

OWOSSO HISTORICAL COMMISSION

APPROVED Regular Meeting Minutes **Monday, October 13, 2014, 7:00 P.M. Gould House**

Call to order - a quorum as established.

Roll Call: Present: Elaine Greenway, Sue Osika, Jennifer Mahoney, Sue Luddington, and Erin Powell.
Robert Doran, Director

Absent: Kerry Baker, James Gutting, and Lorraine Weckwert. **(NOTE: Heather Deason, who appeared in the September meeting minutes as an absent commission member, was never officially sworn in.)**

Approval of Agenda: A motion was made by Sue Luddington to accept the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasures Report: Motion was made by Sue Luddington to accept Treasures Report from Director Robert Doran. Motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Comments: Gordon Pennington spoke about the importance of history in Owosso, both for future generations, and the youth of today. Indicated the need to engage younger people in the "process of history," and was impressed by the Historical Commission's agenda. He was especially interested in the new marketing, advertising, internet, PR and social media strategies that the OHC commission is reviewing.

Communications

Director's Report: Directors Report was moved to New Business. Michigan Museum Association Conference Report was moved to November, 2014 OHC meeting.

Minutes of meeting, September, 2014

A motion was made by Sue Osika to change the September, 2014 minutes to reflect that a motion that was approved for Jennifer Mahoney to use a \$500 donation to purchase, design and plant a perennial garden on the east side of Gould House, using perennials from Crooked Tree as vendor. The September motion passed; Lorraine Weckert was the dissenting vote.

Old Business:

Flowers purchased and planted in Gould House east garden by Jennifer completed.

A motion was made by Sue Luddington to pay the \$500 in grant funds to Crooked Tree for perennials for the east garden of Gould House planted by Jennifer Mahoney. Motion passed unanimously.

2014 Home Tour Report presented by Elaine Greenway.

New Business:

Election of Owosso Historical Commission Officers – Chair and Vice Chair

Elections: Sue Luddington made a motion that Elaine Greenway be elected for a one year term as Committee Chair. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Sue Osika that Jennifer Mahoney be elected as Vice-Chair for a one year term. Motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report

A motion was made by Sue Luddington for all OHC Committee members to spend at least one hour per week with Director Robert Doran working at one of the Historical Facilities. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Jenifer Mahoney to temporarily dissolve all current committees and committee chairs in order to “pull in” to firmly establish vision, mission, long and short term goals, policies and procedures, etc. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Sue Luddington to establish “The Ivan Conger Archive Room” at Gould House to honor his lifelong passion and dedication to the community by assembling the comprehensive *James Oliver Curwood Collection* we recently acquired via Baker College. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Erin Powell that we purchase a printer/scanner for Gould House; price to be determined. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Sue Osika to raise suggested admission of Curwood Castle from \$2/1 to \$5/\$2; to raise the rental fee at Curwood Castle from \$150 for the first hour to \$250 – with a refundable \$50 deposit – and from \$25 to \$55 for each additional hour; the same for Gould House. Request will be forwarded to City Council for approval. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Jenifer Mahoney that Curwood Castle close for the month of January. Also to change winter hours – February, March thru mid-April – to Wednesday through Sunday, 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Sue Luddington to connect surveillance wires that were cut at Curwood Castle when the desk was moved and to purchase a new surveillance monitor. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Jenifer Mahoney to purchase five museum grade informative plaques for Curwood Castle which are critical in order to create a world class museum experience; price to be determined. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Sue Luddington to raise money and to simultaneously engage the city to find money to clean, repair and restore the paintings at Curwood Castle. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Sue Luddington regarding Denice Grace that along with Director Robert Doran, she:

- Expand her role.
- Help to implement and manage expanded Docent and Volunteer Program.
- Help to implement and manage Intern Program.

