

Dartmouth Historical & Arts Society  
Meeting of Sept. 28, 2017  
At Russells Mills Schoolhouse

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present: Robert Harding, Dan Socha, Enid Silva, Donald Plant, Katherine Plant, Pat Stringer, Jason Protami, Jeff King, Marian Ryall, Sue Guiducci, and Robert Barboza. A moment of silence was observed in memory of former Dartmouth teacher Kathleen Comiskey Roberts, who had just passed away.

Guest Speaker: Mr. Harding suggested that the agenda be suspended to allow guest Jay Thomas, an architect living on Elm Street, to make a presentation on the proposal by town officials to sell or lease the old Southworth Library in Padanaram Village. Mr. Thomas suggested that the building has significant historic value to the community, as the only surviving example of a rare type of Romanesque architecture in town. He indicated that he has joined a grass roots campaign by residents to prevent a sale by organizing a non-profit group (SOS, Save Old Southworth) seeking to lease the building for use as a community meeting place and arts center, and was seeking the society's support for that campaign.

Mrs. Silva noted that the village is not a historic district, and said any sale of the property would have to be authorized by a town meeting vote. She is an active member of the SOS group, and indicated she would lead an effort at town meeting to block any potential sale or lease of the building to a private developer. She said the group will be submitting an RFP to the town seeking the property be leased to them at a nominal fee and re-developed into a community center. Society members were invited to join a tour of the building scheduled later in the week. Mr. Barboza made a motion to write a letter of support for SOS, and pledge some financial assistance to any future renovation and preservation efforts; the motion was seconded by Mr. Plant, and approved by unanimous vote.

Minutes: Mr. Barboza made a motion to amend the minutes of the Aug. 31, 2017 meeting to correct correct the spelling of Katherine Plant among the attendees, and add Ms. Guiducci to the list of those present; seconded by Mr. Harding the amendments were approved by unanimous vote. Mr. Plant made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. King, which was approved unanimously.

Officer & Committee Reports: Mrs. Stringer presented a financial report indicating that the balance of funds in society accounts stood at \$10,477.96 at the end of the month; the motion to accept the report came from Mrs. Plant, seconded by Mr. Socha, and approved by unanimous vote. Mrs. Silva submitted a membership report indicating that one new member has joined the society, bringing the membership rolls to 81 people or families; Mr. Protami made a motion to accept the report, seconded by Ms. Guiducci, which was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Socha updated the directors on publicity efforts and social media activity during September, noting healthy activity on both the web site and Facebook pages. He solicited suggestions for improving the reach of social media efforts, with considerable discussion of those ideas taking place. Mr. Barboza made a motion to accept his report, seconded by Mrs. Plant, and approved by unanimous vote. Mr. Harding offered a report on programming plans, noting the recent Come Back In Time event, the cemetery tour, and Paul Cuffe symposium were all carried out successfully. He also reported that director of collections at the Whaling Museum, Jordan Berson, was confirmed as the principal speaker for the Oct. 26 annual meeting. Mr. King made a motion to accept the program report, seconded by Mr. Plant, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Guiducci submitted the report of the Education Committee, noting several groups of Dartmouth elementary students were scheduled to visit the schoolhouse in October, and she would be going to town elementary schools and the high school to make presentations as well. Mr. Protami made the motion to accept her report, seconded by Mr. King; the vote was unanimous. Mrs. Plant delivered the House Committee report, indicating there would be no pot luck supper for this year's annual meeting, but that she would organize refreshments for the event. Mrs. Stringer made a motion to accept her report, seconded by Mr. King, which passed with a unanimous vote.

Old Business: Mr. Harding presented a draft Memorandum of Understanding on collaboration with Dartmouth Libraries, including an addendum regarding the society's temporary custody of the historic clock to be displayed at the schoolhouse. After some discussion, a motion to approve the MOU came from Mrs. Silva, seconded by Mr. Socha, and approved by unanimous vote. Mrs. Silva proposed a meeting of the bylaws committee on Oct. 8; she, Mr. King and Mrs. Plant are scheduled to attend.

Mr. Barboza was directed to forward minutes of recent meetings to Mr. Socha for posting on the web site; Mrs. Stringer reported that the 2016 financial reports to the state have been completed with the aid of Mrs. Plant; Mr. Harding passed out a volunteer hours reporting form needed for future financial reports.

New Business: Mr. Socha requested directors send e-mail contacts to him to help build the society's MailChimp lists. Mr. Harding reported the Dartmouth Heritage Preservation Trust's request to use the schoolhouse on Oct. 18 for their annual meeting; a motion to approve the request, with the provision that no alcohol be served on the premises, came from Mrs. Ryall, seconded by Mr. King, and was approved unanimously. Dartmouth High Alumni Association president, Mrs. Silva, reported that association archives have been moved from the schoolhouse to space on the second floor of Town Hall; she also noted that she will investigate the possibility that the owner of an antique carriage may wish to donate it to the society. Mr. Harding reported being in contact with a member of the Barker family who may be interested in donating some family heirlooms to the society; Mr. Barboza made a motion to authorize the president to accept any donations offered, seconded by Mr. Plant; the motion passed unanimously.

With no further business on the agenda, a motion to adjourn came at 8:20 p.m. from Mr. Barboza, seconded by Mr. King. The vote was unanimous.