

Iola Historical Society

Board Meeting Minutes, September 28, 2020

Board members Cliff, Lee, Tom, Bonny, Charlie and John present. Cliff called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Cliff received a letter about the Iola-Scandinavia HS National Honor Society community service day scheduled for Wednesday October 21. Every year students help with spring and fall cleanups around town. Lee would like to have some students help move lumber and wainscoting from the garage in the museum to the small building east of the museum (former LP gas loading building). Charlie said there was some lumber in the garage back of the museum that should be moved too. It is on top of some railroad tracks that he will be getting rid of. Charlie suggested using a trailer to haul the stuff over, then sorting it on the platform before stacking it in the building, probably in the right bay. Cliff would like to see some raking done as well as some cleanup around the Riverwalk. Bonny volunteered to work with some students on washing windows and other cleanup.

Cliff received an e-mail from Doug Watson regarding some difficulties with the three-year renewal of Go-Daddy, which is the platform we use for our website. A couple years ago, John and Tom had been looking to work with Carter Snyder on setting up a new website, but work on that stalled. John and Tom will follow up with Doug to see if they can help with the current website.

The Christmas party is still planned to be in the Machine Shed Monday December 7, beginning at 5:30pm.

Bonny made a motion to accept the August meeting minutes, Tom second ... discussion. Charlie asked if any decision had been made to accept the WWII service notes of Neil Kachur. He suggested donating it to another museum if we do not want it. John mentioned that he got an e-mail from Joan Niemiec expressing interest in these notes, so he would like to read them and get back to her. Both the WWII notes and the 1888 schoolbook from Floyd Kolden from last month were set aside somewhere in our Resource Center. Charlie, then John will review the WWII notes. Motion to approve the meeting minutes passed.

Tom gave the Treasurer's report. Both the checking and savings accounts are getting low on cash with the lack of fundraising events this year. We are still doing ok, since spending on day-to-day expenses has not risen above previous levels. The endowment fund is down about \$600, which is not bad considering how far the markets dropped earlier this year. Tom handed out the preliminary budget paperwork, which the board will review on October 7. Bonny motioned to accept the report, Lee second ...motion passed.

Cliff mentioned that we will have two guests at our membership meeting tonight, Billie and John Jensen. They are members who live away from Iola, and they have three items they would like to donate ... a highchair, a gliding rocking chair and an organ. Cliff handed out photos of each. The Jensen family had a farm east of Iola where Krause Publications built their place. The high chair is in Chippewa Falls, while the other two items are at their place 'down south'. The items may be considered for the new displays planned for the museum garage. Charlie mentioned that Mr. Jensen was his father's cousin, and that he would rather have an organ from someone with ties to our area than one that he was offered by someone else who contacted him. Tom asked the group if they knew that the buttons on an organ are called "stops". That is where the expression "pulling out all the stops" came from. *(Note, from the internet, "To pull out all the stops means to make every possible effort or use all available resources to achieve an end. The "stops" in question were originally the physical stop knobs of a pipe organ.")*

Lee mentioned that he and Bonny have been working Wednesdays on organizing the Resource Center. They found a small box of obituary clippings that were interesting. They will be getting into the Phyllis Beyer collection next. Lee would like to figure out a name for the new display area in the museum garage. Cliff suggested something on the order of the 'Smith Exhibition Room'. Not sure who the 'Smith' will be yet.

John asked if there was any interest in some items found in an old house now owned by Henry and Cindy Knoch on Water St. in Iola. The house was built in 1895, and these items were found in an old tackle box hidden away. John brought one item, which was a Fidelity-Phenix Fire Insurance Co. policy made out to Mrs. Adolph Skowen in 1950. It was sold to her by J. H. Twetan, who was the insurance representative in Iola at the time. The board was not interested at this time, so John will follow up with Henry & Cindy. Cindy's grandparents were from Helvetia.

John passed around a photo of the Girl Scout group that made the peace pole that was donated last month. It was Troop 102, and the names listed on the back are Katie Van Dyke, Ashley Beier, Alicia Bonikowske, Celci Tankersley, Corryn Moe, Johnna Sprangers, Bria Derickson and Kaitlin Freeman. John still needs to get the donation form completed.

Bonny motioned to adjourn, Charlie second ... motion passed ... adjourned at 6:24pm

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Cliff opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:36pm. Thirteen people were present.

Sue Halverson motioned to accept the August meeting minutes, Charlie Nordness second, passed

Tom F. gave the financial report, covering the same items as in the board meeting. He added that there is \$22,500 available in the endowment fund to tap into if our cash accounts get too low. May not need to do this as we are still getting donations and membership dues will be coming in for next year. He mentioned the budget meeting on October 7. Bonny motioned to accept, Sue H. second ... motion approved.

Cliff talked about the following,

- Monday December 7 will be the day of our Christmas Party, starting at 5:30pm. The Machine Shed will allow ample room for social distancing.
- John and Tom will consider the direction of the website, then report back to the board.
- October 21 is the I-S student community service day. Some work is being planned for our facilities and grounds.
- Regarding the WWII notes, we would rather concentrate more on local family histories. Billie Jenson mentioned that the historical society in Bayfield has a table available for people to leaf through notebooks, which we may want to consider for something like this.

Cliff introduced Billie and John Jenson, and mentioned the three items they would like to donate.

- John said that today was his father's birthday. His father was born in Iola, and the highchair was his. John was named after his grandfather, who did not speak English. His grandma would need to translate. His father learned English in school. John lived in Chicago and the highchair became his in 1935, then it was passed down to his brothers and sisters.
- The gliding rocking chair is now in southern Texas, in a town called Kingsville. John retired from a small college there.
- The pump organ was in his grandmother's home. It was reconditioned in the 1970's and is still in very good condition. Charlie T. asked how old it was, and Billie said John's father was born in 1901, so it is at least that old.
- Howard Jenson is whom they came up to visit, and his farm was where the Krause Publishing operations used to be. Seven members of the Jenson family are buried in the Iola Cemetery.

Lee asked John J. to fill out a donation form with as much of the family history about the items as he can remember. John J. will bring up the gliding rocker and pump organ sometime next spring.

7:02 pm, meeting adjourned

For the program following the meeting, Norman Mortenson demonstrated the newly acquired player piano that their family donated. He bought it from Milo Thoe, who had restored several player pianos but saved this one for himself. There is a vacuum motor used to run it instead of a foot pump. Norman kept it in his rec room and remembers many family and friends sing-a-longs with it. It has been 10 to 12 years since he last played it, but it still works pretty well. Several music rolls came along with it, but many are quite fragile. The rolls have the lyrics written on them for the sing-a-longs. Newer rolls can still be bought today for such pianos.

7:27 pm, end of demonstration.

Minutes recorded by Secretary – John Bertelson