

Town of Becket Historical Commission

557 Main Street Becket MA 01223

Minutes of November 13, 2018 Meeting

Historical Commission Room

Present: Sandi Jarvis, Gail Kusek, Rita Furlong,

Absent: Katherine Hoak

Guest: John Garvey, Rte. 20 Scenic highway Committee

1. Call to order: 3:02p.m.
2. October 2018 minutes approved.
3. Communications:
  - a. Mr. Garvey presented the committee with an original M.E. Ballou and Son Price List #35 from the year 1935 booklet. He also wanted to observe our meeting as he has recently moved to Becket.
  - b. We received a notification regarding the need for 2020 budget.
  - c. We received a notice from the Planning Board regarding a public hearing for a fence within the North Becket Village Historic District on December 12 @ 7:00.
4. New Business:
  - a. We discussed a recent e-mail message from Ofer Zaarur regarding a possible Visitor Cent at the corner of Rte.20 and Rte. 8 north. He owns the motel there on Rte. 20 and wonders if we would be interested in assisting him with that venture. We spoke of pros and cons concerning that idea and then

participated in a conference phone call with Mr. Zaarur at 3:15. He stated that there is not a visitor center here in Becket and his patrons often asked, "What is there to do around here?" There is a two room building on his property that he believes would make a great visitor center. There is water and electricity there now. A compost toilet, picnic area, parking area, charging station for cars, charge phones access, Wi-Fi accessibility, maps, brochures, coffee and vending machines, ice cream, Becket history information, area services list, programs and sites to visit, and site for a flea market, could all eventually be developed. Perhaps volunteers could be found to man the center, summer especially.

We registered concern about who pays for utilities, cleaning, maintenance, rent, lease, staffing, insurance, and overall management of this plan. Town money would probably not be available to fund a private owner's building. We all agreed that such a plan has merit, but getting it up and running would take a lot of money and effort.

Mr. Garvey expressed concern that there is a visitor center already in the neighboring town of Chester.

Gail said that she would make available much of her Becket history material if such a proposal were to be reality.

We suggested that this location would not be a good place for Becket artifacts as we already have the town hall, the Athenaeum, and the Mullen House Education Center to house such material but yes, the need for information to access these for visitors is perhaps a viable need. We closed with the suggestion that we meet at the site when Mr. Zaarur is in town

again. We will invite selectmen and anyone else who might be interested in this proposed venture.

b. Budget:

- i. We completed a requested budget for 2020 due by Dec. 3, 2018
  - ii. We completed a Capital Budget due by January 3, 2019
  - iii. Gail did research on an inquiry regarding the family of Richardson. She found an 1855 reference and replied to the original inquiry.
  - iv. Gail did research regarding the Bidwell property (21 Maple Street) at the Registry of Deeds and made a copy of those deeds.
  - v. Gail scanned the Lyman receipts onto our computer file.
5. Treasurer's Report. Rita will follow through to see if our request for carrying over the balance from the 2018 budget has occurred. Otherwise, the balance is the same as last month's.
6. Old Business: all suggestions for further work listed on the agenda will be dealt with at the next meeting.
7. Next meeting: December 11, at 3:00.

Meeting adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita Furlong, secretary pro-tem

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