



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

Meeting Date: Tuesday, June 13, 2023

Meeting Time: 5:00 PM

Meeting Place: Historical Commission office, Becket Town Hall (Zoom Info listed at the end of this agenda)

Attendees: Sandi Jarvis, Rita Furlong, Gail Kusek, John Garvey

Guests: Michael Lavery (Michael has submitted a request to be appointed to the Becket Historical Commission, this will be voted on at the next BOS meeting).

Agenda

1. The meeting was called to order by chair SJ at 5:03pm.
2. A motion was made by RF to approve the minutes from the May 2023 meeting, seconded by JG. Passed unanimously.
3. RF reports no change in the commission accounts from last month. (\$1,059.46 in FY2023 account, \$656.40 in Gift and Donations Account). JG made a motion to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by GK. Passed unanimously.
4. Communications
 - a. New-
 - i. Becket Athenaeum Executive Director, Jodi Shafiroff: She is asking about possible local history programs at the library for the coming year. SJ and RF will meet with her.
 - ii. Michael Lavery has submitted a request to be appointed to the Historical Commission by the BOS. The Commission welcomed ML and he gave a brief introduction about his interests.
 - iii. Query re: Union Papermill at Bancroft, Tim Goodhind; visitation request. Tim Goodhind is descended from the Goodhind brothers who emigrated from England and all worked in paper mills. Two of the brothers were

superintendents of the Union Mill in Bancroft. JG will meet with Mr. Goodhind on June 14 in the Historical Commission office and show him the materials we have on the mill.

- iv. Visitation request May 24, Ballou descendants, Alice Ballou Morse, Ted Olmsted, Mullen House baskets, Town Hall displays. SJ and RF met with Alice Morse and Ted Olmsted at the town hall and showed them the Snow Genealogy and files in the Historical Commission office.
- v. Query re: Rev. Ebenezer Martin, son Joseph Plumb Martin; Lorenzo Puertas. This query is from a high school student researching the Revolutionary War experiences of Joseph Plumb Martin, who wrote a book of his experiences. He was the son of the first settled minister of the First Congregational Church of Becket and was born in Becket but moved around age 6. SJ sent the material we have on him and his father.
- vi. Town notifications: None

b. Old

- i. Follow-up Mama Frasca 45 rpm record, Dream Away Berkshire Magazine article. SJ sent a follow-up email and the magazine offered to send a hard copy and digital copy of the article. They are still interested in making a digital copy of the 45rpm record, SJ will follow up.
- ii. Follow-up Marty Drennan re: Stephens and Meach ancestors. SJ has been communicating with him, these families were part of the Becket group who created a new settlement in the Ohio Reserve.

5. Old Business

- a. Cupola restoration: RF and JG report that this project is underway. Jeff Penn and John Wallen recently visited the town hall to look at the original building plans. They will write up a draft contract and when that is signed John Wallen will return to the town hall to start the engineering work. John and Jeff also met at the town hall with Bancroft Custom Woodworkers, the company that provided the initial estimate.
- b. Portraits in Community Room: RF and JG report that the portraits have been moved and the portrait information sheets compiled by SJ have been hung with the portraits.
- c. Historical Facts update with portrait information: SJ reports that the portrait information sheets have been added to Historical Facts section of the town website.
- d. Office color printer/copier/scanner: After a discussion of the pros and cons of printers it was decided to go with an ink jet printer. RF made a motion that SJ

pursue the purchase of a printer less than \$1,000. Seconded by GK, passed unanimously.

- e. Historic Building Plaques: JG reports finding a few companies making the historic house plaques, anywhere from \$60 to \$200. Lenox just recently restarted their plaque program and he has sent a query to them to find out who they are using. RF made a motion to authorize JG to purchase one plaque at less than \$75 and bring to a future meeting to see if it is what the commission wants. Seconded by SJ, passed unanimously.
- f. Massachusetts State Archive maps: JG reports two maps in the state archives that might be worth pursuing, one from 1795 and one from 1820. He will investigate further and report back at a future meeting.

6. New Business

- a. RF reports that she has hung a number of photos and maps on the office walls, grouped geographically.
- b. GK reports that she has found evidence that leads her to believe that the Dewey Tavern, of which we have the original sign, was on Hamilton Road.
- c. GK brought up the possibility of erecting a sign on the mill stone at Ballou Park which is reputed to be a mill stone used by Native Americans. This will be added to the agenda for the July meeting.
- d. RF mentioned that at the Memorial Day observance the names of Becket veterans who were killed in the Revolutionary War or Civil War are not mentioned. A discussion was held on how to accurately obtain these names. This will continue to be researched.
- e. ML brought up the possibility of an interpretive sign at the location of the closed spring on Route 20, just before the Chester border. This was discussed at the May 2022 Historical Commission meeting but no vote was taken. The following is copied from the May 2022 meeting minutes: *It was discussed that at the time of the closing the commission had attempted to do some research on the history of the spring and had not been able to find much documented history that would stand up to critical review. The commission would be hesitant to put anything on a sign that was not 100% accurate. It was also pointed out that during the closing process it was found that the entire area is privately owned by two different parties, so permission would have to be granted from one or both of those parties for placement of the sign. If the sign were placed within the highway right-of-way then permission would also have to be granted by the Massachusetts Highway Department, and they may not be in favor of anything that would encourage people to pull over at that location.*

7. Next meeting – July 11 at 5:00 PM, Becket Town Hall

Minutes submitted by John Garvey, clerk.