mitchell, and year later removed from our location by him and taken back without permission or agreement, is to be sold at the upcoming Mitchell auction. The group agreed to take steps to reacquire the OHC carriage. Kerry Baker gave us all an affidavit about how the carriage was removed from OHC without permission as she was at the time of the removal an employee of Mitchells and was present at the removal of the carriage.

James Gutting left the meeting at 8:04.

For the event of "Tour Our Town", it was approved to have two baskets of items as prizes from OHC.

Jennifer Adams/Mahoney volunteered to be on the landscaping committee for the Castle and the Gould House.

The moosehead which was recently acquired through donations is stored presently in Comstock Cabin, as DPW doesn't think it will fit up the stairs to the Castle. It will cost \$200.00 to have the horns removed and replaced by a taxidermist.

The Curwood-Hoddy-collection of historic items has been gratefully received from a donation by Baker College. This is an extensive collection of movie posters, and 28 volumes of Curwood writing, clippings,

manuscripts and screenplays, etc. The items have been inventoried and upon the formal agreement between the City and Baker College being accepted, announcements will be made about the collection.

Becky Hoddy Smith told the story of how Hoddy acquired the posters and film from Mrs. Curwood after he bought the house and she wanted to sell the items to Hoddy.

Heather Deason offered to digitize copies and make hard copies of some photos donated of Curwood at the Castle and Becky Hoddy Smith offered to pay for the hard copies.

Motion to Adjourn by Elaine Greenway, seconded by Sue Ludington at 8:51pm

Submitted by Lorraine Weckwert, temporary secretary!