



Meeting Minutes  
St. Louis Park Historical Society  
July 12, 2016

St Louis Park Historical Society  
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Attending: President Ted Ekkers; Secretary Jeanne Andersen, Treasurer Henry Solmer; Trustees Sue Ainsworth, Jane Hagstrom, Dale Lapakko, John Olson, and Jim Robbins; member Don Schimmel

**GOVERNANCE:**

- Review and approval of June minutes. Minutes were reviewed and approved with corrections.
- Treasurer's Report. Henry's report was reviewed and approved.
- Membership Report. We have 240 paid members and 24 members who are less than 60 days overdue. Jeanne noted that it is difficult for her to track membership in Excel, and that we need someone to clean up and update PastPerfect. This person would have to pay great attention to detail, spelling, etc. A suggestion was made that a High School student might want to volunteer once school starts again.
- *Re-Echo* Report. Ted made a general call for articles, and encouraged the continuation of a variety of writers contributing to the newsletter. Jeanne suggested that we advertise the Amazon Smile Program, where users of Amazon.com can designate an organization to receive a percentage of the purchase price, with no cost to the purchaser. The link is <https://smile.amazon.com/>
- Secretary's Report. Ted announced the following meeting dates:

The August Board meeting has been moved from August 2 to August 9 to accommodate National Night Out.

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for September 13. We need to start looking for a venue.

Jeanne reported that we received the check from our second Legacy grant for our newspapers on microfilm, in the amount of \$3,402. The microfilm reels should arrive in about two months. Scott Smith of the Community TV Department has generously offered to come and film a demonstration of the machine, which we will do when the remainder of the reels come in.

**COLLECTIONS AND RESEARCH**

Ted reported that the family of Eliot Royce would like to donate his recumbent bicycle and Cat in the Hat to the Society. Although we have severe space limitations, we may be able to place it in our office.

Jeanne reported on her current areas of research:

- A tabulation of class sizes, according to several parameters. Don Schimmel is also working on this and we hope to settle several Facebook questions. This project has led to concerns about records in the High School and District Office, some of which may be disturbed with upcoming changes at the schools as reported in the *Sun-Sailor* on July 6, 2016. Jeanne hopes to work with Don and Joan Brinkman of the St. Louis Park Schools Foundation to discover what resources are in the High School and ensure that they are preserved.
- Mounting class photos from the 1920s in three-ring binders to protect the photos and make them more accessible.
- Additional research on the background of Lydia Rogers.
- Additional research on the Jackley family.
- Continuing to work with the Class of 1966 to provide photos for their 50<sup>th</sup> Class Reunion.
- Working with a contractor for the EPA to provide photos.
- The City has asked us about a photo of a man with a snowplow for Al Franken.

## **PROGRAMMING**

- The Society's table at Parktaular was well received, and Jane reported that people had fun trying to guess which famous Parkite was which, with mixed success.
- Ted and Jeanne will represent the Society at a table in Minikahda Park for National Night Out on August 2. This was of much interest to neighbors last year.
- There will be an event at the Depot on August 21 from 1 to 4 pm, featuring a representative from MN/Dot who will discuss ramifications of the Southwest Light Rail on the Park.
- Parkshores has requested a guide for an SLP historic places bus tour in September. Dale has volunteered to do this if he is available.
- A program is being planned for October 18 at the Little Theater in the Lenox Community Center. It will be a 1-2 hour presentation of the history of St. Louis Park. It is free to participants. Dale and Jim volunteered to work on this.

## **FUNDRAISING – Tom Friedman Event**

Ted reported on behalf of Trustee Paul Linnee. Paul has touched base with Tom Friedman and they hope to set a date soon for a fundraising event in the fall in conjunction with Tom's book tour. Tom has agreed to the proposed format of an interview by Paul's sister Susann Linnee, a world renowned journalist, who is also a graduate of St. Louis Park High School. We need to start thinking about a venue, pricing, publicity, etc.

## **MUSEUM**

Jeanne had the opportunity to speak with David Grabitske at the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) about our proposed plan to raise funds for a museum and give it to the City. A summary of his comments:

1. Our proposed Building Committee must include an architect, who will be the most important player. Also on the list should be a lawyer. All members of the Building Committee should know that they would not be eligible to do the actual work.
2. It may be a good idea to hold a public forum or two to find out what the potential users of the museum would find useful (e.g., house histories, family information) and what they would not find to be useful.
3. MHS strongly recommends building a new building, as older buildings, especially those made of concrete block (as many of our buildings are) are prone to create dust and it is difficult to control humidity.
4. Once the architect has developed a schematic design, fundraising can commence in earnest, selling the concept and the benefit to the community.
5. Building or buying a building can be estimated at about \$400/sq.ft. Our estimated need is for 4,000 sq.ft., making our fundraising goal \$1.6 million plus a \$400,000 endowment, for a total of \$2 million. [This may be considerably less if the City builds the building on existing City-owned land (such as a City park) and with resources such as Sentenced to Serve.]
6. Contrary to our proposal, Legacy grant money cannot be used to hire someone to raise funds. David recommended we do our own fundraising. Fundraising notes:
  - State bonding money is not available to nonprofits, but it is available to cities and counties and can be given to nonprofits.
  - About 100 cities in Minnesota provide funds to their local Historical Societies.
  - The average amount per year provided by cities is \$5,500.
  - The State gives \$5-6 per resident to MHS for the History Center.
  - \$1 per resident of St. Louis Park would be \$47,502.
  - 10 cents per resident of St. Louis Park would be \$4,702.
  - Try to obtain a “lead gift” of 10 percent of the amount needed.
  - Get 5-10 other gifts of \$100,000 each.
  - Companies do not have budgets for memberships in organizations, but they do have advertising budgets and often have Foundations.
7. We should build our membership base, not only to raise funds but to demonstrate the support for the Society’s goals.
8. If the museum is built by the City and is placed in the inventory of the Parks and Rec Department, it is not necessary for the Society to rent the building. MHS recommends that the Society and the City (vs. Parks and Rec) execute a Management Agreement that spells out:
  - Use of the building
  - Mutual responsibilities

- Term of the agreement – can be a set term or in perpetuity, with provisions for dissolution, extension, etc.

9. The Society may request Legacy grants for:

- HVAC/Humidity equipment
- Fire suppression system
- Security system
- Storage facilities
- Furniture

Ted reported that he will be meeting with Mayor Jake Spano in the coming weeks to discuss the Society's goals and find ways that the City and the Society can work together. Jeanne will draft an article for the Sun-Sailor for the Board's approval.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Jim reported that he will be working with the Kids Voting Program again this year, in conjunction with the League of Women Voters.

### **ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next Board meeting will be on Tuesday, August 9, at 7pm at the SLPHS Office. (Note this is the second Tuesday due to National Night Out.)