

Dighton Historical Commission
1111 Somerset Ave
Hybrid Meeting- Old Town Hall and Zoom
Minutes of September 12, 2023

Present: Pat Gailes, Rafa Delfin, Zach Caron, Peter Caron (BOS Liaison)
Public: Shara Costa (town clerk), Jim Aguiar (building commissioner)

Meeting Agenda

1. Call Meeting to Order at 6:08 PM – No quorum since there were only three members present
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Secretary's Report
 - Minutes of August 8, 2023 – No action taken and has been tabled for October's agenda
4. Preservation Planning
 - Smith Memorial Hall – Jim Aguiar, Building Inspector, discussed the two porches that flank the front of the building that's facing the road. There were six columns that were removed during the renovation, but in removing them Aguiar discovered that there was considerable amount of rotting in two columns. Aguiar proposed to reduce the number of columns to four. Aguiar plans to restore these four columns by sandblasting them and set aside the two rotting ones until we find a use for them. The ramp will be attached to the right porch and will now go towards the corner of the building where the existing ramp goes but it will circle back and come back to the front so it won't be as long as the existing ramp. Aguiar said that the completion of the library is set for early 2025.
 - Historical Marker Program
 - Marker for Old Town Hall – Gailes asked Aguiar who would sign Historical Marker Application for Old Town Hall. Aguiar said either he or town administrator Mike Mullen. Delfin checked for clarification regarding the details of the marker. Name should say "Dighton Town House" and year is "1869." Also, checked the publicity option. Peter Caron and Aguiar signed the application form.
 - No action taken on approval of the marker application; tabled for the October agenda
 - Discuss/Review – Response from MHC on Lower Four Corners Area
Gailes sent a letter via email to MHC on Thursday, Sept 7 about the rejection letter sent to DHC regarding the application for national register district. No response as of yet.
 - Discuss/Review - Walking Tour of Dighton's National Register Districts
We had decided on September 30 for a date. Gailes said that she now has a conflict and we need time for publicity. We are pushing this to the October agenda for discussion

- Discuss/Review - Community-wide Survey Update – Phase 2 – Stacy Spies has sent the Mt. Hope area form for review (total 47 pages). The mapping coordinates have been sent to CAI technologies and have been entered. Stacy is double-checking with CAI as to completion or if they need more information. Next is for Stacy to provide us with the forms and maps per contract. No invoice from Stacy as of yet.

5. Budget

- FY 24 Balance and Expenses – no expenditures for August. Current budget: \$1,400 and \$500 from encumbered funds

Delfin signed for payment to Mallard for \$188 (for wristbands) voted at August meeting

Delfin signed for payment to CAI technologies for \$240 from encumbered funds

6. Unfinished Business

- Review/Discuss Historical Commission 50th – Time Capsule. Delfin said that during the September 9 Firecracker Festival, there were some items donated to be considered for the time capsule. He is disappointed that very few items were donated and hopes that more will be donated when submission date will be extended until December. One significant contribution came from the Dighton Girl Scout Troop 76116 for donating a booklet of all their activities so far for 2023. Zach Caron suggested that students submit class pictures. Gailes suggested that we submit a commission group photo. We have to find a temporary place to store the time capsule until the new library is completed. The commission recommended the Town Hall vault would be the ideal storage place. Pat Olsen did reach out to former DHC member Collette McKeon regarding the time capsule from 1934 and opened in 1992, but she has not received a response.
- Discuss/Review - Preserving Memories of Dighton - Gailes proposed that DHC have its own e-mail address. She asked if we can get a Gmail or does it have to be through the town? She also asked if we could have a digital storage platform to save oral histories and related information. Zach asked if the town has any kind of digital server; he thinks an external hard drive could be damaged or lost. A digital server like iCloud would be best to store our data. Zach will work on the release forms. Gailes suggested that we look into the Boston Public Library Links to help us with this project.
- Discuss/Review – Firecracker Festival – The weather was hot, which prevented more people to attend. We still have some wrist bands and 87 pens and 214 boxes of crayons left that we can give away next year. Our table attracted curious attendees interested in local history. Gailes, Delfin and Olsen manned the table. Delfin suggested that the word “firecracker” should be dropped from the name because firecrackers have never been used since the festival began in 2021. He also suggested to bring the festival back to July. Zach suggested the name “Dighton Founders Day” or “Dighton Founders Festival” to commemorate the town’s foundation date on May 20, 1712.
- Review/Discuss - America’s 250th Anniversary – Gailes will meet with Town Administrator Mike Mullen to discuss on September 20, Wednesday at 9 AM.

7. Presentation – Dighton’s Historical Google Map – Zach showed us how to navigate the Google My Maps (an extension of Google Map) so we can see each historical site from every town. He

created a more user-friendly version of the map with various categories like building schools, businesses, and houses and gave each site a different color. The user can zoom in to see the details for each site and can download all the sites as an Excel document. The Excel document can also be uploaded and it will automatically place the sites. Zach took the street names from the MACRIS map, transferred them to an Excel document and then uploaded the document to the system. There is no limit to the number of maps.

8. Public Input – Town Clerk Shara Costa said she is very interested in history and genealogy. She said her grandfather has many books on genealogy.

9. Other

- Open Commission position – 1 – Shara Costa is interested in becoming a member. She will see Leanne Kerwin to apply for the position.
- Next Meeting Date – October 10, 2023 6 PM

10. Correspondence

11. Adjournment at 7:07 PM