- Work with local organizations to create a “people at risk” volunteer program.
- Work with local school districts to create curriculum that to foots to local history/ writing/ architecture/ and conservation. This can then be put on our web site for teachers to use all over the state.
- Help to implement and conduct Docent and Volunteer orientation and training.
- Assist with archiving Curwood Castle collection.
- Attend all future OHC Committee meetings unless otherwise notified.
- City Clerk Amy Kirkland has offered a city laptop (used only during election time) that OHC can use at the Castle.
- Assist with creation and implementation of Curwood Castle Exhibitions.
- Take on the role of cleaning the Castle and Gould house. Use cleaning funds to offer her incremental reviews and pay raises commensurate with her duties and performance.

Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Sue Luddington that all contracts, proposals and acquisitions are to be negotiated with Director Robert Doran along with OHC committee consensus. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Jenifer Mahoney that all OHC committee members need to establish committee consensus before removing, moving, exhibiting or changing anything at the four historical structures. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Jenifer Mahoney to create new budgets that reflect the short and long term goals of OHC. Use projects and initiatives laid out during October OHC meeting via Director Robert Doran’s report as a road map for creating a budget first draft to be delivered at November 2014 OHC meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Jenifer Mahoney to get bids on purchasing a significantly larger television to screen movies at Curwood Castle; price to be determined. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Sue Osika to hold off on purchasing new furnaces for Gould House. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Sue Luddington to have the city inspectors’ conduct in in-depth interior & exterior assessment of Gould House in order to inform further structural work. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Sue Osika to alarm Gould House. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Jenifer Mahoney to have Lance Omer conduct a professional evaluation of the two second floor apartments to help guide the OHC in determining if rents reflect current market value. This will inform our decision as to whether we change leases to have tenants pay their own gas and electric. New leases will also reflect that phones will no longer be included. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Sue Osika to determine feasibility of establishing availability for rental functions at Gould House i.e. parties, showers, small weddings, and various other small events. What would that kind of scheduling look like? ...who would manage? / roll the price of a function manager into each event. What would we need to add in order to provide these services? Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Jenifer Mahoney to determine history and value of Gould House furnishings. OHC will then discuss the possibility of liquidating some of the lesser furnishings to make room for more donations, functions, exhibitions, etc. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Sue Luddington to cut down two overgrown bushes in the center of the U driveway; and to submit a request proposal for cutting down the large pine tree that is leaning into our electrical wires. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Jenifer Mahoney to move forward with exploring the feasibility of turning Gould House in a Historical Exhibition space. The following was included in the motion:

- Need to find \$\$\$ to buy or create exhibition panels.
- Establish Gould House as an exhibit space to showcase the OHC collections and assets, as well as the collections of other local and regional historic organizations.
- Exhibitions will include a comprehensive catalog explaining the historic position and idea behind the collection and organization of items shown. Will also include forwards written by collaborators, local and regional scholars, etc.
- Exhibitions will be tied into our long and short term goals and Marketing and PR strategies. Will include an opening night reception/fund raiser, etc.
- Exhibitions will remain in place for 6+weeks and have a regular schedule open to the public.
- Find local, state and federal \$\$\$ to underwrite each exhibit
- **Spring Show:** "Bringing the Past to Life – Photographs from the Owosso Historical Committee and the Shiawassee Historical Society Collections" in partnership with the Shiawassee Historical Society. To include a one day art fair on Gould House Lawn, street and Fayette Park
- **Summer Show:** "Owosso goes Hollywood – The Movie Posters and Correspondence of James Oliver Curwood" in partnership with Ivan Conger. Curwood Film Festival in Castle and on the Castle Lawn.
- **Fall Show:** "Woodard – Commemorating their 150th Anniversary." In partnership with Owosso Main Street. Indoor Woodard furnishings in Gould House and outdoor furnishings on front lawn. Will also include an Antique Car show on Washington Street in front of Gould House, and an antique furniture show in Fayette Park or Market Square. Engage community and Woodard to borrow important indoor and outdoor furniture. Motion passed unanimously.

Further, it was discussed and unanimously agreed:

- To establish and collaboratively assemble a prototype "Workbook" for all projects and initiatives – includes participants, budget, time frame, communication, accordance with mission and vision, benefit to the community and OHC; and finally an evaluation and measure of success.
- To establish an Honorary Board of Directors comprised of community leaders, artists, professionals and entrepreneurs to serve as a mechanism for fundraising and a means of attracting talent, donations, and local, regional and state awareness.

