

Dane County Historical Society: December 16, 2024

Present: John Decker, Mike Flaherty, Barbara Furstenberg, Peter Hessman, Jane Licht, Jerry Remy, Peter Williams; Rick Bernstein, Executive Director. Excused: Joanne Jensen, Gini Nichols

John Decker called the meeting to order at 1:43 p.m.

Minutes. **Motion to approve the November minutes by Jane Licht, seconded by Peter Williams. Motion passed.**

President's Report.

- John reported on a webinar regarding legal aspects of non-profit organizations. If a charity conducts solicitations anywhere in the U. S., they must be registered in the state where they are seeking funds. Although we are only registered in Wisconsin, it was agreed that this is sufficient at the moment.
- John pointed out that there are two required reports: 1) renewal of our registration; 2) annual report to the Department of Finance.
- John would like to complete the electronic database of historic documents for board members.

Treasurer's Report.

- Paul Hessman reported that the Baird account stood at \$77,771.10 as of November 30.
- As of December 15, there is \$7,598.07 in the Summit checking account; \$8,240.82 in the savings account; and \$1,380.62 in the secondary savings account. The grand total is \$17,220.51.
- There was discussion about creating an interest bearing account at Fidelity Investments. Fidelity provides a significantly higher rate than Summit. **Peter moved to be proactive in pursuing a Fidelity account; Mike Flaherty seconded the motion, which passed. Paul will make further inquiries.**
- **Move to place the report on file by Jane, seconded by Mike. Motion passed.**

Archivist's Report.

- Barbara has continued to catalogue recent arrivals.
- Rick raised a question of the disposition of a number of banker boxes of clippings compiled by newspaper columnist Frank Custer. The clippings are loosely filed by year. Rick does not feel these are useful for researchers. He pointed out that current digitization allows easier research into newspapers. Discussion brought out the point that some of the older newspapers in the collection may not have been digitized. **The board concurred that the collection should be kept at this time.**
- Rick showed a set of aluminum discs about education in the state that have been transferred from the Portage County Historical Society. It appears that they came from a professor at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point, with a notation that they may deal with Black Earth schools.
- Rick reported that we have received a large collection of photographs and other materials assembled by Tom Rich, a Madison East High School graduate and teacher at Sherman Middle and La Follette High Schools. The photographs document the homes of East High students and East High and Sherman Middle School teachers between 1945 and 1970. There are yearbooks and reunion booklets from East High School and lists of students in various La Follette classes. There is also a book "Remembering the Akamatsus" by Margaret G. Leonard.

Budgets.

- Rick presented a report on the 2024 financial performance. Expenses were less than projected and revenues exceeded projections.
- Rick presented a draft of the 2025 budget. Jane suggested there is a need for funds to restore our markers. The Village of McFarland marker needs repainting; perhaps the Village would agree to a cost-sharing arrangement. Jerry Remy asked whether there is a local company that could refurbish markers more cheaply than the Sewah company. **The board asked Rick to explore this, mentioning a powder coating company in Oregon. Jane moved that \$3,000, be added to the 2025 budget for historic marker maintenance; Peter seconded the motion, which passed.**
- **Motion to approve the 2025 budget as amended to \$24, 757; Peter seconded. Motion passed.**

Executive Director Report

- Rick reported that the Traveling Exhibition on Restrictive Covenants is proceeding well.
- He has asked Patrick Miles to submit a resolution to the Dane County Board of Supervisors refuting racial covenants.
- Board members offered to bring food for a reception. **It was suggested that Joanne Jensen be asked to organize the reception.**

Other business. **Jerry Remy requested that future board minutes include the date and location of the next meeting.**

The next meeting will be held, Tuesday, January 21, at the Lussier Heritage Center.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:14 p.m.

Barbara Furstenberg, Secretary