

June 09, 2016

Final Minutes

Attendees

Board of Directors: Lori Mix, Amherst Trustee of the Trust Funds, Nate Jensen, Amherst Board of Selectman (BOS), Peter Hansen, Representative to the General Court from the Town of Amherst.

Also in attendance: William Ludt, Amherst Heritage Commission

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Lori Mix
2. Approved meeting minutes of May 5, 2016. Nate moved, seconded by Peter. Motion passed unanimously, 3-0.
3. Floor was opened to members of the public to provide comments and input on remaining proposals for review. William Ludt of the Amherst Heritage Commission was the only member of the public in attendance available to discuss his organization's proposal - the preservation of historical documents in the Amherst town vault. Lori requested additional information about the long term management of documents once the project is complete. William Ludt discussed policies and accessibility rules that would be put into place to ensure documents remained properly archived, cataloged and stored. Nate Jensen asked about the qualifications of the archivist chosen to lead the project. William Ludt provided the process for vetting of the archivist. Three archivists submitted proposals. Ruslyn Vear, Amherst Library, and Jackie Marshall, Genealogist and Amherst citizen, provided input to the process of choosing a qualified archivist. The work will be led by the archivist with support of the Heritage Commission and other volunteers. Peter Hansen expressed concern over "bleeding" of ink in documents and what would be done to prevent that from happening. Will Ludt described some of the archivist's procedures such as wearing gloves, and the storage materials used to prevent or limit further damage of the documents. A long term goal, but outside the scope of this project, is the digitization of documents within the archives. Will Ludt also provided additional information about the value such a project would have beyond what was described in the proposal including supporting town clerks, Nancy and Lorraine, who routinely access the vault for information. Nate Jensen also added that Gail Stout frequents the vault looking for deed and other historical documents.

No other members of the public were in attendance. At 7:45pm Lori motioned, seconded by Nate that the public comment period be ended. Motion passed unanimously, 3-0.

4. Review remaining three proposals submitted for consideration of award.
 - a. Town of Amherst Cemetery Trustees Granite Wall Restoration and Rebuild. The proposal seeks funding to repair a collapsing wall about 30 feet to the right of the Town Hall door.
 - Grant request: \$21,550.00
 - Estimated completion date: No date provided

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Discussion: Lori stated, per the previous Bertha Rodgers Trust meeting, that the Cemetery Trustees currently maintain an Unrestricted Fund with an income of \$43,402.11 and a Perpetual Care Fund with an income of \$171,672.52 as of April 30, 2016. These funds are meant for ongoing maintenance of current cemeteries. With internments below the wall, the Cemetery Trustees have access to income from both funds to repair the wall. Maintaining income in these funds solely for potential, yet undefined, emergencies or the building of a new cemetery at some unknown point in the future is counter to the intent of the Perpetual Care Fund. The Unrestricted Fund can be used for broader purposes associated with Amherst cemeteries.

- Major impact on organization: The Cemetery Trustees currently have significant trust fund income available to cover the cost of repairing the wall without impacting the ability to cover other unanticipated repairs. Major impact on the organization is deemed low.
- Betterment of Amherst: The project is a visible part of the village of Amherst, and to those that visit Town Hall and its cemetery.

Nate moved, seconded by Peter that this proposal be removed from consideration. Motion passed unanimously, 3-0.

b. The Amherst Land Trust (ALT) Joshua's Park Project. The proposal, amended in an email dated May 02, 2016, requests that the Bertha Rodgers Trust fund the following items: Playground surface preparation and foundation-installation costs \$10,000; Split-rail fence behind playground \$4,600; Handicapped swings for the playground \$1,000; Handicapped walkway extension into the woodland \$25,000.

- Grant request: \$40,600.00
- Estimated completion date: End of 2016

Discussion: No additional information was provided by the ALT to demonstrate that funding from the Bertha Rodgers Trust would have a significant impact on the completion of the park.

On May 23, 2016, the Board of Selectman voted to approve the transfer of ownership of the park from the ALT to the Town of Amherst. At the time of this meeting the playground was already open to residences of Amherst, and development of the community garden and other features was underway.

- Major impact on organization: The request for \$40,600 represents 9% of the total estimated project costs to-date. Impact is deemed low.
- Betterment of Amherst: The Joshua Park project has received overwhelming support from the community, ownership was transferred to the Town, and the playground is open to the public.

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Nate moved, seconded by Lori, that this proposal be removed from consideration. Motion passed unanimously, 3-0.

- f. The Amherst Heritage Commission Amherst Town Hall Vault Historical Documents Preservation and Conservation Project. The purpose is to identify, catalogue, properly store and preserve the holdings that are in the Town Hall vault.
- Grant request: \$8,915.00
 - Estimated completion date: January 2017

Discussion: See discussion under public comments on page 1.

- Major impact on organization: The Amherst Heritage receives \$200-\$300 per year by the town for operating expenses, but otherwise relies on grant funding for all projects. Funding this project would cover 100% of the grant request. Major impact on the organization and project is deemed high.
- Betterment of Amherst: Makes Amherst historical and heritage documents and artifacts accessible for research by all Amherst residents, and improves the longevity of such records.

Lori moved that this proposal be approved with the additional requirement that the AHC memorialize Bertha Rogers by naming the Town Hall vault the “Bertha Rogers Archives” and including the name on a plaque to be installed at or near the vault. The motion was seconded by Nate. Motion passed unanimously, 3-0.

5. Peter suggested that with a significant portion of the Bertha Rodgers Trust income remaining, consideration be given to awarding the Amherst Fire and Rescue additional funds to support another request in their proposal. This is in keeping with the trust guidelines that awards may be granted to up to two organizations. Nate calculated funds remaining. As of May 31, 2016 income of \$78,981.38 was available for award. \$30,000 was recommended for award to the AFR at the May 5, 2016 meeting. \$8,915.00 was recommended for award to the AHC at tonight’s meeting. Total recommended award is \$38,915.00. \$40,066.38 remains in income. Peter motioned that an additional \$33,000 be granted to the AFR to purchase 20 AEDs. \$7,000.00 would remain in income. Lori seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, 3-0
6. Nate will notify the BOS of the Board of Directors award recommendations requiring approval by the BOS at their next meeting.
6. Nate Jensen moved, seconded by Peter to adjourn meeting at 8:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Lori Mix, Amherst Trustee of the Trust Fund