- That Director Robert Doran use Gould House as office, and to house, archive and display the OHC Collection.
Approved purchase of shelving units@ \$420.
Thank city for donating new laptop and software.
Agree to share Internet access with tenant @ \$28 per month.
- Have Gould House open to public whenever Director Robert Doran present and available. Put up sign and use Washington Street door which currently has a functioning front door bell.
- Move forward by establishing an Accredited Intern Program – high school and or college – to be implemented this summer.
- When computer arrives and software is loaded, begin ongoing archiving process.
- Call the DPW only in the event of an emergency. We’re currently paying \$20 an hour every time they are called.
- Reviewed city policies and procedures concerning PO’s, requisitions and purchasing. After prior commission approval, ALL purchases need to have PO generated with the vendor, through Director Robert Doran.
- Currently our budgeting process – especially Gould House OHC money – is like a “square peg in round hole” because of city policies and other constraints. As new budget develops, move to changing framework that speaks to our unique organizational structure.
- An integral part of all new initiatives, projects and acquisitions will be the research and then OHC consensus necessary to determine financial viability, and then assess as to whether they fit into our overall strategy, mission and vision, short and long term goals, etc.
- A document was distributed explaining the difference between a Vision and a Mission Statement. It was agreed that the commission would meet once informally to engage in an M&A “strategic planning session” to then come back to the November, 2104 meeting with a road map for a 2015/16 M&A plan. The “strategic planning session” would include:
 - Develop new web site that includes all components of the OHC, not just the Home Tour.
 - Rebrand OHC using Curwood Castle Architecture Plans.
 - What is currently is the “face” of the OHC, our historic structures and our collections.
 - Once we determine OHC brand, define an overall name that clearly explains marketing strategy for the entire OHC collection. The octopus has many arms, but what should we call the head?
Example: ***The Owosso Curwood Collection*** which includes Curwood Castle, Gould House, Comstock Cabin, and Paymaster House; Gould House Owosso Historical Archives and The Ivan Conger James Oliver Curwood Collection; all under the care and leadership of the Owosso Historic Commission.

Thorough strategic planning session, all of the above will then become the architecture and road map for our new web site.

- By December 15th put together 2015/16 Marketing initiatives and budgets so we can start developing a comprehensive M&A plan to support those initiatives. It’s rather late in the game but we can do our best.
- Establish an overall Marketing budget for the entire fiscal year, looking towards 2/3/4/5/10 year(s) plans
- Establish an ongoing schedule for press releases – immediately submit press release for Curwood Castle renovation and recent acquisitions, and new Director Robert Doran hire, where we can roll out Owosso Historical Committee Vision and upcoming schedule of events.
- Social Media – Face Book & Twitter. Need Owosso Historical Committee’s help to implement and manage.

- Acquisitions –stressed preauthorization based on firmly established city financial rules and protocol. Director Robert Doran has the flexibility to spend \$500 without committee authorization. If we (collectively or individually) see something unique or time sensitive, he can immediately negotiate with Committee Chair for quick approval.
- Develop and establish adjudicated Curwood Short Story Prize – find \$\$\$ for purse.
- **Work to significantly raise awareness of Curwood as a Pioneer Conservationist.**
- Museum shop – order souvenirs that foot to our new branding initiative; better use of current souvenir space.
- Based on our new budget and full OHC continue consensus, seek out, through donations and acquisitions, pieces that were either original to the Castle or closely match what is pictured in the photograph from Curwood’s time.

Curwood Exhibitions:

- Rotate out the “basement” exhibitions at least 3X a year.
- Have 2nd and 3rd floor turrets focus on conservation.
- Implement and market ongoing Curwood “Film Festival” to showcase his films.
- Summer Event: Conservation initiative – work with local and state conservation clubs and organizations.

Director Robert Doran passed out the BYLAWS of the Owosso Historical Commission to review proposed changes to be discussed at November, 2014 meeting.

Citizen Comments

Adjourn – Sue Luddington made a motion to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.