

NEXT MEETING – Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Board Meeting – Alexandria Historical Society

February 11, 2014

President Bill Dickinson called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. Other members present were Debbie Ackerman, Lisa Adamo, Ted Pulliam, Katy Cannady, Dave Cavanaugh, Jackie Cohan, Audrey Davis, Tal Day, Linda Greenberg, and Julie Randle.

PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

No changes were suggested to the draft agenda (attached). Dickinson distributed to each of the Board members present a copy of the Board Director's Notebook that he had prepared, which contained such AHS items as a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws and the 2013-2014 budget.

CONSENT AGENDA

General: Dickinson noted that the Consent Agenda consisted of regular meeting reports, such as the Treasurer's Report and the Secretary's minutes, that had been submitted to Board members earlier for review. He suggested that in order to save time in this and subsequent meetings, these reports would not be addressed individually unless a Board member wanted to do so. Instead, they would be voted on together. This procedure met with general agreement.

Reports: A motion was made by Greenberg, seconded by Ackerman that the minutes of the Board meeting of November 12, 2013, circulated by Pulliam; the Treasurer's Report for January 2014 circulated by Adamo; the Webmaster's Report for February 2014 circulated by Coster; and the President's Report for November 2013-February 2014 circulated by Dickinson (all attached) be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chronicle: Greenberg reported that the next *Chronicle* will feature two articles: Jack Sullivan's article on John Zimmerman, a young Confederate soldier from Alexandria who wrote a diary of his participation in the Civil War as part of the 17th Virginia Infantry Regiment and Sherry Browne's article about the Minnigerode Memorial Arch at the entrance to the cemetery at the Virginia Theological Seminary. In the April *Chronicle*, Luke Pecoraro, Assistant Director for Archaeological Research at George Washington's Mt. Vernon, will provide a new look at Mt. Vernon's commercial importance by describing its role as a commercial center for nearby plantations and towns.

Working Group: Dickinson had included copies of position descriptions developed by the working group in the Director's Notebooks, and Davis circulated at the meeting a copy of the position description for the T. Michael Miller History Award (all attached). Dickinson characterized them as more like recommended procedures than requirements, like bylaws. He also noted that some positions were described in the bylaws.

Ackerman commented that the position descriptions would be helpful not only for new people to the positions but also have been helpful to people who now occupy those positions. Ackerman also said that the working group was developing a position description for a Board member. Cannady said she would develop a position description for the Archaeology representative. Adamo was working on a position description for the membership chair.

Pulliam suggested that position descriptions should not include the specific name of the person to be contacted but should include instead only the position to be contacted, such as "contact the Facilities Coordinator at the Lyceum" rather than "contact Bob Schrum the Facilities Coordinator at the Lyceum." That suggestion met with general agreement.

Speakers: Ackerman reported that the Lyceum had booked someone to speak on the night in May we usually have our lecture. It was agreed that she should explore with the speaker and the Lyceum holding the lecture instead on: 1) Tuesday May 20, 2) Tuesday May 13th (and moving the regular Board meeting date), or 3) Thursday May 15.

Dickinson mentioned that it was anticipated that several Alexandria organizations would publicize the May 6 lecture by Alan Taylor. He and Cohan were to develop a biographical notice for Taylor that it was hoped would be used by all the organizations.

Ackerman reported that she had contacted several people about the possibility of speaking at an AHS lecture in the fall without making any commitments. She asked the Board to think about which ones might be good. Dickinson suggested looking at Facebook and elsewhere online for information about them including reviews of books they may have written. Adamo also suggested the author of a book about Alexandria and Mark Twain. The potential speakers Ackerman mentioned were:

Catherine Miliaras	on the Parker-Gray Historical District
Collin Hite	author of <i>From Marshall to Loussaoui: Federal Justice in the Eastern District of Virginia</i>
Garrett Pike	author of <i>Capital Beer: A Heady History of Brewing in Washington</i>
Rick Schwartz	author of <i>Hurricanes and the Middle Atlantic States</i>
William Connery	either of his two books on the Civil War: <i>Mosby's Raids in Civil War Northern Virginia</i> or <i>Civil War in Northern Virginia 1861</i>

History Awards:

Speaker: Davis mentioned that she and Randle were working on obtaining the director of the new George Washington Library at Mount Vernon, Douglas Bradburn, as the main history awards speaker. Someone at Mount Vernon Davis contacted indicated he was a good speaker. Scott Stroh of Gunston Hall would be a possible backup if Bradburn were unavailable.

