

**NEXT MEETING – Tuesday, February 11, 2014**

**Board Meeting – Alexandria Historical Society**

**November 12, 2013**

In the absence of President Bill Dickinson, Vice President Debbie Ackerman called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. Other members present were Lisa Adamo, Ted Pulliam, Katy Cannady, Tal Day, Paul Friedman, Linda Greenberg, Julie Randle, and Adrienne Washington.

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

**Minutes:** The minutes of the October meeting prepared by Pulliam were approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Adamo earlier had circulated a Treasurer's Report for 1 through 31 October 2013 (attached). The report was ordered filed.

**Treasurer's Membership Report:** Adamo earlier had circulated a Treasurer's Membership Report for 1 April through 31 October 2013 (attached). She also reported that in September and October seven new members had joined and paid online through the AHS website and PayPal. This was an unusually large number for a fall period. She also noted that PayPal takes as a fee 3.2% of the amount paid through it. There was a short discussion about raising the membership fee for those paying online to cover the PayPal fee, but raising the fee in that manner was rejected.

Adamo also noted that the Endowment Fund was not receiving many contributions. Day suggested that one reason for the lack of contributions was that members might not know how the endowment fund is used. He noted that it had been used to help purchase an historic ledger for the Alexandria Library and would be used to help with expenses for the upcoming Virginia Museums Conference to be held in Alexandria. He suggested that information about the Endowment Fund be included in the AHS newsletter, website, membership letter, and perhaps elsewhere. The Treasurer's Membership report was ordered filed.

**Budget and Membership Mailings:** Adamo earlier had circulated a proposed budget for 2013-1014 (attached), and at the meeting she passed out a copy with a more detailed explanation of the expense terms (administrative, fees, etc.) and some suggested additional costs for mailings and for design and printing of a brochure.

The ensuing discussion on the amount of additional costs for mailings revolved around the number of membership mailings that AHS should do annually. Friedman earlier had circulated a draft of a membership letter (attached) and suggested other mailings. The result of the discussion was that Friedman as Membership Chairman will send four different types of letters each year. The first would be in June, and it would remind members it was time to pay their dues. It would be a slight variation of the letter Friedman had circulated earlier. The second

would be sent in September only to members who had not yet paid their dues to remind them to do so. The third would be sent in November or December to all members and would urge them to make donations to the Endowment Fund. Day is to make changes to the earlier Friedman letter, mainly to eliminate references to paying dues, and submit the letter to Friedman in the near future. Friedman would phone those who did donate to the Endowment Fund asking whether they wanted their name listed as a donor in the forthcoming program for the History Awards. The fourth was a letter thanking people for joining, rejoining, or making donations. Pulliam made a motion encompassing these results, Day seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

There then was a short discussion about whether people who paid dues electronically through the website could be thanked electronically, and it was generally agreed that they could be. Issues raised for further discussion: 1) allowing memberships to expire one year from the time dues were paid, rather than expiring on the current fiscal year basis, and 2) holding an annual membership drive.

After the membership discussion and discussion of additional expenses, Adamo agreed to prepare a revised budget for 2013-2014 and submit it for an online vote.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### **Program:**

Feedback on Smith Lecture: Ackerman reported that Gene Allen Smith gave an excellent lecture on his book *The Slaves' Gamble: Choosing Sides in the War of 1812* but that not many people attended.

Rosenwald Lecture: Ackerman passed on Dickinson's report that it seemed unlikely that Alexandria school system would sponsor a lecture on the Rosenwald schools. Washington indicated that the lecture still was a good idea. It was agreed that Friedman, Dickinson, and Washington would meet to discuss holding the lecture without participation of the Alexandria school system.

Recording Future Lectures: Ackerman reported that it seemed best to decide on recording future lectures on a case-by-case basis. She said that the speaker in March already had his lecture on U-Tube. The April program was the history awards ceremony and did not need to be recorded. The May lecturer did not want to be recorded. The only lecture left was the June lecture, and whether that lecture would be recorded could be discussed at a later meeting.

**Progress of Working Group:** Ackerman announced that the working group would meet again at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup> at the Black History Museum. It was agreed that the minutes of the group's session on October 29 prepared by Greenberg (attached) be filed with the minutes of the minutes of the regular Board meeting.

