

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
ST. CLAIR SHORES HISTORICAL COMMISSION

St. Clair Shores City Council Chambers
Tuesday, April 6, 2021

PRESENT:

Chairperson	Mr. Gerald Sielagoski
Vice-Chairperson	Mr. John Cilluffo
Treasurer	Ms. Kathleen Campbell
Members	Ms. Janet Horan
	Ms. Kay VanDeGraaf
City Librarian	Mrs. Rosemary Orlando

EXCUSED:

Secretary	Mr. Michael Leydet
Members	Ms. Theresa Bertolini
	Ms. Jeanne Srigley
Council Liaison	Ms. Candice Rusie

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Sielagoski called the Annual Meeting of the St. Clair Shores Historical Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. In Leydet's absence, Sielagoski appointed Campbell as acting secretary. This was the first meeting held since March of 2020. Due to Covid-19 restrictions requiring social distancing, the meeting was held in the St. Clair Shores City Council chambers.

Moved by Horan, supported by VanDeGraaf, to excuse Bertolini, Leydet, Rusie and Srigley from the Historical Commission meeting.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion Carried.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by Horan, supported by Cilluffo, to adopt the agenda.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion Carried.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Horan, supported by Cilluffo, to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2020 Regular Meeting of the St. Clair Shores Historical Commission.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion Carried.

Minutes signed by acting secretary Kathleen Campbell.

IV. INFORMATION REPORTS

A. Museum Activities

Caitlin Donnelly resigned her position as museum curator because she has secured a full-time position elsewhere. Interviews for her replacement are in progress. In the absence of a curator, the library has been overseeing museum maintenance activities.

Kay VanDeGraaf asked whether the packet of information regarding the barn progress and finances that she had lent to Donnelly had been turned over to Mrs. Orlando. Orlando will check and report back. VanDeGraaf has requested that the packet of information be returned to her, if located.

B. Historical Society Report

Horan reported that Duchaine met with her to transfer signatory authority on the Historical Society of St. Clair Shores bank accounts to Horan. Campbell made a \$15.00 deposit to the Historical Society bank account in order to keep the account active for another year until decisions are made regarding the organizational status of the Society. As previously discussed, the dissolution of the Historical Society is addressed in the bylaws, which Sielagoski clarified, by referencing a copy of the bylaws. Sielagoski indicated that a temporary band aid has been applied for now and that unless a plan for longer term sustainability is developed and executed, dissolution should be considered.

Discussion continued regarding a dedicated account for the Barn funds through the City. All assets are not specifically marked for the barn but VanDeGraaf asked whether donors whose donations were designated for the barn should be notified. Sielagoski explained that the donation paperwork indicates that the donations may be used at the discretion of the Historical Commission. Orlando reminded the Historical Commission that if the funds were put in a dedicated city account, all requests for payment would be subject to the City of St. Clair Shores approval process for payment disbursement. There was a discussion regarding the Society member list (no active members) and the possibility of merging or combining with another community's Historical Society or another historical preservation related 501(c)(3) organization.

C. Genealogy Group Report

The Genealogy group has not met during the Covid pandemic. Sielagoski reported that the St. Clair Shores Public Library has offered remote access to the Ancestry Library Edition genealogy resource to library patrons with log-in credentials through the library website.

D. Comments by Individual Commission Members

Horan suggested that if the pandemic continues to escalate, the commission could consider Zoom meetings.

Sielagoski indicated that he has continued to work from home and that his company is considering a 70/30 remote work program for the future. Jerry is the head of the Stellantis North American functional safety team. He shared that his work from home days are actually longer than when previously working in the office because of the recent merger with PSA and an increased number of international teleconference meetings.

E. Librarians Report

Orlando announced that there will be a History Walk in front of the library in June. The library will display businesses in St. Clair Shores and their history. Orlando asked about the process of obtaining permission for the use of photos from the archives. Sielagoski had recently been granting permission but feels his permission for future requests is not necessary. In the past, as chairman, Sielagoski had granted permission on behalf of the Historical Commission to the library for usage of photographs from the archives and has not rescinded that permission. VanDeGraaf and Horan agreed. Campbell questioned usage other than library projects and was assured that only library projects had blanket permission. Campbell suggested that this policy should be reviewed annually.