Miller Award Nominations: Randle has sent a letter to several organizations announcing that AHS was seeking nominations for the award. So far, one nomination had been received. OHA also will place an item in its *This Week in Alexandria* seeking nominations. A discussion was held about also taking out an ad in the Alexandria Gazette seeking nominations. A motion by Ackerman and seconded by Greenberg that Cavanaugh place an ad in the Alexandria and Mount Vernon Gazettes with a maximum cost of \$200 for both. The motion carried unanimously. Dickinson suggested that the ad include the Society logo and website address. Greenberg suggested that there might be a way to track the response to the ad.

Student Awards: Ackerman reported that the teacher liaisons at the four schools had been contacted and had nomination forms. The deadline for submitting the nominations was March 1. The student award speaker would be the first awardee in 1984, Father Ferguson, who then was a student at Bishop Ireton.

Refreshments: Greenberg agreed to contact Whole Foods about donating refreshments, although the last time they were contacted, a couple of years ago, they declined. Other suggestions were Trader Joe's, which apparently does an organization only one time; the new Fresh Market at Bradlee Center; and Alexandria Pastry at Bradlee.

HARC: Day reported that the last HARC meeting was cancelled because of snow. The upcoming meeting would consider the Fort Ward Management Plan.

Investments Portfolio: Greenberg reported that our investments had increased 17% in seven-month, but she also warned that this trend could be reversed.

OLD BUSINESS

AHS Participation in Parades: Dickinson mentioned the possibility of Board members marching in the George Washington's Day Parade and the St. Patrick's Day Parade, but members were not interested.

Budget for FY 2013-2014: Adamo reported that thus far the Board has spent \$2,500 out of a budget for the year of \$6,400. She also reported that former member Friedman's letter at the end of 2013 seeking donations had been successful. AHS had received several large donations at the end of the year. She said she would furnish Pulliam with copies of the letter and related membership letters for the record.

Video of Future AHS Speakers: A discussion was held about whether to make a video recording the March lecture by Stuart Butler. Dickinson said he would try to get a recording paid for, possibly by money from the War of 1812 Commemoration Fund. It was generally

agreed that if payment for the video from a source other than AHS could be arranged, the recording should be made. Dickinson also said he would try to have the honorarium for Butler paid by from the 1812 fund.

Promotion of Events Held by Other Historical Groups on the AHS Website: It was generally agreed that the Board should work in the direction of including at least some of the events of other historical groups, mainly those events which an organization contacted AHS about placing on our website, but that this issue should be discussed further at a meeting when Coster was present. Adamo agreed to check with Wild Apricot to see whether it had the ability, as Davis suggested, to place material written by another organization on our website simply with the approval of our webmaster.

Increase in Basic Membership Fee: Dickinson had included in his President's Report a list of dues charged by other area historical associations (attached). Greenberg noted that we were not much out of line with other associations. Day said he thought Friedman at an earlier meeting was correct in saying that these fees should not be the main source of AHS revenue and that the fees should not be raised. The Board generally agreed to keep the fees as they are.

AHS Brochure: Adamo reported that she and Greenberg were working on a draft of a revised brochure. She suggested that once a draft was developed, it would be presented to the board for consideration and then sent to Jackie Leister, the person who prepared our present brochure, for final preparation.

Digitization of War of 1812 Pension Records: It had been suggested at an earlier meeting that AHS might contribute to a project that is placing all U.S. War of 1812 pension records on line through Fold 3 and Ancestry.com. It had been suggested at an earlier meeting that AHS might donate the percentage of the total cost of the project that equaled the percentage of U.S. veterans who were Alexandrians. Adamo reported that the census records for Alexandria in 1814 did not exist and that it was difficult to calculate an accurate number from the 1810 and 1820 censuses. Dickinson mentioned that there were some 143 War of 1812 veterans buried in Alexandria cemeteries not counting Ivy Hill. Adamo said she would investigate the issue further and report back at a future meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Vacancy: Dickinson reported that, as indicated by an earlier email (attached) , Friedman had resigned from the Board. Dickinson praised his service to the Board, particularly his taking on the task of obtaining speakers after the loss of Vice President Gross and his assuming important membership responsibilities. Dickinson also mentioned that the bylaws do not provide for replacing Board members who resign.

