

Thompson's Mills Preservation Society Board Minutes September 17, 2019

Members Present: Jim Ballard, President; Ron VanOrden, Treasurer; Larry Thompson, Board Member at Large; Patty Linn, Board Member at Large; and Tom Parsons, TMPS member. Guests Nancye Ballard and Kim Jackson, Albany Visitors Association. Absent were Carl Browning and Don Lyon.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by President Jim Ballard. Ron VanOrden moved, Patty Linn seconded that the board accept the minutes of the August 6 meeting. Motion passed.

Treasurer's report: Ron VanOrden reported that the most significant item in his report was that TMPS had paid for the silo painting. Because donations were so generous, TMPS did not have to use any of the funds that we'd allocated for this project. Lori Rodrigues, artist, charged \$5,328.82, less than we'd expected. No major changes in the budget were reported except that TMPS has spent more on items in the store than we'd originally budgeted. Patty Linn moved, Jim Ballard seconded that the report be accepted. Motion passed.

Review of apple pressings. Adequate numbers of volunteers showed up for the August 31 event. Patty observed that those who were there, were "all in." Several people have agreed to work at the September 21 pressing. Jim stated that he plans to send notes to all volunteers to thank them for their participation.

At the August 31 event, someone from the Oakville Presbyterian Church asked to borrow the TMPS press for a pressing the church plans to hold this fall. It would not be advertised to the public; instead, the pressing is part of a fellowship activity for the congregation. They own a press, but have found that, with only one, members who attend must wait for the opportunity to press, which is held at the Coon farm on Peoria Rd. Date has yet to be determined. Tom suggested that we might lend the older press, which is officially owned by OPRD. Ron will talk to our insurance agent about requirements involved in lending equipment to other groups. He suggested that, if/when we allow other groups, such as the church, to use our press, we require that they display our TMPS banner. A deposit and insurance were discussed as being requirements for equipment to be loaned.

6:10 p.m. Brian McBeth, Project Manager in the OPRD Engineering Department, and his wife, Christy, joined the meeting. 6:16 p.m. Larry Thompson showed up.

Silo project: Because the Linn County Cultural Coalition contributed to the project, TMPS is required to send a report to that organization. Jim will check with Don Lyons to see if this has been done. Jim called the newly refreshed silos "a project we can be proud of." A card expressing our appreciation to Lori Rodrigues was circulated for members to sign.

Discussion about groups that have visited the Mill recently. Jim also asked Kim about the Mill's coverage via articles at the Albany Visitor Center bureau that would be available to visitors. Jim thought a notebook of county attractions, including Thompsons Mill, would be helpful. Kim responded that a video loop, containing photos of the Mill, runs all the time at the Bureau.

Question: Do we want to accept credit cards at the "shop" at the Mill? Tom reported that Sarah Steele, District Manager, hopes that merchandise can be sold via OPRD. TMPS would purchase inventory items from usual suppliers and essentially sell them to OPRD for the price we'd get from the public. The state would provide credit card machines and cover their cost. Ron commented that, "If she's already on it, let's see a plan."

Jim reported that Vincent Warren, a photographer who has taken pictures of the Mill and converted them to cards suitable for sale, is willing to donate his work to be sold in the TMPS shop. Vincent, who proposed this arrangement at the Aug 31 apple pressing, will bring samples of his work to Tom.

Gift Shop items: Gateway staff are researching tumblers which might be suitable for sale in the shop. Ron commented that TMPS doesn't always receive \$15 donations for the tee shirts and that these items should be considered "walking billboards" instead of money makers.

Future projects: the Thompson House at the Mill. Brian carefully explained the possible structural requirements needed to stabilize the structure so that it might be used for a variety of purposes involving the public. The building is not in danger of immediate collapse, but its limitations do need to be assessed. The external shell, the foundation, the windows, and the roof will need to be addressed in the next six-ten years. A professional assessment must be done in order to know which projects need to be attacked in what order. He believes a group such as TMPS can contribute considerable influence when OPRD decides how to allocate its funds.

A motion was made by Larry that a grant be sought to determine the structural stabilization of the Millkeeper's house, specifically what immediate repairs to the foundation are needed, in addition to any other projects that would be completed to make future uses of the house feasible. Patty seconded. Motion passed.

Tom's report: "Basic stuff around the Mill," trying to keep up with things, Tom stated. The summer was busy, particularly since he was short hosts in August. Now the Mill is fully staffed with hosts. He noted that a curator started today, cataloguing objects.

Kim stated that "we'll be there for you." He also commented that Alex Paul, who wrote the Gazette Times/Democrat Herald article about the Mill that was published Sept 6, is due to retire in about a year. Because Alex has demonstrated interest in the Mill, it would be a good idea to ask him to report on the Mill again before he retires.

New business: Jim reported on a phone call from Kay Shaha. After reading the article in the D-H, Kay thought that an embroidered flour sack dating from WWI that had been in her family might find a home at the Mill. Jim went by Kay's home last week to inspect the sack. Photos of it were distributed for board members to see. Tom has agreed to accept it as a gift, and after we take possession, it will need to be framed.

Next meeting: October 22, 2019, at 6 p.m.

Larry moved/Ron seconded that the meeting be adjourned at 7: 37 p.m. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancye Ballard
Substitute scribe