

# Town of Newbury, MA

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## Historical Commission Meeting Minutes 02-06-2013

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### NEWBURY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2013

#### Call to Order

A regular monthly meeting of the Newbury Historical Commission was held at the Newbury Town Library on Wednesday, February 6, 2013. The meeting convened at 6:36 PM.

*Members present:* Nancy Thurlow, Barbara Rogers, Chris Drelich, Channing Howard, and Bill Towne.

*Members absent:* Sue Nagle and Marcia Peirce

Local resident Carol Baum was also present to make a presentation on a proposed Trash Tower for the Upper Green (*see New Business #1*).

#### Approval of Minutes

The draft minutes of the 1/9/13 meeting were presented. Under New Business #2 (Receipt of Gifts), the following wording was added:

Barbara Rogers questioned what is happening with items given to the HC; if items are continuously being deposited into the Schoolhouse, is the Schoolhouse ultimately turning into a museum?

The minutes as amended were approved on a MOTION made by Bill Towne. *The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

#### Reports

##### 1. Treasurer's Report

Chris Drelich indicated that there has been no change in monies since the November report.

The regular fund is still at \$319.85; the gift fund remains at \$1,128.78.

#### Old Business

##### 1. Demolition Delay Bylaw

The HC discussed the timeline for getting the proposed DDB on the agenda for Town Meeting.

All agreed it would be much too rushed in order to get it on this spring's agenda, as the finished product would need to be submitted by March 28<sup>th</sup>. We agreed that it should be well-prepared, with plenty of time for revision, with at least one public hearing to gather input from residents.

Channing did add that all copies of the proposed DDB should be stamped with a "PROPOSED" watermark in the event that worksheets are inadvertently left behind.

##### 2. Proceeds from Silver Coin Sale

We discussed the proceeds from the sale of the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary silver coins. The proceeds are currently in the town's General Fund; the HC needs to request that the money be appropriated to the Historical Commission Gift Fund. We came up with a list of questions:

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- Is there a minimum dollar amount that we need to request from the proceeds?
- Does the request for appropriation of funds have to be done this spring?
- After appropriation, would the funds need to be spent within the year?

Barbara and Channing will visit Tracy Blais, Town Administrator, in the near future to inquire and to learn more.

#### New Business

##### 1. Trash Tower on Upper Green

Local resident Carol Baum presented a proposed Trash Tower to be erected on the Upper Green for one year. She has been collecting trash from the sides of roads and is hoping the Trash Tower and an accompanying sign would raise awareness on the issue of littering.

After the presentation, the HC had a chance to ask Carol questions about the project and then the HC discussed the proposal. Carol had initially spoken with the Selectmen, who then asked for feedback from the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and Historical Commission.

MOTION: A motion was made by Bill Towne to respond to the selectmen in the following manner:

Although the Historical Commission feels that the Trash Tower is a worthwhile project, we do not feel that the Upper Green is the most appropriate site.

*Nancy Thurlow, Barbara Rogers, Bill Towne, and Channing Howard were in favor. Chris Drelich abstained.  
The motion carried.*

## **2. "Wish List" Items for Lower Green Schoolhouse**

The HC discussed "wish list" items for the Lower Green Schoolhouse. We have wanted a 37-star American flag for the interior (reproduction of the flag that would have hung in the classroom in 1877) but have been unable to find an antique one to purchase. Channing had located a company that creates historical American flags.

MOTION: A motion was made by Barbara Rogers for Chris to go ahead and order a historical reproduction of a 37-star flag for the interior of the Lower Green Schoolhouse. *The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

We also briefly discussed renting a porta-potty for the Lower Green for the summer, for the use of visitors to the schoolhouse and those walkers and cyclists who frequently pass by. Barbara will look into possibilities.

## **3. Role of the Historical Commission**

Channing has been researching the official role of the HC and if there are guidelines regarding how meetings are to be conducted, policies on what constitutes a quorum, and what our responsibilities are. Generally, we are an *advisory* committee to the selectmen, as outlined in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 8D (reproduced here in full for reference):

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A city or town which accepts this section may establish an historical commission, hereinafter called the commission, for the preservation, protection and development of the historical or archeological assets of such city or town. Such commission shall conduct researches for places of historic or archeological value, shall cooperate with the state archeologist in conducting such researches or other surveys, and shall seek to coordinate the activities of unofficial bodies organized for similar purposes, and may advertise, prepare, print and distribute books, maps, charts, plans and pamphlets which it deems necessary for its work.

For the purpose of protecting and preserving such places, it may make such recommendations as it deems necessary to the city council or the selectmen and, subject to the approval of the city council or the selectmen, to the Massachusetts historical commission, that any such place be certified as an historical or archeological landmark. It shall report to the state archeologist the existence of any archeological, paleontological or historical site or object discovered in accordance with section twenty-seven C of chapter nine, and shall apply for permits necessary pursuant to said section twenty-seven C. Any information received by a local historical commission with respect to the location of sites and specimens, as defined in section twenty-six B of chapter nine, shall not be a public record.

The commission may hold hearings, may enter into contracts with individuals, organizations and institutions for services furthering the objectives of the commission's program; may enter into contracts with local or regional associations for cooperative endeavors furthering the commission's program; may accept gifts, contributions and bequests of funds from individuals, foundations and from federal, state or other governmental bodies for the purpose of furthering the commission's program; may make and sign any agreements and may do and perform any and all acts which may be necessary or desirable to carry out the purposes of this section.

It shall keep accurate records of its meetings and actions and shall file an annual report which shall be printed in the case of towns in the annual town report. The commission may appoint such clerks and other employees as it may from time to time require. The commission shall consist of not less than three nor more than seven members. In cities the members shall be appointed by the mayor, subject to the provisions of the city charter, except that in cities having a city manager form of government, said appointments shall be by the city manager, subject to the provisions of the charter; and in towns they shall be appointed by the selectmen, excepting towns having a town manager form of government, in which towns appointments shall be made by the town manager, subject to the approval of the selectmen.

When a commission is first established, the terms of the members shall be for one, two or three years, and so arranged that the terms of approximately one third of the members will expire each year, and their successors shall be appointed for terms of three years each. Any member of a commission so appointed may, after a public hearing if requested, be removed for cause by the appointing authority. A vacancy occurring otherwise than by expiration of a term shall in a city or town be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner as an original appointment.

Said commission may acquire in the name of the city or town by gift, purchase, grant, bequest, devise, lease or otherwise the fee or lesser interest in real or personal property of significant historical value and may manage the same.

This doesn't address the matter of what constitutes a quorum, nor the method in which meetings are to be conducted (e.g. following *Robert's Rules of Order*).

## **4. Receipt of Gifts**

Bill Towne donated an earthenware crock from Byfield to the Historical Commission. Chris will write a letter of thanks to Bill and record it in the HC's database of holdings.

Channing also announced that we will be receiving a 300-year-old document with the names of the first settlers who organized the First Parish Church. No word on when we will have the gift in hand.

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## **5. Begin Meetings with Proposed DDB Work**

MOTION: To help facilitate our continued work on the proposed DDB, a motion was made by Bill Towne to begin subsequent meetings with work on the proposed DDB, followed by the regular monthly business items.

*The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**Adjournment**

The next meeting of the Historical Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, March 13, 2013 at the Newbury Town Library, 6:30 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 PM.

*3/13/13*

Christopher Drelich, Date of approval

Clerk/Treasurer