

MINUTES

SESTERCENTENNIAL COMMITTEE MONDAY, MAY 15, 2023 WILLIAM L. PULLEN MUNICIPAL BUILDING MEETING ROOM ONLINE NON-INTERACTIVE ON TOWN HALL STREAMS 6:00 p.m.

Committee members present: Argy Nestor, Buddy Savage, Tracy Weed, Sherry Abaldo, Martha Johnston-Nash, Ruth Ann Senff-Wiemer, Keith Siegel, Matt Blazek

Missing: John Loker

Others present: Holly Savage, Don Grinnell

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** at 6:00 p.m. by Argy Nestor
2. **Minutes from last meeting:**

Martha said it should be “John Ware.” Holly asked about the prizes/community section.

Motion to approve minutes of April 27, 2023 by: Matt Blazek
2nd by: Tracy Weed
8-0

3. **Social media:**

Holly shared a post on Facebook sharing the logo info for the youth and the adults, and one for “May the 4th Be with You.” Argy said Holly’s going to take the lead on that – what we want to post, as frequently as possible without being too much. Argy started a google doc on what we want to communicate to folks and when. We may want to create a timeline on when info goes up — invite people to be in the parade, when would that be. Tracy said it’s not in google docs. Buddy said you’ll need content, something as close to ready to go as possible. Holly said you can schedule it months in advance. Buddy said a critical time is the one-year-out point; we’ve got to really pin that down.

Matt noted 33 likes and 38 followers. He suggested maybe announcing a photo hashtag thing, like post pictures of Union, #unionme250.

Holly is also looking at maybe a more intuitive name. She did not know how the page had been set up and switched to say festival page. Keith thought he said it was a gov page. Holly was not sure that hit the right audience. In answer to Buddy, Keith said the page name is Union Maine 250, adding frankly no one knows what a Sestercentennial is. Tracy noted Waldoboro is using Waldoborough 250th Anniversary.

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Matt said instagram should be associated. Argy said we can have twitter, instagram, etc. but need time. Consensus was don't touch twitter. Buddy said the more content, photos people provide the better; "share your favorite photos of Union" will generate content for us. Keith said people can share and post, but you still have to approve it.

Martha suggested doing above as soon as we can get some interviews with older citizens. Argy and Sherry are on it. Holly has pictures maybe for a different story.

Argy mentioned an updated hardback book. Matt will send pictures to Holly. A book done by the historical society featuring buildings over the last eight to 10 years was mentioned.

Tracy brought up getting material for a snippet, "This is our first committed partnership – looking forward to having Corporal Cobb Camp #68 do a demonstration." Argy suggested highlighting the historical society as well, perhaps before Corporal Cobb.

4. Information sharing and conversation re: possibilities for reenactment and rededication of war memorial on Common – Don Grinnell, member of the Corporal Cobb Camp #68, Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War:

Don lives in Washington and went to high school in Union. In Rockport he formed the above camp. To be a member one needs direct lineage to a Civil War veteran. He wanted to get out into the community a couple times a year, with further education to help residents, wherever they are, trace their lineage going back to the Civil War.

He took the Sestercentennial information back to one of their meetings. They can help out by:

- 1) Perhaps rededicate the Civil War monument on the Common. A search is underway to find a copy of the speech done when it was first dedicated. The historical society does not have one. Jay said a lot was digitized and he will have the town office look. GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) Post was mentioned. Don said the rededication would take 15 to 20 minutes and could be incorporated into the agenda for that day, at the end of the parade for example.
- 2) When Washington had its bicentennial 12 years ago, they brought in some Civil War reenactments which went over very well. There are 21 of them, none part of a reenactment group but they have points of contact. Then they would have the committee work directly with them. The flatter fairgrounds would probably be the preferred site. Bathroom facilities were brought up. Other events on the fairgrounds could help draw. They set up a typical Civil War camp, do some drills, fire off some cannons and muskets. Spouses are there dressed in period costumes. They cook outside for themselves. It is interesting, entertaining, and informative.
- 3) They already started taking all the names on the monument plus found other names not on monument which is typical. They did that in Washington. Records get lost especially paper. They will do the research for every veteran they can find from

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Union who served in the Civil War, put together a data base, find/take pictures, enlistment records, etc. They will also put together a small book over the winter for the library and historical society so people can do their own research.

Argy asked Don to clarify the third component. He said everyone from Union that fought in the Civil War. Some might be alive today. They will use it as a recruitment tool, a two-way street. Argy clarified benefits to them would be communication and connections to those relatives. Don said there are now six camps in the state, with the nearest in Bangor: Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War.

