

MINUTES

**SESTERCENTENNIAL COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2022
WILLIAM L. PULLEN MUNICIPAL BUILDING MEETING ROOM
ONLINE NON-INTERACTIVE ON TOWN HALL STREAMS
6:30 p.m.**

Committee members present: Keith Siegel, Martha Johnston-Nash, Elmer (“Buddy”) Savage, Argy Nestor, Tracy Weed

Others present: None.

1. Call Meeting to Order: at 6:30 p.m.

Argy brought up communication. Maybe google docs aren’t the best way, or do we teach everybody? Karen Strunk from school is going to be the liaison. She got the gold book out to see how they did things in the past and got a little info at the historical society: how they did their committee, and the three days.

She also talked to Jay about subcommittees; he said subcommittee members still have to fill out the form due to insurance. Buddy said it will turn into being volunteers at the end. Argy’s examples were the beard contest and raft race. Re: the latter, Jay said our insurance company doesn’t want to cover anything on the water; unless we can get the warden service to be the ones responsible for people on the water, with their own state insurance... Argy asked about Maine Guides. The reality is if Don’s on the water running an event, he’s going to be sued personally and the town as well. He wouldn’t volunteer unless his insurance would cover him. Once we decide what we want to do, we’re going to have to run the activities by Jay to ensure the insurance is copacetic. We still want to cover people who come for the day, so they have to fill out the paperwork.

Discussion followed. Buddy thinks things will work themselves out.

Argy asked how many people they want on the overall planning, and whatever subcommittees they have do they want one of us to be on them? Keith thinks it makes sense. The Bicentennial had five on the overall planning. Argy said there are six of us now counting Matt. There’s a signup sheet at the high school. So that would be eight. Buddy mentioned Sherry Abaldo, whom Argy said would fill out a form. Ruth Ann Wiemer approached Argy at pickleball. Chuck Huus may also be interested. Buddy said we might have to accept a lot of coming and going on the committee and not say no to anybody. Argy said maybe they take on a subcommittee. Her concern is what if all of us leave? She plans to be here for the long haul. Buddy will be back and forth; he said that’s why we have to get a grasp of how big an event we’re trying to make.

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After talking with Jay about the budget piece – love to have it in January or February, drop dead date is March – we decide on what activities then work backwards from there. The timeline could be by February, whenever that budget is needed, we have a plan in place for whatever the activities will be at that point. They are working on the press release and letter to nonprofit, maybe suggestion boxes, get a buzz going and get people to think about ideas – make sure we've invited everybody to contribute as much as possible.

Keith, reading the nonprofit letter which he liked, confirmed they will go after for-profits, too. With the theme *Looking Back to Look Ahead*, it could be win-win to get the new company moving into BM Clark involved.

Argy also stopped at the library. Her sense is they're very interested, will work with us, may have a link where people can dump ideas, etc. Karen is only at the historical society twice a week. She's quiet so Argy offered one of us could go to their January meeting. Last time around they ran the whole thing and don't have the capacity to take a big lead at this point. As Martha suggested they could be partners. Argy said they're critical because of the history. Going to their meeting, sharing info, asking them for ideas will be good.

Richie and Patty Kahn have not gotten back to her. All Patty's photos are in a photo album at the historical society. Argy suggested popping in and looking at it. She took pictures thinking she could submit it with the press release.

Tracy suggested inviting Jeff Nims and will reach out to him.

Buddy said the event list fit right into what we're talking about. He can envision it being just modernized a bit, and it's doing it all over again. Argy thought a few things were wonderful ideas, like the planting of seven trees on Seven Tree Island; those trees are all gone again (due to location and lack of soil, she thinks). Argy suggested perhaps we could do them at the park.

Tracy suggested a sunrise service including our church leaders.

Argy wrote down a photo booth with period clothing. She talked with Janice Harriman who was on the original committee; the more she communicated it was really fun. She still has the dress she made for Erica, who along with Gail Hawes was around 12 during the Bicentennial. Argy also mentioned one of those boards with holes in it.

Argy said at the historical society Karen found the minutes of their meetings, but they're very brief. One of her questions was about the book, which it said went to press in April. In answer to Martha, Argy said it doesn't say if they sold them ahead of time. Tracy almost feels like every household received one. Buddy said that rings a bell. Argy said Janice remembered a couple people contacted everybody in town and asked if they wanted their birth date listed in the book. She found it at the library, and the school has a

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copy. There were some mistakes in the original book; at some point the historical society updated it and printed it just paper, and that one you can check out of the library, but the hardcover one you can't – it's just a reference book. Keith said we could include that book and have a "50 Years Later." Argy brought a copy.

