

Iola Historical Society

Board Meeting Minutes, July 27, 2020

Board members Cliff, Lee, Tom, Charlie T., Bonny, Sharon and John present. Greg L. also in attendance.

Tom motioned to accept the June meeting minutes, Bonny second, passed

Tom gave the Treasurer's report. Low activity, but cash position of accounts is still ok. On page 2 of the report, there is one more business member compared to last year. On page 3, the YTD surplus is around \$700, and the endowment fund value is down around \$15,000. Cliff pointed out that this was without our events this year. Lee motioned to accept the report, Sharon second, passed.

Lee presented a portrait of Thor Helgeson. He is a great-grandparent of Lee and helped Malcolm Rosholt with the book From the Indian Land. Thor wrote the book in Norwegian and Malcolm translated it into English. The family farm was recently sold, and Lee wanted to know if our historical society would like to accept the portrait. Thor was an itinerant (travelling) teacher, where the students would come to his house. He was religious and usually told stories of a moral nature. Sharon asked about the year the photo was taken, and Lee guessed 1862 or 1863. Thor was born 1842 in Norway. When he was 20 he came to Detroit, in 1862 he lived in Racine and in 1863 he was in Dane. After that, he spent the rest of his life in Portage and Waupaca counties, dying in 1928. Lee suggests displaying the portrait in the schoolhouse, and he will write up the script. Lee motioned to accept, Tom second, passed. John asked who should be listed as the donor, and Lee said it should be Mitch Taylor.

Lee indicated that Norman Mortenson is willing to visit during our September meeting to demonstrate the player piano that their family recently donated. Charlie suggested recording the demonstration too. Lee would like to move two tables and trunks out of the hallway of the museum and put them in the Town Hall to make room for the piano. This piano is on rollers that roll, so it is easier to move than the piano we have where the wheels are frozen in place, but care should still be taken not to scratch the floor. Charlie agreed to contact Rex Evchuk to find out what is wrong with our first player piano to see what it would take to repair it. There is no desire to get rid of that one right now. The board gave Lee permission to move the trunks and tables.

Greg discussed the historical marker program. Marker #15 / #16, for the old Iola hospital and former cancer sanitarium, will be set by Chet Krause Dr. and dedicated August 19. Greg will see if he can get on the WDUX Breakfast Show to promote it. The radio station has a new format, so he is not sure. Marker #17 for the Helvetia Town Hall is expected to be unveiled Thursday November 5. Markers planned for 2021 are #18 Clifford Thompson, #19 Bridging the South Branch and #20 Rural Schools of Waupaca Co. Greg's plan is for a couple markers a year until twenty-five of them are done in 2024 or 2025, then slow the program down. Greg will be talking to the Rotary Club tomorrow about the marker program. He also mentioned a nice article in the Fox Cities magazine about the Iola area, and he handed several copies out at the meeting.

Lee mentioned that he noticed that several of the photos Lyle collected were not scanned into our computer. He is trying to get more information on the Town Hall, and found some of the un-scanned photos in the box labelled 'government'. Bob Strand did a write-up on all our buildings, but Lee is trying to find out more information on the last election held in the Town Hall and that is not in Bob's writings. Lee would also like to find more photos.

Cliff adjourned the board meeting.

Membership Meeting Minutes, July 27, 2020

Cliff opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:30pm. Twelve people were present.

Sue Halverson motioned to accept the June meeting minutes, Donna Hooker second, passed

Tom F. gave the financial report. Charlie T. motioned to accept, Sue H. second. Approved. Tom also reported that as of yesterday he is now the grandfather of a baby boy. His son and daughter-in-law live in Australia.

Cliff outlined his reasons for consideration of cancelling the Taste of Norway event in October,

- Too much uncertainty with workers as well as how many of the public will attend
- Social distancing may be a logistical problem
- Not sure how many crafters would attend

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- Greg mentioned that the I-S Chamber of Commerce has cancelled all of their events this year
- Tom said that the Hidden Studios program that usually ran the same weekend was doing a 'virtual' event, so that would reduce the number of people visiting the area
- Finally, Cliff pointed to the negative publicity for our organization if an outbreak was traced to our event.

Donna H. made the motion to cancel the Taste of Norway event for this year, Sharon P. seconded, motion unanimously passed by all present.

Lee presented the portrait of Thor Helgeson, covering what was mentioned in the board meeting. The farm was by Anderson Rd, north of Iola.

Lee talked about the player piano.

Greg talked about the historical marker program. He plans for former workers and patients of the hospital to be at the dedication to share their remembrances.

Greg mentioned the Fox Cities magazine article on Iola, and pointed out the circulation of 60,000.

Sharon asked for volunteers for the open house Saturdays in August. Sarah Abramson will take August 1 and 15, while Cliff will plan for August 8, 22 and 29. That will be the last day of this abbreviated season. This past Saturday open house was hosted by Charlie Nordness, and no one showed up. Cliff hosted and reported that four people showed up the weekend before and six people the weekend before that. That was the weekend of the car rally.

Par Mar will be visiting August 6 to do some work on the security system.

Meeting adjourned

Charlie T. presented photos of the flatbed railroad car move from Scandinavia to in front of our depot. The Scandinavia Booster Club donated it. The move was paid for by the Central Wisconsin Tractor Club. Charlie first took down the shack used for storage of the speeder in order to make room on the tracks. Gary Otterson helped to move the caboos. Del Mork helped with a bearing issue. A heavy equipment moving company called Cons Trucks, out of Stevens Point, had the trailer to transport the RR car and they charged a very reasonable price. It worked very well because the RR car never needed to be lifted. It was a "Trail-eze" trailer, and the wheel axles could hydraulically move back and forth to change the turning radius. As they were trying to load the 43ft flatbed RR car July 15 onto the trailer, they found that the king pin was no longer in place and the flatcar bed was shifting off the wheels. That is when the group realized that there was probably never any intent to move the RR car after it was initially set in Scandinavia. The flatcar bed was shifted back and secured for the move. King pins may be installed at a later time. The rest of the move did not have any issues.

Scandinavia had acquired the flatbed RR car 10 or 15 years ago to go along with their caboos, but were now desirous of removing it, offering to donate it to the Iola Historical Society. The Iola Northern RR that served the area was primarily for passenger service and produce hauling, so no flatbed was part of that operation. We now are looking for suggestions on how to use the flatbed RR car. One person suggested music performances, which the group liked.

Minutes recorded by Secretary – John Bertelson