



TOWN OF BECKET
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
557 Main Street, Becket, MA 01223
TOWN HALL – (413) 623-8934
FAX – (413) 623-6036

Meeting Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Meeting Time: 5:00 PM

Meeting Place: Historical Commission Office, Town Hall

Attendees: Sandi Jarvis, Rita Furlong, John Garvey, Gail Kusek (5:18pm)

Minutes

1. Meeting was called to order by chair SJ at 5:02pm.
2. A motion was made by RF to approve the minutes from the November 2023 meeting. Motion was seconded by SJ and passed unanimously.
3. RF reports that the printer purchased in FY2023 but debited from the FY2024 funds will be corrected and applied to FY2023. When that is correctly applied the FY2024 balance will be \$1,214.38, after the reimbursement to JG for \$785.62 (Ephraim Walker papers \$300.00 and 5 historic plaques \$485.62).
4. Communications
 - a. New-
 - i. Town notifications: None
 - ii. SJ reports that she met with Norton Owen, archivist at Jacob's Pillow, at the town hall. They looked at the first floor display space that currently holds the baseball display and feel that it would be an appropriate space for a display on Jacob's Pillow. Norton Owen also supported the idea of providing the Historic Commission with selected copies of photos and records to provide a base of historic reference material in the commission office. Both these initiatives will be pursued.
 - iii. The Washington Historic Commission sent an email stating that they were going to start transcribing the Diary of Deacon Alvah Eames who was a Washington resident but for many years was a deacon in the First Congregational Church of Becket. The Washington Commission asked whether anyone in the Becket Commission had any expertise in

transcriptions. SJ sent a number of online resources that may be of assistance to them.

- iv. A query was received by John Penny who is interested in purchasing the old Old Deer Inn" property, Jacob's Ladder Road at Fred Snow Road. SJ sent along information that the Commission had gathered for previous requests on that property.
- v. A suggestion came from the town administrator about having a Becket basket industry display at the town hall. It was pointed out that there are a number of Becket baskets already on display in a couple of different town hall areas, and the main basket display is at the Mullin House which has open hours in the summer months. The possibility of a dedicated basket display in the town hall will be discussed further.
- vi. SJ reports that the Email account is full and she is working on archiving old communications to free up space.
- vii. An email was received from Mike Murray suggesting that the Historic Commission speak to some of the older residents of the town. Clarification on the suggestion is being pursued.
- viii. A query was received from Charlie Flint concerning "Doc" Houston of Greenwater Pond. SJ sent previous research on the Houston family and Greenwater Lodge, though none of it mentions a "Doc" Houston.

b. Old

- i. The Becket Fire Department has requested any historic material the commission has on the department, this was gathered by SJ and sent on a thumb drive to Mark Hanaford.
- ii. During the meeting with Norton Owen and SJ, Mr. Owen said that he had a copy of the History of Jacob's Pillow written by Elsie Johnson of the Texas Women's University in 1967 as a senior thesis. This was a thesis that the Historic Commission had previously inquired about with Jacob's Pillow. Mr. Owen will digitize a copy and provide it to the commission.

5. New Business

- a. None

6. Old Business

- a. Budget requests, Town Administrator, due by 22 Dec 2023. SJ reviewed what she has come up with so far, the commission members made some modifications to the request.

- b. Annual Town Report article due by 31 Jan 2024 to Admin. Asst. SJ is working on the report.
- c. Ephraim Walker papers: These papers are still waiting scanning and evaluation.
- d. Cupola restoration: No action until the revised estimates are received. JG and RF will reach out to the contractor to make sure the estimates are received by mid-February.
- e. Historic Building Plaques-publicity: No publicity has been done yet, possibilities include the town website, Becket Beat, FaceBook and a tax stuffer. After discussion it was decided not to pursue a tax stuffer since the plaque program only applies to a subset of homes.
- f. Revolutionary War veterans: No report this month.
- g. Ballou Park signage-Native American mill stone. GK is working on this.
- h. Massachusetts State Archive maps: JG will investigate downloading the TIF files and having them printed locally on quality stock.
- i. 2027-100th anniversary of Becket Flood. GK continues to organize this material.

7. Next meeting – Jan 9, 2024 at 5:00 PM, Becket Town Hall

Meeting adjourned at 6:24pm.

Minutes provided by John Garvey, clerk