

October 13, 2009, Minutes as approved by the Board on November 10, 2009

**Board Meeting – Alexandria Historical Society
October 13, 2009, 6:30, Black History Museum**

The meeting was called to order by President Audrey Davis at 6:30 p.m. Members present were: Bob Madison, Anne Paul, Ted Pulliam, Amy Bertsch, Amy Breedlove, Mary Ruth Coleman, Henry Desmarais, Bill Dickinson, Laura Mae Sudder, and Karen Wilkins.

Minutes: The minutes of the September meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Paul presented the Treasurer's Report. She passed out copies of the Treasurer's Annual Report for 2008-2009 and the Treasurer's Report for July 1 to September 30, 2009 (attached). She also reported cashing the J. Patten Abshire CD and reinvesting the amount received plus \$4,000 from the Abshire Savings Account in a new nine-month CD from Burke and Herbert in the amount of \$18,645.37. She understood at first that the interest rate on the new CD was 4%, but that now seems unclear. If that is not the interest rate, she would like to have the flexibility to cash in the CD and move the money elsewhere. She also would like to invest \$4,000 of the amount in the general savings account in a CD. Coleman moved that Paul use her best judgment in making investments along those lines. Breedlove seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Paul also reported that because of website expenses, AHS operated in the red last year. If AHS operates in the red again this year, she would like for the Board to adopt a budget for the following year.

Old Business:

December Meeting: Davis asked if anyone thought there was a need for a meeting in December. Such a meeting is not customary, and there was general agreement that there was no need for a December meeting this year.

April History Awards: Davis passed out assignments for the 2010 History Awards. They were: Dickinson, History Award Chair; Paul, Co-Chair; Thurman, Committee; Coleman, High School History Awards Chair and Presentation Pieces; Sudder and Greenberg, Reception and Refreshments; Breedlove, Program; and the Board as the Clean-up Committee. Davis was to coordinate with Bertsch concerning a proclamation. Margaret Spellings, former Secretary of Education, will be invited to be the Guest Speaker. Senator Patsy Ticer was to be invited to help present the awards.

Bertsch mentioned that a press release requesting nominations for the history award needed to go out the end of January.

Archives Restoration: Davis reported that the collected AHS documents have gone to the city archives and have been accepted by that office. Davis will prepare a new deed of gift that allows AHS to retrieve the documents when the Board so desires. She also reported that in response to a notice in the newsletter, Sherry Hulfish Browne has donated to AHS a copy of *A Seaport Saga*.

New Board Members: Davis reported that as a result of a notice in the newsletter, four people have expressed interest in becoming Board members. She had told them that their names would be held for the nominating committee's consideration for the May elections. She also reported that the prospective members may be willing to help with Board activities before the elections.

Presidents' Plaque: Davis reported that she has the plaque and will arrange for additional names to be added to it.

Civil War 150th Anniversary 2011: Davis announced that another meeting of those interested in activities to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War will be held in the Masonic Memorial October 24 from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Pulliam is to go to the meeting and report to the Board on what took place.

Old Chronicles on the Website: Madison and Davis reported on progress finding someone to scan the old *Alexandria Chronicles* onto the website. Bob thought it would take about 20 hours to scan the issues. Davis said she had talked with Carrie Joyner at the Lyceum, who was interested in doing the scanning. Board members discussed the proper pay for scanning and the order in which documents should be scanned. Davis said she would talk further with Carrie Joyner about the project.

National Capital Region Conservation Act: Dickinson reported that Rep. Moran had introduced H.R. 2986 in the House and Sen. Cardin had introduced a companion bill, S. 1525, in the Senate to establish new authority for the Director of the National Park Service to make grants to states and local governments in the National Capital Region, which includes northern Virginia, to assist in their acquiring land for environmental and historic preservation purposes. He passed out copies of the House bill (attached), and moved that AHS send a letter to Representative Moran and Senators Webb and Warner in support of the bills. Pulliam seconded the motion. Davis announced that she had talked with Greenberg and Cannady, who were unable to attend the meeting, and that Greenberg would have voted against the motion and Cannady for. A vote was taken on the motion, and the motion passed. Davis will write the letter.

New Business

Old Navy Hospital Website: Madison reported that he had received a request from the man who maintained the website for the Old Navy Hospital who wanted to post an old *Chronicle* article on that subject on his website. There was general agreement to allow this posting.

Newsletter Editor, Website Manager, and Program Chair: Davis announced that Madison wanted to pass on to another Board member the positions of newsletter editor, program chair, and website manager that he holds currently. All agreed that he had done an excellent job in all three positions. (Madison reported he had been newsletter editor for seven years.) Bertsch agreed to become the new newsletter editor after a transition period working with Madison. Madison will continue in the other positions while a volunteer is sought.

Freedmen's Cemetery Sculpture Steering Committee: Paul moved and Bertsch seconded a motion that Wilkins serve as the AHS representative on the Committee. The motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Program Update: Madison reported that the next program will be Cliff Sloan speaking on his book on the *Marbury v. Madison* decision, which held that the Supreme Court could declare laws unconstitutional and involved several Alexandrians, on October 28. The next program will be on March 24, and the subject will be General Braddock's march from Alexandria. It will be followed by the History Awards in April.

Newsletter: Madison reported that he had recently sent out the latest copy of the newsletter.

Chronicle: Davis reported that Greenberg indicated that the next issue of the *Chronicle* will be mailed this week.

Website: Breedlove reported that she had emailed Board members the latest statistics (attached) and that there was little change from the last report. Madison reported that he had added to the website a list of all *Fireside Sentinel* articles.

HARC: Sudder reported on the HARC September meeting. The primary item discussed in the meeting was recent research into the African-American community that existed at Fort Ward after the Civil War. Lance Mallamo, head of OHA, and Pam Cressey, city archaeologist, reported that there appeared to be more at Fort Ward concerning the community that was worthy of preserving than originally thought.

Sudder also reported that over the weekend she had received an email from the chair of HARC asking HARC members to give their opinion on a preservation matter on City Council's agenda for October 17. The issue concerns demolition of a building at 224

North Fayette Street that once housed the only American Legion Post in Alexandria open to African-Americans. The Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review had voted to allow the current owner to demolish the building, and that decision had been appealed to the Council by neighboring property owners. Sudder asked the Board for guidance on what position she should take as the AHS member of HARC. Bertsch and Davis recused themselves from taking part in the following discussion. During the discussion, it was pointed out that the issue was new to the Board and complicated, and it developed that Board members had several questions concerning the issue. Paul moved that Sudder be instructed to seek a delay in the decision, and Wilkins seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Library Funding: Paul reported that, as a member of the Alexandria Library Board she had learned that the budget for all libraries in Alexandria was expected to be reduced next year by \$470,000 after a reduction of \$1.89 million for the current year. The Special Collections/Local History part of the library had absorbed much the reduction for this year, and Paul expressed concern about possible additional reduction in its budget for the coming year. It was generally agreed that AHS should support Special Collections, and Paul agreed to report further about the Library's plans on absorbing the reduction for next year.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:10

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Pulliam
Secretary