**Membership:** In addition to the earlier discussion in connection with the budget, it was generally agreed that membership cards were more trouble than they were worth and that AHS would not issue them.

**Fundraiser:** Friedman suggested that the Board consider holding a fundraiser in the future.

**Website:** Coster reported through Ackerman that the new website is working well and attracting a lot of attention. Over the last month, the website had 250 unique visitors to it, 70% of which were new visitors. Most of the visitors were Alexandrians. She also reported that our first lecture video now is live online. Any content for the website should be mailed to her to post.

***The Chronicle:*** Greenberg reported that an article about George Washington by Richard Kligenmaier will be in the next issue of *The Chronicle*, which should be published before Thanksgiving. A discussion was held concerning whether *The Chronicle* should be emailed. It was generally agreed that it should continue to be sent through regular mail.

**April History Awards:** Ackerman reported that she would be in charge of the student part of the History Awards Ceremony and that the general chair of the ceremony was still undetermined.

**HARC:** Day reported that HARC is to meet with the new leader of the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association. HARC hopes to introduce her to the interesting and important history of Alexandria.

**Archaeology:** Cannady reported that the Art and History Waterfront Plan Implementation Committee will be making a presentation of the committee's recent report at the Lyceum on November 14. Pulliam, who is a member of the committee, will be making the presentation. She also reported that Freedmen's Cemetery may not be ready to open in March 2014 because the delivery of stone for the cemetery had been delayed.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Support for Virginia Association of Museum Conference:** A discussion was held concerning whether to increase from \$500 to \$1,000 the AHS donation from the Endowment Fund to support the Virginia Association of Museums' conference to be held in Alexandria. Day moved to do so, Greenberg seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. It was noted that this change would need to be reflected in the budget.

**War of 1812 Boat Trip:** Ackerman reported that Dickinson suggested that AHS not pursue organizing a boat trip to commemorate the War of 1812.

**Funeral Home Records:** Friedman reported that repeated attempts to persuade the owners of the Everly-Wheatly Funeral Home to turn over their records to the city had been unsuccessful. The owner's attorney continued to express concerns about privacy violations despite offers of means of preventing such violations. Adamo mentioned that the Congressional Cemetery in the District had placed its records online. Friedman volunteered that if Adamo would provide the name of someone in the administration of the Congressional Cemetery, he would contact them to see if he could learn how they had gone about that publication. Randle said that there were cemetery records in the Virginia Library in Richmond and that she would get Friedman a name of someone there to contact.

**AHS Endorsements:** The issue of whether to endorse different groups or activities was tabled for discussion at a future meeting.

**AHS Representation at Events:** Randle said she was going to the Civil War lecture at the Virginia Theological Seminary and would ensure that AHS brochures were available there. The issue of whether AHS would be represented at other events was tabled for discussion at a future meeting.

**Additional Lecture by Author Alan Taylor:** It was suggested that Alan Taylor, author of a new book *The Internal Enemy: Slavery and War in Virginia, 1772-1832*, be invited to give a lecture at the Lyceum on May 6 or May 8. Taylor is a Pulitzer Prize winner and history professor at the University of Virginia. Friedman made a motion to invite him. The motion was seconded by Day. The motion passed with Washington abstaining.

**AHS Involvement in Parades:** The issue was raised about whether AHS should participate in future Alexandria parades, such as the Scottish Walk and the George Washington Day Parade. There seemed to be no agreement on formal participation.

**Promoting Local Museum Lectures on AHS Website:** Whether to promote on the AHS website lectures at other local museums was tabled for discussion at a future meeting when Coster would be present.

**Design Change for AHS Brochure:** This issue was tabled for a future meeting.

## NEW BUSINESS

**Increase in Membership Dues:** Day raised the possibility of increasing membership dues. Because of lateness of the hour, the issue was tabled until a future meeting.

**Fort Ward Descendants Society Concern:** Washington reported that the city had been preparing to introduce a new history of the African Americans who lived at Fort Ward after the Civil War but that because of the concerns of the Society of the Descendants of Fort Ward over the lack of consultation with descendants, the introduction had been postponed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Pulliam  
Secretary