

Dodge County Historical Society Board of Directors Minutes
August 21, 2008

The Dodge County Historical Society met Thursday August 21, 2008 at the Log Cabin on the Dodge County Fairgrounds at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Sue Harwood, Julie de Groot, Ruth Stringer, John Kvasnicka, Bob Peterson, Scott French and Director Earlene King.

Absent: Don Smith, Melisa Ferris and Nancy Smith

Visitors to the Board: Don Zeller, Joanne Bennerotte, Mary Ann Bucher, Vicki Peterson, Barb Gilliland, Lois Nash, Faye Richter

President Sue Harwood called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm

Petitions to the Chair: none

Amendments/Additions to the Agenda: Sue Harwood informed the Board that John Olive would be coming to the meeting to report his findings regarding the museum sewer line problems. She asked that John's report be heard when he arrived. Scott French moved that the agenda be accepted with the addition of John Olive's report whenever he arrives. Bob Peterson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Minutes of the June 2008 meeting and the July special meeting: Scott French moved to accept both June and July minutes as submitted. Julie de Groot seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Julie de Groot, Treasurer, presented to the Board a balance sheet covering the DCHS finances through August 21, 2008. The laptop that had been purchased specifically for the use of the Treasurer had crashed losing all of the financial data. Consequently, Julie had to reconstruct a balance sheet using an Excel worksheet because the Quick Books software was not accessible due to the crashed laptop. Julie has been working with Janice Borgstrom-Durst, bookkeeper/accountant, to bring order and understanding to the DCHS finances using Quick Books. John Kvasnicka asked why there were two Kasson "Save the Tower" restricted CD's. Don Zeller, who was DCHS treasurer during the time the CD's were obtained for the Water Tower committee, shared that the "Save the Tower" money is to be used exclusively for the Kasson Water Tower. Having two CD's simply reflects how the donations arrived and why there are two maturity dates for the CD's. Julie stated that she will have an updated and adjusted report for the September meeting. At this time Julie has only had available to her a March, 2007 financial report to work from. John Kvasnicka asked to see a DCHS budget. Julie explained that she was still getting things sorted out with the DCHS finances. Once that is completed Julie feels she will be able to put together for the Board a working budget for the remainder of 2008 as well as a budget for 2009. Scott French made the motion to accept the Treasurer's report as presented. John Kvasnicka seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Monthly Reports: Museum sales for the month of July totaled \$444.70. Eight new annual memberships were received for a total of \$80.00. Two new five year memberships were received for a total of \$70.00 and one Lifetime membership for \$250.00 was received. General donations totaled \$15.00. Twenty-eight (28) adult admissions and two (2) child admissions for the month of July totaled \$116.00. July's museum income totaled \$975.70. Sales and memberships originating at the fair were included in the museum income. The fair generated \$406.00 toward the grand total for July. Historically, July is a good month for museum income. The museum had 99 visitors in July. The Log Cabin at the fair had 516 visitors counted. Total DCHS visitors for the month of July was 615. Scott French asked if the 99 visitors to the museum were tour groups. King told him no tours came through in July. The 99 museum visitors were comprised of paid admissions, members and misc. visitors.

Director's Report: (full report on file)

The DCHS will host a Minnesota Historical Society presentation "Preserving Family History" October 11, 2008 at the Opera House in Mantorville at 1 pm. The Board was presented the draft copies for the display poster and the upcoming press release regarding the presentation.

The final grant report regarding the Wasioja schoolhouse re-roofing project has been submitted to the Minnesota Historical Society.

The 2009 fair theme for the DCHS will be "Dodge County Women of History". Responses to the fair theme have been positive with several individuals showing a strong interest in taking part in the research and preparations. It is not too early to form a fair committee for 2009.

Storage container prices quoted at the June meeting were purchase prices, not rental prices.

October 7, 2009 a PastPerfect training session, "Managing Collections Using PastPerfect", will be held in Eau Claire, WI. Director King will be attending.

Committee Reports:

Ghost Town Tour: Barb Gilliland of the Ghost Town Tour committee reported that the bus and mileage charges had not been turned in yet. Once those charges are available she will be able to present a final financial report. Sue Harwood congratulated the Ghost Town Tour committee on a "job well done!" Copies of the newspaper article about the Ghost Town Tour, written by Melanie Dobson were made available to the Board members. Scott French commented on the positive responses he had received. Barb thanked Scott for his assistance during the Tour. Sue Harwood asked Barb if she had given any thought to how any money left over might be used. Did the committee have any preference? Sue suggested the committee consider the Ghost Town sign project. Barb said that was her preference if there was any money available after the bus and mileage charges were added to the overhead.

Zumbro Bend Rendezvous: The Rendezvous committee submitted a 2008 working budget that had been approved by the Board in September 2007. The purpose of having the budget available was for the new Board members to become familiar with the successful and hard work of the Rendezvous committee.

Vicki Peterson, representing the Zumbro Bend Rendezvous committee, asked the DCHS Board if the Rendezvous committee could have its own checking account to streamline the financial responsibilities for the committee's treasurer, Lynette Dahms. After a short discussion, John Kvasnicka moved to give the Zumbro Bend Rendezvous committee permission to establish a checking account for Rendezvous use. Scott French seconded the motion. Motion carried. Sue Harwood suggested that Lynette and Julie get together to discuss which bank would work best for everyone involved. The Mantorville State Bank was suggested because the Rendezvous demonstrators find it more convenient to be able to cash their checks in Mantorville.

