



Cass County Historical Commission

Officers: Amy Davidhizar, Chair, Vice Chairperson - Allen Butchbaker – Jane Bergman, Secretary/Treasurer - Members-at-Large: Dianna McGrew - Ann File - Jean Schultz - Nate Robinson - Matthew Bussler - Darren Bettinger

BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Newton Home
20689 Marcellus Hwy.
Decatur, MI 49045

August 11, 2022 – 5:00 p.m

- I. Call to Order – Chair, Amy Davidhizar**
- II. Roll Call**
- III. Approval of the Agenda**
- IV. Approval of Minutes**
 - a. July 14, 2022 meeting
- V. Financial Report**
- VI. Bills**
- VII. Old Business**
 1. Budget for FY 2023
 2. Newton Home Lease
- VIII. New Business**
 1. Meeting with Historical Society on August 8th
 2. Historical Commission Statement
 3. Relationship with Historical Society/Newton Girls
- IX. Committee Reports**
 1. Current/New Committees
 2. Outreach
 - a. Website
 3. Newton House
- IX. Public Comment**
- X. Adjournment**

**CASS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Date July 14, 2022

Time: 5:05p.m.

Board Members present: Amy Davidhizar X, Allen Butchbaker X, Jane Bergman X, Darren Bettinger X, Annie File X, Nate Robinson X, Jean Schultz X.

Also present: Zane Lankford.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Amy Davidhizar at 5:05 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Allen Butchbaker to approve the minutes of June 9, 2022. Seconded by Nate Robinson and motion carried.

Financial Report: Chair Amy Davidhizar recounted what transpired when she appeared before the county's Board of Commissioners to ask that funds be allocated for the Historical Commission. Amy reported that the commissioners had agreed to give the Historical commission \$4,000. A motion was made by Allen Butchbaker to approve the financial report. Seconded by Jean Schultz and motion carried.

Bills: A motion was made by Allen Butchbaker to approve payment of the December bills. Seconded by Jean Schultz and the motion carried.

Old Business:

1. Newton House Lease: Chair Amy Davidhizar reported that she will be contacting Rhonda Riley at MSU to check the status of the lease and to inform her of the amendments that the Historical Commission is requesting.
2. Bathroom Progress: Zane Lankford updated board members on the progress that had been made on the bathroom renovation. Zane had made arrangements to have wood milled for the chair railing and baseboards. Once that is installed, the bathroom will be finished.
3. Cass County History Forum: Chair Amy Davidhizar described her interest in having the Historical Commission bring together various organizations in the county that are active in promoting history. Amy had spoken to Mike Moroz about the idea of an annual or bi-annual forum and he expressed enthusiasm for it.

New Business:

1. Underground Railroad Days: Chair Amy Davidhizar informed the board that the Historical Commission and the Historical Society had joined together to staff a table at the Underground Railroad Days celebration. The Commission offered books for sale and the Society distributed literature. Amy explained that the residents of the Vandalia area and Calvin Township who stopped at the table expressed great interest in learning more about the history of the area. Amy sold a number of plat maps to the attendees.
2. Cass County Fair: Chair Amy Davidhizar asked members of the board to consider the advisability of the Historical Commission participating in the Cass County Fair. Board members felt that it would not be feasible this year, but will consider partnering with other organizations, such as the Department of Parks and Recreation, or groups involved in county history in the future.
3. Vacancy on the Historical Commission: Chair Amy Davidhizar invited board members to consider what might be an appropriate action to address the ongoing vacancy on the Historical Commission due to Matt Bussler's inability to attend meetings in person. After discussion, Nate Robinson made a motion to refer the issue to the county's Appointments Committee. Jean Schultz seconded and the motion carried.

Committee Reports:

1. The Historic Newton House: Board members discussed attendance at the two most recent open houses and noted the increase in July that could likely be attributed to posting on FaceBook. Members discussed the possibility of hosting multiple themed open houses during the month of July in an effort to increase interest and reach a wider audience. Allen Butchbaker noted that he and Ann Killian had discussed the idea of organizing a program that would focus on the old growth forest and perhaps attract people interested in ecology and forest preservation.

Members also discussed the upcoming Fall Festival and how the Historical Commission could help the Historical Society organize the effort. Board members agreed that the Historical Commission would offer to organize and run children's activities at the Festival and staff docents to conduct tours of the house during the event.

Chair Amy Davidhizar distributed new sheets to log volunteer hours and in kind donations at the Newton House. This information will be used to track donations of time and goods that can be used to support grant applications.

2. Outreach: Chair Amy Davidhizar noted that our participation in the Underground Railroad Days event proved to be an effective way to reach residents of another area of the county. Increasing our presence on social media may also help us reach a wider audience.

The meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

Secretary,

Jane L. Bergman