Re: reenactments, Ruth Ann asked about Leonard Mills and sharpshooter expert Dave Soulin of Rockland. Don said there are eight to Civil War reenactment groups. In July there were two groups at Fort Knox. He added in Washington they came in the night before and stayed overnight. He also said his ancestors Royal and Bailey Grinnell he came up the Georges River and originally settled in Union.

Matt suggested more of a timeline event, going past the Civil War, noting the area was purchased in the 1640s and first settled 1774. He would handle the rest. He asked how many troops they were planning to muster. Don said there might be 30 soldiers. Matt said Don was thinking more of an interpretive camp giving demos, not reenactments which Don said are more in the South on the same battlegrounds as the war was fought. Matt has been trying to put a timeline together for a couple years, from the earliest explorers/settlers to the Civil War, then past that.

Buddy asked about associated costs. Don said none. Martha said we have a sponsor if needed, with Argy noting Wayne Kirkpatrick of Kirkpatrick Sales and Rentals.

Consensus was this will be a great addition. Matt will be the point of contact for the reenactment. In answer to Keith, Don said one's ancestor does not have to be from Union or Maine to join the organization. The committee thanked Don. He may come back once a quarter to see what's going on. Martha noted getting genealogy information into town records is great. Checking with the state archives re: the dedication speech was mentioned. Matt said it was July 4, 1888.

5. Trees: Next meeting with Tom.

Argy recapped Keith's suggestion to do seven trees in seven meaningful locations in Union. Discussion included the Common, public land, plaques on the trees, and the new public space on Coggins Hill.

6. Committee members updates on activities:

Matt met with the historical society and Jeff Nims. They are interested in exploring something with the map that will bring it more to life. They are not interested in really changing it from the *Come Spring* look, maybe getting it redone.

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They are interested in adopting the QR codes, even on a legend on the map next to the homestead names that would then bring up the Union historical website with information on the original houses.

Matt also discussed with them making a better base for the map that fits the aesthetic of the Common better. He is working on a 3d mock-up design using granite to tie into the old quarrying industry that was here in town, and to match it better with some of the monuments already on the Common. He will be on their committee re: the map.

There was trepidation about a QR code tour in at least a permanent fashion due to private property concerns. A temporary thing could possibly be put out during their Come Spring bus tour so people could explore on their own. Matt has also been exploring lesser-known places of historical value that have public access: St. George canal network, party barges between Union and Thomaston, quarry industry, TCC, the fair incorporated by Joshua Chamberlain, etc. He would like to bring the town beyond the novel *Come Spring*, as there is so much other Union history that could be out there. He is working with the historical society to build more things up for them that could be unveiled during the weekend celebration, even if a soft unveiling.

Argy was curious if the historical society had separated the bus tour and the Common walking tour. She mentioned archivist Kevin Johnson at the Penobscot Marine Museum with tons of pictures of Union, who will do a talk at the school as well as for the town for \$50. This might be great to do at the old town hall.

Matt offered to dip in and is trying to set up a photo exhibit called ghost towns, with old pictures superimposed on current buildings. The sanatorium where the post office is now was mentioned. Argy mentioned an article on Paul Jones, who was a little boy when his parents ran it, then he took it over, and he talks about similar problems that people have today.

Re: parade Ruth Ann said the Shriners are up for it. Their normal stipend is \$300 but it goes to Boston Children's Hospital and a burns hospital. He thought he could include the mini racers at a lower price. She is waiting to hear back.

Re: pipe bands, the Maine Public Safety Pipe and Drum Corps will run it by their members. She contacted but no word yet from Claddagh More and Dunlap Highland Band. Single piper Ernie Smith's fee is \$400.

She heard from the Down East Brass Quintet, who requested an unspecified stipend and need a flatbed truck. Jeff Payson and Wayne Kirkpatrick were mentioned. Matt suggested trying the University of Maine Marching Band.

She is communication with a local wholesaler re: Clydesdales. No word yet from Peter Stuart or the Owls Head Transportation Museum. Buddy said they do flyovers. Matt will get in touch with them.

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Ruth Ann expressed concern about getting people to commit without a budget. Argy suggested contacting people, then once we know the cost we go from there. We have some money and will get more. At this point the only costs are the parade and t-shirt logo will have that. There is \$819.51 left from last Founders Day to use by July 1.

Argy asked how long do we want the parade? Include everyone who says yes? Washington learned they can't have animals in parades anymore, a state thing. Argy wondered if that would apply to setting up the Common to look like it did when animals were there. In answer to Ruth Ann on having Clydesdales, Matt said he will ask his wife.

