

BOARD MEETING

Monday, December 14, 2020 at 7:00 pm
Meeting conducted virtually on ZOOM Platform

MINUTES -revised

Present: EXECUTIVE: John Green (Chair), Patricia Wallace, Geoff Dawe, Anna Kroeplin.
DIRECTORS: Peter Styrmo, Ronen Grunberg, Alan Lambert, Jeff Thom.
STAFF: Kathleen Vahey- Curator

1. CALLED TO ORDER: 7:05 p.m.

Vice-President, John Green welcomed everyone to the virtual Board meeting and called it to order. Patricia declared she will be an observer during the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION: 2020-AHS-057

Moved by Geoff, second by Alan: THAT the agenda be approved as presented. **CARRIED.**

4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: November 9, 2020:

The Curator noted a correction under the President's Message on the timing of a grant.

MOTION: 2020-AHS-058

Moved by Anna, second by Peter: THAT the Nov.9, 2020 Minutes be approved with a minor revision. **CARRIED.**

5. AURORA FACTOID:

Jeff shared Aurora's history of hockey, highlighting the 2003-2004 undefeated season, and the successful Provincial and National championships won by the Aurora Tigers. He also noted the Aurora players who played in the NHL.

6. REPORTS

a) President's Report:

Status - Trillium Grant and/or other Grants

The Trillium Grant is currently on hold. Staff is working on providing more details to the Foundation based on ERA's report.

Status – Online Donations: link to CanadaHelps.org

Ronan is setting up a variety of donation categories, and preparing engaging visual components. It was confirmed that the online donations link has been included in the e-newsletter and some donations have already been received via CanadaHelps.com.

b) Treasurer’s Report:

Geoff reviewed the written reports that were emailed to the Board. Overall, AHS is in good financial shape due to various government grants and subsidies. (He recently personally thanked MP Tony Van Bynen for the efficient process AHS experienced with the wage subsidy.) He noted, however, that the emergency wage subsidy is considered income.

- The CEWS has been extended to June 2021.
- The CERB grant has been increased from \$40,000 to \$60,000 with \$20,000 forgivable.
- AHS qualifies for Property Insurance rebates.

Geoff reported that we will be retaining a new Bookkeeper by early January 2021. He noted that AHS will be switching accounting software to QuickBooks since the former one is not efficient, and that AHS qualifies for a discount on software and technology resources through ‘TechSoup’, an organization that supports Canadian charities, non-profits and libraries.

MOTION: 2020-AHS-059

Moved by Geoff, second by Jeff T.: THAT the Treasurers Report be received. **CARRIED.**

c) Curator’s Report:

Kathleen referred to her written report that was emailed earlier, and highlighted the following:

- Council approved AHS’s grant at the Nov.16th Budget presentation, however they asked for more details in 2021. Council also asked about a recovery plan from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Hillary House is not conducting tours as Ontario is in a formal lockdown until Jan.11.
- HH will be closed from December 25 – January 4 for the holiday season, however staff and volunteers will inspect it twice a week and pick up mail. Patricia will work Dec.24 afternoon.
- Recruitment ads for new AHS Board members have been sent out and posted.
- A submission has been made to the Energy Rebate program.
- The Curator applied for the OTF grant that could fund a P/T Events Coordinator and offset PPE costs. Results should be available in March 2021, (with a start date in April).
- The payment has been processed for the Canada Summer Jobs application.
- The initial phase of curatorial tasks has been completed by the temporary Intern.
- The Curator is looking at live streaming program options.
- She met the Library and Aurora Cultural Centre to discuss collaborations and common goals.
- It was recommended that the January 2021 Speakers Series be cancelled. Kathleen accepted John’s offer to arrange a speaker from Metrolinx to talk about the Aurora Train Station at a future date.

Status – Godfrey Collection

- The Archives of Ontario wants to assess the Godfrey Collection to assess only the papers.
- The Aurora Museum & Archives asked for confirmation by April 2021 if AHS wants their designated space at Library Square for the books of the Godfrey Collection.

d) **Facility Maintenance Committee Report:**

The Board received the written report from James Hoyes, Facility Maintenance Chair, with thanks.

- The Curator reported that there are aggressive black squirrels in the barn that abuts the offices. She asked for recommendations to exterminate them due to the extensive damage.
- Exterior lighting has been installed and readjusted to appease the neighboring apartment.
- Patricia reported that the fee was more for external wiring/outlets that were installed on the north side of the house, near the tennis court.
- Patricia noted that Parks Canada removed the large brass dedication plaque to refurbish it.

e) **Landscaping Committee Report:**

The Board received the written report from John Bare, Landscaping Chair, with thanks.

f) **Restoration Working Group:**

Alan reported that ERA Consulting conducted their inspection on November 17th and expects their recommendations report on property rehabilitation by the end of the week. ERA noted that HH's porch is one of the best of its kind in all of Canada.

- We are on track to conduct the procurement process for vendors in early 2021.
- It is anticipated that work will commence early Spring.
- Much discussion ensued on all of the possible projects ERA may recommend. Alan will send ERA's report to the Executive and staff to review before the next Board meeting.

g) **Heritage Advisory Committee Update:**

The Board received the written report from John Green, Vice-Chair, with thanks.

MOTION: 2020-AHS-060

Moved by Anna, second by Alan: THAT all of the reports under item #6 be approved. **CARRIED.**

7. **BYLAW REVIEW**

Jeff referred to the revisions emailed to the Board that were based on comments and suggestions from the last meeting. It was recommended that a separate operational document be produced to include topics such as Board roles and membership levels that do not need to be in the AHS Bylaws or Constitution.

Patricia recommended that the Bylaw Review be tabled until January to enable all Board members to thoroughly review the suggested Bylaw changes. Jeff asked if a lawyer should be consulted to review the document pro bono.

Discussion ensued on timing of the February AGM since the Bylaws need to be presented to the membership to approve any changes. Patricia recommended that the AGM be moved to March 2021 to allow the Board sufficient time to finalize the bylaws, and provide the AHS members the required 30-day notification of the AGM.

The new Board Meeting schedule in Q1 is January 11th, February 8th, and March 8th, 2021.

MOTION: 2020-AHS-061

Moved by Jeff T., second by Peter: THAT the Annual General Meeting be held on March 24, 2021.

CARRIED.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

a) Aurora Train Station Restoration – Metrolinx

There was a recent article in a local newspaper about the Aurora Train Station and it was concerning because AHS was not consulted on in for historical data and facts.

Role of AHS:

The train station discussion brought to the Board's attention to what the role of the Historical Society is and the value that it brings Aurora's community. Much discussion ensued including, but not limited to, AHS:

- has lost connection to its members because there are no longer has monthly meetings.
- does not effectively engage with members.
- does not have a local historian in our membership, therefore not known for having a breadth of expertise, but does have staff to research inquiries.
- Has become a management committee for the Hillary House.

One suggestion to bring relevance to AHS in the community is to write a monthly article in the local newspaper. It was noted that an author would need to be found to write the articles.

All agreed that the AHS Strategic Plan needs to be referred to and followed. As well, our branding needs to be sharpened up and promoted effectively.

9. ADJOURNMENT – 8:55 p.m.

MOTION: 2020-AHS-062

Moved by Geoff, second by Alan: THAT the meeting be adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

CARRIED.

10. NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE: - Monday, January 11, 2021 at 7 p.m.