

**Webster Historical Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes, September 29, 2020**

The Historical Commission held a meeting on Tuesday, September 29, 2020 in the Board of Selectmen Meeting Room, Webster Town Hall, 350 Main Street, Webster, MA.

Present: Ted Avlas, Curtis Cleaves, Elaine Davies

Absent: Ron Heroux

Also Present: Ann Morgan - Director of Planning & Economic Development

1. The Chairman called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.
2. Draft Meeting Minutes
  - a. December 18, 2019. The Commission reviewed the draft meeting minutes. No edits were made. Motion to approve the minutes as drafted made by Mr. Cleaves, seconded by Mr. Avlas. Motion passed, 2-0-1 with Ms. Davies abstaining.
  - b. February 18, 2020. The Commission reviewed the draft meeting minutes. Edits were made. Motion to approve the minutes as drafted made by Ms. Davies, seconded by Mr. Cleaves. Motion passed unanimously, 3-0.
3. Old Business
  - a. Mission Statement: The Commission reviewed some sample language. Ms. Davies noted that she had sent some language back in March which was passed to the Commissioners and reviewed.  
  
Motion to approve the draft Mission Statement made by Mr. Cleaves, seconded by Mr. Avlas. Motion passed unanimously, 3-0.  
  
Ms. Morgan noted that the approved Mission Statement would be posted on the Historical Commission webpage. Ms. Davies asked what would be the next steps towards using the Mission Statement to advance the work of the Commission. She noted that she was interested in starting with the educational component of the mission. Mr. Avlas asked that this be added to next meeting agenda for discussion.
  - b. Additional Members: Presently there are three vacancies. Mr. Avlas asked that the vacancies continue to be posted on the website and that members reach out to people they think might be interested. Ms. Davies noted that, in her experience, people respond well to a direct ask. She added that there had to be a vision for moving forward. She knew someone who might be interested in the educational aspect of the Commission's mission. Mr. Cleaves noted that the Commission had been inactive for a number of years so folks may not be aware. He thought that interest would be sparked once the Commission put some programming together that would highlight its work. Ms. Davies stated that it would be a good idea to develop a communication strategy. Mr. Avlas asked that this be put on the next agenda.
  - c. Tercentenary Marker - Thompson Road: Mr. Avlas provided an update. Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical School got back to him and they, unfortunately, don't have the resources to assist in the restoration of the sign. Mr. Avlas contacted Highway Superintendent Kenny Pizzetti who arranged to have the sign picked up from Bay Path. Mr. Pizzetti did so and had the sign reinstalled in its original location. Ms. Morgan noted that she had MassDOT as they are the official

keepers of these historical markers across the State. Ms. Davies said that this was a good first project to bring awareness to the work of the Commission. Mr. Avlas noted that the current location is at a very busy location and people can't really stop to read the sign safely. One idea would be Memorial Beach which would allow people to view the sign safely. Mr. Cleaves noted that the language of the sign is general to the history of the Lake and it may be possible to work with MassDOT to relocate it. Ms. Davies noted that relocating the sign at the beach would provide additional space to have a Native American display. There was discussion about the location of the sign once restored. Ms. Morgan noted that the Commission would have to work with the Town and MassDOT if a new location was desirable. The current location is the original location determined by the Town leadership in 1930 and was likely chosen because Thompson Road was the thoroughfare travelled by tourists coming to the area.

#### 4. New Business

- a. Meeting Schedule: The Commission talked about how often and times to meet. Previously they had discussed meeting every other month. Ms. Davies suggested that they meet monthly to keep the ball rolling on some of the initiatives discussed earlier in the meeting. Presently they meet during the day but it could be changed based on the needs of future members. After reviewing the calendar the Commission decided to meet the fourth Tuesday of each month at 11:00 a.m. The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m.

#### 5. Staff Report / Update

- a. MPPF / Town Hall Assessment - Update. Ms. Morgan provided an update. The first phase was the assessment which prioritized a list of work items for repair and restoration. The three top priorities are the roof, the clock tower / cupola and the auditorium. Additional money was granted by the State to take on some of the priority repairs. The cost of repairs and the Town's ability to borrow for the balance limits the project list at this time to the room and clock tower / cupola. An article for the Town's cost is on the October Town Meeting warrant. Ms. Morgan noted that she would send the article to the Commissioners. It was noted that the income from the solar farm on the Town's landfill is earmarked for Town Hall repairs.
- b. Member Requirements - Code of Conduct, Open Meeting Law, and Conflict of Interest - Ms. Morgan distributed copies of materials for the members. Receipts were signed by all and returned to Ms. Morgan.
- c. Correspondence: Mr. Avlas noted that he had received correspondence from the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) regarding FY2021 Survey and Planning Grant cycle. Ms. Morgan noted that the MHC offers different grants to local communities and that this grant is for things like updated the local historic survey and creating a preservation plan. It was noted that the local survey should be assessed and updated as some of the material is dated. This would be a good project but the Commission would have to take the time to assess the material prior to applying for a grant. It's unlikely that such work could be completed before the current deadline but would be a good work item to help get ready for the next grant cycle.

Motion to adjourn the meeting to be followed by a tour of Town Hall made by Mr. Cleaves, seconded by Ms. Davies. Motion passed unanimously, 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 11:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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Ann Morgan, Recording Secretary