Argy asked who did the Common map. Matt thinks it's signed. Argy said they were told Donna Morine, but it was created by Esther Morton who is no longer alive. Argy suggested Matt connect with Donna. He will also ask Jeff Nims, as they are taking the lead on the map.

Consensus was reached re: parade via the Facebook page. Tracy said recycle every so often. Argy reached out to Tabby about the Girl Scouts.

Re: time capsule, Tracy would like to see if Bruce Libby can come verify where the cement capsule is. Then we can have a capsule purchased and ready in the event what's in there isn't salvageable or usable. Argy mentioned partnering with a carpenter in town. Keith mentioned it has to be watertight in 50 years. Tracy liked reaching out via the Facebook page for input on what to put in the new time capsule.

Argy said we should connect with Karen Strunk re: the school. She met with the dance/music residency person at school last week. It sounds great. The residencies will go over a two-to-three-month period most likely in fall. At the end of four weeks have a dance for the kids at the school, and in another four weeks with a musician/dancer culminating in a community dance at the school with perhaps a third one in the spring. She learned town hall foundation is not slated to be shored up until after the Sestercentennial. She said the other residency is the historical musical that's being written. She meets with that artist next Thursday.

Keith said it would be fun to do something with Maine Cabin Masters, who rebuilt the EMS hut at the fairgrounds. He talked to Chase who gave him the business contact info. He was very interested. They could bring a lot of people. Argy was thinking something with the arts. It's very early on yet but we discussed the Old Town Hall. He reached out to the business manager just back from vacation. Matt asked about their experience dealing with historic buildings. Keith said they are conscientious about permits, rules, and bringing in experts citing an ADA-compliant project they did for the Travis Mills Foundation. Keith will get more details of what's involved, cost, etc. Next would be a conversation with the historical society.

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Keith asked committee members to think about what other projects Maine Cabin Masters could do. Mentioned were the gazebo, the Little League field, the grandstand, and a pop-up theater on a trailer.

Tracy started putting together save the date cards. Discussion included size (consensus 5"x7"), quantity, and where to print (Staples, Adventure, etc.). Re: the float, she doesn't know if she can pull off her original idea of building a gazebo. Alternatives included Jerry Joly doing a banner with people walking behind it. Argy mentioned someone in a blueberry costume could hand out cards. Ruth Ann mentioned online blueberry costumes; Martha looked one up at \$58. She and Buddy mentioned a log cabin built by the historical society, Argy said by Richie Kahn. Buddy will check on it. Tracy will check with Karin at the historical society. Ruth Ann mentioned David Beck helping make a gazebo. Matt discussed possible details of a gazebo float. Argy said maybe we could get a group of people to make one on a Saturday afternoon. Waldoboro's parade is June 17.

Re: logo, Argy said the call has gone out. Deadline is June 5. The committee will select on June 7. They will start printing a small number of shirts and hats and go from there.

Matt left the meeting due to family.

More float ideas and alternatives were discussed as well as material for Union Fair alongside the historical society. Argy mentioned involving the pickleballers. Local builders were brought up. Suggested plan for June 17 was blueberry costume, save the date cards, and a table. Tracy will contact Jerry Joly to see if he might donate a banner.

Argy sent out information from Jay re: the vault and closing off the parade route. Buddy will contact him about the raft race. He said the fair is very happy for us to use the grounds that weekend. They want to know when. His thought would be the whole weekend. Argy spoke with Irene at the museum who said they will do whatever. Buddy will brainstorm museum hours with her.

Argy talked about connecting with the fair about the moxie bottle being in the parade. George and Judy are the contacts (in the minutes). Buddy said they are in Vermont now and will be around shortly. He confirmed the reenactment folks can have fires on the fairgrounds, Argy added probably with permits. She mentioned food trucks which can be difficult to get.

Argy said we need a display for the TCC art show June 3, same day as the car show and library plant sale which would be a good place for save the date cards. Martha will get pricing on 500 and 1,000 cards. Argy will work on the trifold.

Tracy suggested contacting Sybil Wentworth who may have time to help. Argy said they talked about her taking the lead with the Founders Day quilt show.

Ruth Ann brought up a Moxie can costume to carry the banner with the blueberry.

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7. Medallion discussion:

Argy said the front of the medallion (gazebo) was designed by Hank Aho, who now lives in Union. Nobody knows who designed the back. Tracy said she and Karin did some digging at the historical society. Karin believes though no written confirmation that the map on the back side is part of what they pulled out of the Come Spring map that the historical society has the trademark or copyright for. It matches the map in the book, and there is no reference of a person. The description describes what all of it represents in Union, Argy said, which makes sense.