Wasioja Civil War Days: A working budget was presented to the Board at the June meeting. John Kvasnicka reported a balance of \$17.18 in the WCWD account. There had been a concern regarding liability insurance coverage for WCWD Shivaree fund raising event to be held Friday August 22 on the Restoration House grounds. Don Smith contacted Brian Underdahl of the Minnesota Counties Insurance Trust regarding the liability insurance for the event. So long as the number of attendees do not go over 100 and only wine is served the DCHS basic coverage is sufficient. A copy of the Liability Declaration was made to be delivered to the Mantorville Restoration Association as proof of coverage. Mary Ann Bucher suggested that all committees should have a copy of the Liability Declaration to use. King commented that it may not be appropriate for the committees to have a copy of the Liability Declaration since a determination of additional coverage would have to be done by the insurance company.

Old Business:

Minnesota Counties Insurance Trust – Risk Control Survey report: Sue Harwood reported that she had faxed to Mark Casey of MCIT the plans of the DCHS to address the three concerns Mark noted in his report; lit exit signs, blockage of emergency exit door and Wasioja School playground equipment and ground cover. Bob Peterson said he would contact his employer to see if two lighted exit signs with battery back-ups could be donated or purchased at a discount for the DCHS museum. Scott French asked about the ground cover for the Wasioja school playground equipment having to be done. Sue stated the communication with Mark Casey indicated that the DCHS would have to address it at some point.

Wasioja book reprint permission documents: John Kvasnicka shared with the board that Quentin Crouch has been dealing with family issues and has not been able to meet to discuss the reprint permission documents. A question was asked regarding who is the direct descendent of the book's author, Charles Crouch. The direct descendent is the daughter, Cheryl Gay. John Kvasnicka told the Board that Cheryl Gay had given the rights to the book to Quentin Crouch, nephew of her father, Charles Crouch. John Kvasnicka is still waiting for documentation

concerning the ownership rights.

Endowment fund policy: The updated endowment fund policy was presented to the Board for review. John Kvasnicka made the motion to adopt the endowment policy as updated. Julie de Groot seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Book cart: The book cart issue was addressed. King stated that she had searched the internet for the best price and least expensive shipping costs for a three shelve, double-sided book cart. King had enclosed copies of a Smith System book cart from Worthington Direct for \$254.95 with a shipping fee of \$85.00 for a total of \$339.95. Scott French offered to search for a better priced book cart. King requested that Scott look for a three shelf, double-sided book cart on wheels with at least 12" clearance between shelves. King reminded the Board that the book cart issue had been around since November 2007. John Kvasnicka moved to table the book cart issue until the September board meeting. Ruth Stringer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

New Business:

Dodge County Commissioners – presentation: Sue Harwood, as president of the DCHS, was to have made a presentation to the Dodge County commissioners July 22nd. The presentation was cancelled due to concerns regarding Board approval of the presentation. Sue Harwood stated that she had consulted with Board members individually regarding the presentation and had received favorable responses and encouragement to go ahead with the presentation. Questions arose about needing full Board approval before contacting the county commissioners. Sue asked if there had been full board approval of the former president's letter sent to the commissioners last year. There had not been full Board approval regarding the letter sent to the commissioners in 2007. Having known that, Sue Harwood stated she had no idea there would be a need for Board approval in 2008. Sue Harwood stated her feelings that going before the Dodge County commissioners to present the DCHS request in person and with supporters is more effective than sending a letter. After additional discussion regarding a presentation before the commissioners with a suggestion of using a Power Point presentation Sue Harwood agreed to set another date for a DCHS presentation before the Dodge County commissioners.

Mantorville Chamber of Commerce: Joanne Bennerotte, representing the Mantorville Chamber of Commerce, discussed the need for co-op advertising between the Chamber and Mantorville organizations. Sue Harwood explained that the DCHS cannot afford advertising that hasn't been budgeted. Joanne was asked to come to the DCHS Board in November with the co-op advertising costs and coverage. Joanne agreed. Joanne shared with the Board that the area Visitor magazine has been a good vehicle for advertising the Mantorville attractions. The Step-on Guide Tours is a good vehicle for encouraging bus tours. Concerns about the \$1.50 DCHS museum fee that is quoted for bus tours were discussed. Joanne explained that it was too late this year to raise the museum fee for the bus tours but it could be done for the following year. John Kvasnicka made a motion to honor the Step-on Guides bus tour fee of

\$1.50 for the remainder of the year. Scott French seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Museum sewer line – John Olive: John Olive submitted a verbal estimate of \$1,100 to repair the museum sewer line. John stated he was hesitant to even give an estimate since he had no way of knowing where the problem might be found in the sewer line. He felt it would be better to do the job for time and materials. John was also concerned that a portion of the museum sewer line might be under the neighbor's garage. John then suggested a plumber with a camera be hired to look in the actual sewer line to determine where the problem lays. The average fee for this is \$260. It would be money well spent to avoid costly digging and repairs. John offered another solution for the freezing sewer line. He suggested the DCHS Board consider installing a 1,000 gallon holding tank. Scott French said he would check with some plumbers about a camera search of the sewer line.

Plunkett – spray for Asian beetles and box elder bugs: Julie de Groot made the motion to have Plunkett's spray the museum exterior for Asian beetles and box elder bugs in late September or early October. Scott seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Concerns were brought up about powder post beetles and the problems they caused in the past in the Little Red House. King was directed to contact Steve Savin of Plunkett's to do an inspection for powder post beetles in the DCHS buildings.

New website: Director King had included a report detailing her research into cost effective alternatives to keep an updated web site available for the DCHS. (on file with August 21, 2008 minutes) The consensus of the Board was to make no changes at this time but continue researching web site alternatives.

General Discussion: General discussion commenced informally outside after the meeting was adjourned.

Adjourn: Scott French made the motion to adjourn. Bob Peterson seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Earlene King, acting secretary