

DRAFT

**Alexandria Historical Society Board Meeting
Black History Museum
6:30 – 8:15pm, November 10, 2015**

Present: Debbie Ackerman, Jamie Bosket, Katy Cannady, Jackie Cohan, Audrey Davis, Tal Day, Dennis Hensley, Patrick Ladden (note taker), Jim MacKay, Julie Randle, Mark Whatford, Helen Wirka

Not Present: Sarah Coster, Catherine Weinraub,

1. **October Minutes:** changes/edits need to be made; please send your additions, edits to Catherine so that the minutes can be updated and circulated; additions are coming or have been sent by Tal, Dennis, and Jim.
2. **Program Schedule and Other Topics**
 - Current schedule (see AHS website for speakers and details)
 - Jan 30, 2016, 10am, **Explore the Real Mansion House**
 - Mar 23, 2016, 7:30pm, **Woodward & Lothrop: A Story Worthy of the Nation's Capital**
 - Apr 27, 2016, 7:30pm, **32nd Annual History Awards**
 - May 25, 2016, 7:30pm, **Alexandria's 1939 Library Sit-in: Its Impact, Aftermath, & Legacy**
 - Jun 26, 2016, 7:30pm, **The Real Mercy Street: The True Story Behind PBS' Popular New Series**

Discussion:

- a. September 2016 program: consider Jay Roberts for September program; perhaps a walking tour or a "salon" something less formal than lecture; maybe as an additional event; might be held at a place such as the Black History Museum, Watson Reading Room, other possible venues mentioned as well; if walking, deal with challenges so that speaker can be heard; OHA already has the "Attics and Alleys" program and we don't want to duplicate; consider collaborations with Alexandria Library Friends of Special Collections
ACTION: Audrey will follow-up with Jay Roberts to see what format might be best for Jay Roberts
- b. Alexandria 101: Dennis asked whether anyone offers an "Alexandria 101", i.e., a concise history/overview of Alexandria. If not, perhaps AHS might consider developing or inviting speakers to a more intimate setting such as the Black History Museum for a series of talks.
- c. Acknowledgement and thanks to Dennis and his wife: On behalf of the board, Debbie thanked Dennis for his hospitality and generosity in hosting the Oct 28 reception at his home. All attending enjoyed themselves immensely. Debbie also thanked Dennis for acquiring and supplying AHS board members with name tags. Board members are reminded to keep tabs on their name tags and to

bring them with them to AHS public events. They can be stored in our storage area at the Lyceum if you want.

- d. Jamie offered the idea of having some type of special event (tbd) at Mt.Vernon to increase visibility and interest in AHS.

3. Treasurer's Report: (see "ALEXANDRIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY Account Balances and Values as of October 31, 2015" prepared and presented by Tal Day)

- ☐ Tal emailed the report to all board members before the meeting and also provided hard-copies at the meeting.
- ☐ Discussion:
- ☐ Briefly, the report cited above is a standard columnar financial report showing balances for all of AHS's accounts – operating, savings, investment, and endowment – for four reporting periods in 2015, namely 6/30, 8/31, 9/30, 10/31/15.
- ☐ - Tal indicated that the portfolio is reviving
- ☐ - checking account is ok; can't transfer \$\$\$ right now from PayPal to checking which will be corrected
- ☐ - need to link the members' names who signed up at the last lecture and paid through Square D (Sarah put the names on the back of the RSVP list that Mark should have)
- ☐ - AHS should consider increasing the general fund to attract high caliber speakers by being able to offer travel support and honoraria
- ☐ - There was a broad discussion about an end-of- year donation appeal to membership; last year this appeal was deemed largely unsuccessful and that to be successful we need to make the appeal more concrete and specific as to how we would use the raised \$\$\$
- ☐ - Should AHS consider developing a grant type program to benefit local museums or historic houses?
- ☐ ACTIONS
- ☐ a. Board agreed not to send out an end-of-year appeal for donations
- ☐ b. Tal will submit application for AHS tax exemption (Tal reminded that the solicitation box needs to come off of AHS materials; Tal has submitted the application)
- ☐ c. A separate discussion will follow about the ideas of generating a grant program
- ☐

4. Membership report: (see "Alexandria Historical Society Membership Data" prepared and presented by Mark Whatford and Dennis Hensley)

Dennis and Mark emailed the report to all board members before the meeting and also provided hard-copies at the meeting.

Discussion:

Membership is up compared to last year at the same time. There was a discussion about whether to send out another postcard for spring 2016 programs and events. Members agreed this was a good idea depending on costs.

ACTION: Mark will gather costs to send out another mailing likely by February and poll AHS board members to confirm that we want to do this

5. Chronicle: Helen Werka reported

Helen introduced ideas about the next Chronicle including what the board wants the Chronicle to be; should the articles be more popular, less academic; should the authors be drawn from a wider pool of possible authors; should the tone change; should there be a subgroup, editorial board, program committee that helps to usher ideas and content into the Chronicle? ACTION:

- a. Target February for the next issue. Problem is there is no content in the pipeline right now.

6. **Newsletter: Jackie Cohan** reported that the last newsletter was late. Jackie plans on sending out the next newsletter on Mercy St by the end of 2015.
7. **Publicity: Jim Mackay** said he will work on getting AHS signage for the lectern. He also agreed to get tabletop signage for membership for lecture nights and other events.
8. **Correspondence: Patrick Ladden** passed around a report on correspondence and email.
9. **History Awards: Julie Randle and Debbie Ackerman** reported on the spring history awards program planning. All school liaisons are on board; info will go out in December. Discussions included:
 - should there be a cash award for the students?
 - should we make the award winners AHS members as a benefit?
 - add a student writing piece to the Chronicle and let the liaisons know that eligible juniors and seniors will have the opportunity to submit a written paper
 - we may want to let adults know that they can submit a written product for publication in the Chronicle as a part of the adult award

ACTION:

- a. Board voted to include \$400 for student awards
 - b. Board agreed to include the possibility of publication in the Chronicle
 - c. Board agreed to provide gratis membership to award recipients
10. **Alexandria Archaeological Commission, Katy Cannady** reported on the archaeological work ongoing at 220 S. Union St as part of the pre-construction work along the Potomac River waterfront. The original 18th century timbered foundation has been uncovered and will go to the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Lab for preservation and will likely return to Alexandria in two to three years.

Katy also expressed frustration that the promised barging of other excavated waste materials is not occurring. Rather because of hazmat concerns, more of this material is being trucked away than originally planned.

11. **Historic Alexandria Resources Commission (HARC)**, Dennis Hensley reported on the October meeting and the establishment of an ad hoc committee to review street names

and sites that bear the names of confederate military in light of voiced recent concerns about slavery. Dennis also mentioned that there are ongoing discussions concerning 517 Prince St and the possible take-over of the property by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.

12. Other and Open

- a. Debbie asked for volunteers for hospitality at the March meeting
- b. There was a discussion about the possibility of serving beer/wine at lectures to make them more social and perhaps more inviting. Apparently you need to seek an ABC license. Jamie volunteered to investigate and bring information back to the group.
- c. The premiere of Mercy St was held the week before this board meeting on two separate nights – at Hoffman screening and at Newseum. Carlyle House and the Apothecary will mount Civil War exhibits. The Mercy St production crew is in pre-production for Season 2.

Meeting adjourned about 8:15pm.

Next meeting – February 9, 2016, 6:30pm, Black History Museum