Orlando explained that all photo request forms are sent to Sielagoski. He recently gave an interview to Brienne Turczynski from Metro Mode Media for a digital article about historic preservation efforts in the St. Clair Shores. Sielagoski also spoke with Jeanne Srigley and provided Turczynski with the Srigley and Bertolini oral histories. He outlined the Historical Commission activities and granted permission to use several photos in the article which was published in March. Turczynski was surprised at the amount of positive support that the Historical Commission receives from the Mayor and Council regarding its historical preservation efforts.

Orlando indicated that she had reserved the City Council chambers for the next scheduled Historical Commission meeting in May.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Historical City Marker Update:

Campbell asked for approval on the Van's Used Car Historical Marker. The Historical Commission approved the marker. There was some discussion about the ordering process. Horan and Orlando will review records that they have from previous orders.

Campbell has heard from Viviano Florist Shop. They are excited about the marker and are gathering information and photos.

Barn Fund Raising Update:

No activity to report.

Historical Tour Map Update:

Cilluffo had no activity to report.

Historical Markers for Residences/Businesses Update:

A new application has been received for a marker for a house located at 22114 Avalon Street. The Historical Marker sub-committee needs to review and authenticate the documentation. Cilluffo questioned whether the Historical Society would still pay for the marker now that there is question about the dissolution of the Society. Sielagoski indicated that Horan has access to the funds and that he did not foresee a problem.

Campbell reported that she and Cilluffo had been contacted by Amanda and Jeff Sloan, the 2019 recipients of a marker for their home on Eleven Mile Road. They have since sold the house and have purchased another historic home in St. Clair Shores. Amanda wanted to keep in touch with the Commission and let us know that they were starting research on their recently purchased home in order to apply for a marker. Their new home records indicate 1927 as the build date, but she knows that this is not correct. Campbell let her know that many records indicate 1927 because most records before that time were damaged or destroyed and the actual construction dates were unknown. Campbell provided her with the information about the Davis Block and offered some plat map records for the area.

Amanda indicated disappointment that the buyers of their Eleven Mile home were not maintaining the home as she had hoped. VanDeGraaf asked if the marker could be removed if homes are not maintained. Sielagoski indicated that this was not possible because the marker was purchased by the homeowner and the Commission does not impose any conditions required to retain or display the marker.

Name Tags:

Campbell distributed the new name tags. An invoice was provided to Orlando.

Forms/Thumb Drives:

Campbell has copied logo, logo permission, forms, etc. on thumb drives to be kept in the Historical Commission files. The Library has not yet granted access to the Local History Center.

Campbell offered a sample of a reimbursement form, to be reviewed by the Commission members and discussed at the next Historical Commission meeting.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Sielagoski reminded the Historical Commission that the election of officers takes place at the annual meeting. After discussion, it was moved by Horan, supported by VanDeGraaf, to nominate and elect Sielagoski as Chairperson, Cilluffo as Vice Chairperson, Leydet as Secretary and Campbell as Treasurer. The nominations were accepted.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion Carried.

Budget Meeting:

The Historical Commission needs to have a budget meeting. VanDeGraaf suggested having the budget discussed at a regular meeting. Sielagoski recommended that a separate subcommittee meeting be held for the purpose of creating a budget proposal which would be presented for approval at a future Historical Commission meeting.

Muskrat Tales:

An inventory needs to be taken of the Muskrat Tales on hand in the storeroom. Campbell and VanDeGraaf volunteered to take inventory. Orlando informed them that it is not possible under the present Covid-19 restrictions but will contact them when the area is available for access.

Farmers Market:

Campbell suggested that in order to prevent the Historical Society from being dissolved, we publicize the organization with signs and/or posters at the Farmers Market. A Historical Society membership brochure was completed before Duchaine's resignation and a brochure could also be developed for the Historical Marker for Residences/Businesses program.

VII. AUDIENCE

Michelle Mormul was present in the audience. Mormul purchased a home on Wildwood Street in 2019 and is interested in becoming active in the community. She is attending several board and commission meetings to see if they fit her interests and schedule. She indicated that Historical Commission meetings would conflict with her "Sing Out Detroit" choir activities. Mormul has a Ph.D. degree in history.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by VanDeGraaf, supported by Cilluffo, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion Carried

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Campbell, Acting Secretary