Argy said they had a proclamation from the governor, which we should do and perhaps invite the governor and involve our legislators. Martha noted it's two years away so we know who the governor will be; legislators are two years. Argy said we can invite the governor now, and it would also be wonderful to invite the secretary of state who is so proactive and about small communities in Maine.

2. Minutes from last meeting:

Motion to approve minutes of October 12, 2022 by: Keith Siegel

2nd by: Buddy Savage

4-0-1 abstention (Johnston-Nash)

3. Argy update – Union school visit, high school student(s), new member of committee:

Argy visited the Union school and spoke to the staff. They were very glad it's so far into the future. She talked about perhaps the older students interviewing; they're going to consider that. Karen Strunk said Mary Thompson is into the history and sharing it and is interested in doing it with children, so that's one person they'll work with at the Union school. Karen has meetings every Wednesday and said joining the committee could be tricky. The meeting schedule was briefly discussed.

4. Decide on theme: *Looking Back to Look Ahead*:

Keith loves the theme. Buddy hasn't warmed up to it completely but good if people are confident with it; we should decide and stick to it.

5. Draft goals:

Argy drafted goals which are in the packet. Argy was thinking about strong or important activities like preserving people's voices. It struck home when she realized how few original committee members are still alive.

Tracy asked if they should note they're doing this for citizens and also for visitors. Argy brought up a TCC point: it's in Union but in the greater community of Appleton, Hope, Washington, and Warren welcome when anything's going on. Martha noted people have moved out into the surrounding towns. Argy met an Appleton resident who comes to Union every day. Keith agreed a lot of people love this town in the outer communities. How to include this was discussed. Consensus was "all Union citizens and visitors."

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Buddy said we've always been a bit of a hub for services, Appleton for sure, Hope kind of a split. Tracy mentioned the agricultural businesses and the fair. Martha said Washington is very much here, too. Community was discussed.

Argy suggested two bullets: "to bring people together for a common goal that will help the community of Union become stronger." The Sestercentennial, as she said to Adam, could be a vehicle to help bring people together and perhaps help put differences aside. After discussion, consensus was the second bullet should read as stated by Argy: "to enhance the sense of community between residents, visitors, and the surrounding area," added to Buddy. Argy summarized: "to enhance a sense of connection with the past and present residents, visitors, and the surrounding communities." She would still like to get "history" in there per Martha and will think about it. She said they have five bullets.

6. Review Press Release:

Consensus was reached on the press release.

7. Review letter to nonprofit:

Consensus was reached on the nonprofit letter.

Keith brought up committee members attending their meetings. Argy said many had a November meeting and don't meet again until January. Getting a list of nonprofits was discussed; Argy brought up the secretary of state's office.

Martha thought a for profit letter could come later, as it's hard for them to commit this far ahead. Argy mentioned Wayne Kirkpatrick's new business – not necessarily asking for money but how would you like to participate like the nonprofits. Buddy agreed they're not going to commit to a year and a half out.

Keith confirmed we are talking about a budget for 2023. Argy said we ask the town for so much, then if we decide for example we're going to have story slams or a New Year's Eve gathering, we can charge and that money will be a profit for hats, t-shirts, etc. We can say estimated profits, budget, this is what we're asking for; we're not just asking for the town to support the whole thing.

Buddy said further on businesses would be willing to support some of the workload and expense for certain things, but you have to focus them in. If this summer or next summer they're willing to commit to something the following year, let them run with it. Next summer would be about as long a range... Argy recapped idea boxes, etc. so we don't need to do a for profit letter for now. Buddy echoed other outreach and word of mouth might be enough for now; maybe wait until later in the spring. Keith mentioned "You knew you grew up in Union when," Peter Robbins' page. He lives in Waldoboro.

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Buddy brought up industries that have come and gone: casket factory, lime products, laundromat, Susabelle's, The Cricket, etc. Many people have no idea.

Tracy mentioned setting up social media, free advertising. Argy said we have two Union facebook pages. Martha suggested a separate one.

Martha will reach out to Gail Hawes.

8. List of ideas/activities:

Argy discussed the google doc. Everyone had contributed. Buddy suggested getting past events in. Tracy noted they had two different chicken barbecues; she automatically goes to the Masons, a nonprofit who'll get the letter. Buddy noted a lot of these events have been traditionally held for Founders Day anyway.

Argy noted Founders Day happens because of the date, that's what it's commemorating, so that would be the culmination working around the fair date. Buddy can't imagine there would be another Founders Day.