Friedman's term was scheduled to end in June of this year. Greenberg suggested that the position be filled for the unexpired term to give the Board a chance to observe the new member to determine whether he or she should be nominated for a full term. Pulliam made such a motion, and Day seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. Day agreed to propose a change in the bylaws.

From two people who had expressed interest in serving on the Board, the Board selected Mark Whatford to replace Friedman. Dickinson was to notify Whatford of his selection.

Nominating Committee: Greenberg, Davis, and Cohan volunteered to serve on a nominating committee for Officers and Board members for 2014-2015. Current officers, who all serve one year terms, and board members whose terms are expiring should indicate to the nominating committee whether they intend to continue to serve. It was suggested that, if replacements are necessary, requests for nominations be included in future newsletters and announced at future lectures. It also was suggested that the nominating committee consider the second person who already had expressed interest in serving on the Board but had not been chosen.

Endorsement of H.R. 4003, a Bill to Preserve the Civil War Defenses of Washington:

Dickinson reported that the Alliance to Preserve the Civil War Defenses of Washington had asked AHS to endorse H.R. 4003, a bill to preserve those defenses. Cavanaugh said the bill would re-designate the fortifications and other lands associated with the Civil War defenses of Washington now administered by the National Park Service as the Civil War Defenses of Washington National Historical Park. This new entity would be administered by the NPS. Other Civil War Washington defense facilities owned by a unit of local government, such as Alexandria's Fort Ward, could become affiliated with this new entity under cooperative agreements entered into by the unit of local government and the Secretary of the Interior.

Cavanaugh was doubtful that the bill would pass the House and not sure it even would be the subject of a committee hearing. Both Cavanaugh and Adamo doubted that the new entity, even if the bill were enacted, would receive much or any funding in the current tight budget environment. Cavanaugh suggested keeping watch on the bill's progress before taking any action. That procedure was generally agreeable.

AHS Participation in the War of 1812 Signature Event: Dickinson reported that the signature event commemorating Alexandria's role in the War of 1812 would be held on August 31, 2014. He circulated a map of proposed tables and other structures to be positioned on Waterfront Park as part of the signature event (attached) and suggested that AHS have a table there. Greenberg moved that AHS do so, Randle seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Reservations for AHS Lectures: Dickinson raised the issue of requiring that people make reservations for upcoming lectures. After a short discussion, it was the general opinion that attendance at our recent lectures had been light, and that the Board would review the attendance at the Stuart Butler lecture before again considering whether to require reservations for future lectures.

Donation to Alexandria Black History Museum: A discussion was held about whether to make a donation to Black History Museum for allowing the Board to meet at its facility. Ackerman moved that AHS donate \$250 for this fiscal year to the Black History Museum and that the Board considering making a donation next year also. Greenberg seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously

Letter of Support for Davis as Director of the Black History Museum: Greenberg reported that Davis, past president of AHS, was applying to be the Director of the Black History Museum, a job that she been holding with great success following the resignation of the previous director. She suggested that AHS write a letter recommending her for that position. There was general agreement that such a letter should be written, and Greenberg agreed to draft it.

Brown's Mill: Cohan said that the large remaining building of Brown's Mill, built between 1776 and 1812 and located on what now is Wheeler Avenue, had recently been vacated. The original building had been modified with additions and changes to windows and the roof, but that it retained its fundamental structure. She provided photos that are attached.

She was concerned that the building, now vacated, might be purchased and torn down to make way for a new development. There was some discussion concerning whether it might be at least somewhat protected by a city ordinance. Day said he would raise the issue at a HARC meeting. Members suggested keeping an eye on the property.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Pulliam
Secretary