Argy also said the medallions were produced in silver, gold, and bronze, individually or in a necklace and paperweight. Tracy added Jeff has a wooden nickel at the historical society, not of this. Argy said we could get wooden nickels inexpensively and throw them at parades thrown instead of candy. Keith said it could be a replica of this exact one only say “1774 to 2024 Sestercentennial.” Committee members agreed. Argy said we can use the same company Waldoboro is using.

Cost and size of the medallions were discussed. Tracy said for a 1.5” 3d on both sides, the base rate starting is \$930 gold plated for 300 of them. We could sell them for \$20. She added Waldoboro ordered a velvet bag to go along with it. Consensus was go ahead with this, use the same design, change the wording and the year. Tracy will email them.

8. Sestercentennial activities:

Argy said Hank Aho and his wife Glenice Skelton are both willing to help on the Sestercentennial. She is the one who said you can't have animals in a parade. Argy said he is considering a design and was given a silver medallion for his winning design previously. Argy noted, as hard as it was to find out who did that original artwork, we need to be sure we record and credit the t-shirt and hat design. Tracy said they had it in the notes; they also repurposed his image for the next annual town report with his name.

Argy said there is a mailing list on the google doc. Martha has more and will email. Argy suggested she send it to everybody once updated, and it will be on the google doc. On hold is the letter on levels to businesses that Tracy and Keith are working on.

Wooden nickels were further discussed – great to give out at the table, to look like the medallion, free drinks, maybe a different one later, a hook to bring people back next year. Martha will check with Adventure. She found online at pens.com quantity 500, \$.19 a piece, \$95 for 500, \$180 for 1,000.

Sherry will email her uncle re: Steel Pro. Making and maybe funding the new time capsule was mentioned. Keith sees them per our them of representing Union's future, the business/economic side.

Prizes were discussed, and funding them, for the beard contest, parade, etc.

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Discussion turned to eliminations:

Raft race, yes if we can swing it.

Triathlon or something along those lines, yes (Pour Farm).

Community dance, yes.

Traditional games for children, yes but need clarity. Tracy said Pat Hood, head of Parks and Rec, said they would be willing to help out. He originally said a baseball game. Tracy said Sybil suggested old fashioned balance beams, tires, sack races, three-legged race, etc. Argy said Stuart and Jane said they would help with activities beyond a baseball game.

Story slam/capturing stories, yes. Argy and Sherry are working on it.

Pet show, no.

Antique car show and food trucks at fairgrounds, yes. MVHS, the fair, and Owls Head Transportation Museum will be investigated by Buddy as well as food trucks. Argy suggested Matt contact Owls Head if they have outreach as a possible way to get cars there without involving the fair. Buddy said if that works out the fair would be happy to supply the location. Argy mentioned the parade ending at the fairgrounds, with the antique cars that were in the parade there so people can walk around them, and the food trucks. Other activities will draw as well: museum open, school open, reenactments.

Saturday is parade day. Buddy said we need to divide up these locations.

Beard contest, maybe. Argy suggested Ron Hawes heading it up. Martha suggested putting out feelers to gauge interest. Ruth Ann mentioned Zach Fowler, whom Martha has on the business lists. Argy said people had brought it up and it seems simple. Tracy will check on how it was judged.

Photo booth with period clothing, no.

Time capsule, yes.

Reenactment, yes.

Walking tour, historical society.

Cemetery, historical society.

Photo display of bicentennial for town hall, historical society.

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Tracy said Jeff talked about a recording of the parade from '74. Argy said it would be cool if Zach has a giant screen that goes on the outside of bldgs. Buddy said it would have to be dark so not until @ 9 p.m. for that type of display.

Fireworks, not historical; the fair will have them; the country has always celebrated with fireworks.

Sunrise service, church.

Agricultural history on the Common – Matt will find out about animals.

Traditional crafts/art on the Common – Argy said somebody in Union designed the first spinning wheel. A woman who lives across from Union has one and is willing to bring and share that. She is not necessarily interested in organizing. Other spinners would gather. Martha assumed the Common would be set up with booths, etc. like pre-covid Founders Day, and it would be nice to have spinners on Common. There had been another group of spinners at the fairgrounds.

Tracy read: quilts and a blacksmith demo by Jody Wentworth were mentioned.

Timing of events was discussed. Common activities could start at 10 a.m. with crafts, demonstrations, etc. The parade could start at 11 a.m. There could be food on the Common. It should be in handouts, so people know. Keith suggested Saturday more focused on the fairgrounds, Sunday on the Common. Buddy was a thinking a one-day focus at the fairgrounds.