Martha said it used to be the historical society, Suzy Schaub in charge, and the town sort of took it on. Keith verified no other groups we need to be working with. Martha noted there were several groups but with covid it fell by the wayside. Buddy said perfect timing to get it started again. He doesn't know about this coming year. Martha said the chamber still does.

Argy said maybe we start gathering stories at Founders Day this year and use them for promotional on social media and even on the radio, have those recordings.

Martha said the old townhouse could be set up with recording, perhaps local TV in Rockland, two or three hours and have people stop by. Keith mentioned archived with the historical society when we have our 300th anniversary.

Argy brought up StoryCorps, which could be archived in the historical society, the library, the school library, and at the Library of Congress.

Consensus was we need to find another techie. Tracy said Peter, whom she will reach out to. He can volunteer to help without being on the committee.

9. Tasks – who, what, when? Timeline for activities:

Argy will take care of the press release. Martha will work on the list of nonprofits. Argy said then do we put them in the mail? Send them all by email? Martha suggested a combination, email those we can. We can also post if we get a facebook page and reach out via facebook. Tracy will ask Peter about a facebook page as well.

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Martha brought up facebook administrators. Tracy brought up alumni pages.

Argy brought up parade TCC to Fairgrounds, and do you think Ice Rock group is still around? Matthews Museum history is strong. Irene was mentioned. Buddy agreed do what we can: the fairgrounds is a whole – the space, antique tractors. Keith said Union Farm Equipment has a couple cool antique tractors on display in their showroom; it would be cool to get them out there. Argy said there were helicopter rides that took off from the fairgrounds.

Argy also mentioned hot air balloons. Perhaps helicopter and hot air balloons could give us a small percentage of what they charge. Tracy mentioned insurance policy on that (hot air balloon rides).

Martha will make a list of nonprofits. Letters will go out ASAP. Argy will start a google doc with contact info, physical address or email. Tracy mentioned tracking responses.

Argy will take care of the press release.

Argy said we should get the boxes out for ideas. Buddy said we should get the scope for the budget, maybe put a rough dollar amount once we get the activity list. Argy wants to hear nonprofit's ideas. Keith said the press release needs to go out ASAP, Martha added also on social media which Tracy will take care of. Tracy said we can condense the press release.

Keith asked re: fundraising in the budget, what about a GoFundMe? Martha thinks it's pretty wide open. Argy said that's a little bit different.

Tracy mentioned the fire department's bottle drive, not to compete. Martha mentioned bottles at TCC. Tracy wondered if we might put up donations with Jean Collins or CLYNK. Argy said the library has CLYNK bags but understands they've switched to Jean. Martha said bottles don't come up with that much. Keith reiterated the potential of GoFundMe.

Argy mentioned two grants from state agencies, but we can't do that until we know what we need the money for. December's meeting we need to zero in on what we're going to do and work on the budget from that. Maine Arts Commission deadlines are in March. Maine Humanities not sure, on her to do list. Maine Community Foundation, Stephen King, the Betterment Foundation, Martha mentioned something local... The Pullen Fund Martha said if something specific for kids for the future. Irene might be familiar with it.

Buddy said good question for Jay: timeline for Pullen.

Awards for contests presented at fairgrounds, Argy brought up. There must have been more than beard contest, a costume contest. It would be good to know what these committees did. Janice Harriman was chair of the census committee.

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Buddy mentioned children's races in addition to the beard contest and raft race. The golf club did something Martha was sure.

Keith mentioned Hot Ice rock group. Jason Grindle has a really good band. Martha said the chamber will have their Friday night concert and pie social if we do that three-day weekend. Tracy asked if we should maybe partner with the chamber if they're planning Founders Day 2023 and we're planning this event at the same time. Martha thinks they would dovetail; their concert is generally 6:00 to 7:30 so early enough to flow from that into a dance or something.

Argy mentioned a flea market or demonstration of crafts or art show. If funding is needed, as Buddy said, we'll find a different way.

Buddy said we can come up with a general idea to at least start the money end of it, and can assign it to different events.

Argy said if someone says I absolutely want helicopter rides, someone has to research it. She really wants to do a story slam so will research and organize that part. She also thinks it would be good to do something with artists.

Martha mentioned Maynard Stanley, who does video recordings.

Argy brought up saying yay or nay on ideas which was discussed. She will draft an email response. She also mentioned when she spoke with principal Scott White, he couldn't find Sestercentennial on the website; it's worth asking what to do about this, such as driving people to one of the facebook.

10. Set Future Meeting Dates:

Thursday, December 15, 2022.

11. Other Business: None.

12. Adjourn:

Motion by: Buddy Savage
2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash
5-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Abaldo
Secretary