Digging up the capsule could happen Friday before the pie social, opening the ceremony. Tracy said this would give us a buffer Friday to Sunday closing to pinch hit wherever we need to. Argy said it would nice to get display items/time capsule stuff on the Common for Saturday. Sites mentioned were the library, the historical society, and the town hall (no giant numbers).

Tracy continued reading from Argy's list on traditional arts/crafts. Argy said we need somebody to organize it.

Kids' activities, Parks and Rec.

Engage the founders' descendants, yes. Martha will take the lead. Her original thought was to have founders' descendants appear on the TCC like a reunion type thing: meet your relatives, add to the list of who is descended from whom. Argy said it could connect with what Don talked about earlier regarding Civil War veterans.

Come Spring Bus Tour, historical society.

Silent movie at the old town hall – Karin, perhaps Friday night after the pie social.

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Genealogy -- Argy talked to Nancy Pike. This could happen sometime during the year perhaps at the library. The library would like to participate but hasn't offered what that looks like.

Reading of Come Spring, no.

Chicken barbecue, Masons. Buddy suggested a General Henry Knox Memorial Chicken BBQ. Argy said we could do shirts and wooden nickels on that. The first annual. Tracy said the ambulance service would volunteer.

History of Union musical, yes. Argy said it would take place during the school year and could be repeated at the old town hall (if repaired in time).

Sunday pancake breakfast – Holly will reach out to the church. Tracy noted Waldoboro has a pancake breakfast sponsor, so free pancakes and bacon for all.

Quilt show – usually at the Methodist church but maybe at the old town hall. Argy or somebody will check with Sybil.

Matthews Museum will be open. Contact is Irene Hawes.

Map on the Common, yes, historical society and Matt.

Elderly stories/story slam, yes, Argy and Sherry. Tracy said Ron has been reading his grandmother's diaries from the 1940s. Irene said get in touch with her mom. Argy said there is a google sheet of people. Ron and Janice exchanged stories for the Chamber, Martha said. Tracy said he shared some fascinating stories. Argy said Hank Aho and his wife were bouncing stories off each other. A panel/conversation format would be good.

Chrissy Fowler with dance music, yes.

Birthday cards for time capsule – Tracy will follow up with Karen Strunk.

Historical markers — Ongoing. Need to find public property for markers with QR codes. Buddy said some could be on private property temporarily. Argy put this in the historical society pile.

New Year's Eve gathering/dance/fireworks, no.

Replant or plant trees, awaiting clarification.

Last 50 years in booklet format, soft cover – Tracy said Waldoboro offered us their template for putting it together to send off to be printed, an online template. Irene and the historical society might work with us. Tracy and Keith are the liaisons.

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Community mural, maybe. Argy said the Common Market said no. Other possibilities include inside the post office, beer garden wall, or House of Pizza, where Argy said the building condition is not great. A mural on plywood or oil cloth was discussed, perhaps at the fairgrounds. In answer to Buddy re: the life expectancy of an outside mural, Argy said the muralist she contacted has done over 450 and some have lasted 40 years. Argy's original idea stemmed from the fact that we have no public art in our town. Martha reminded the Common is on the historic register.

Drone picture, no.

Elderly interviews/stories, yes. Argy and Sherry.

Union podcast, yes. It could go with the stories. Story said QR codes could go right to the podcast.

PowerPoint including Thompson and Edna St. Vincent Millay, historical society.

Future predictions – have people write them down for the next 50 years at this year's Founders Day which we can include in the time capsule while selling t-shirts and hats., record people saying why I love Union, etc.

Tracy brought up what are we doing for the now. Argy said above and parade.

Sunrise service, maybe – church.

Argy listed nonprofits we need to engage library, historical society (did a trivia night at the Pour Farm “So You Think You Know Union”), fire department, Parks and Rec, Masonic Lodge.

9. Timeline:

Friday: read proclamation, dig up time capsule, pie social, movie at night, blueberry pie contest, concert on the Common. Martha asked for old-fashioned band suggestions. Ruth Ann suggested a barbershop quartet. Martha is in the chorus.

Argy will see what stock of *200 Years in Union* exists and see if they did another piece of it. Martha mentioned republishing.

Saturday: based on fairgrounds.

Sunday: more on the Common, rededication of monument.

The question was raised, where was the first tree felled? Union was incorporated October 20, 1786. Martha said Philip Robbins may have built the first house.

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10. Other business: None.

11. Next meeting: Monday, June 19

12. Adjourn:

Motion by: Tracy Weed
2nd by: Ruth Ann Senff-Wierner
7-0

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Abaldo
Secretary