

ELIOT HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING  
January 9, 2023  
First Congregational Church, McPherson Hall

Meeting opened at 7PM

Present: 21 (with speaker; 4 new people); 6 attending by ZOOM

Newly elected President Tracey Graffam-Dickson welcomed everyone and inviting those who are not members to join us.

Rosanne Adams Fisher introduced our program and speaker Tad (Emerson) Baker whose presentation "Forgotten Frontier: New Hampshire and Maine in the 17th Century", took a closer look at the first settlers of the area, their political and religious leanings. He talked about the various peoples in the "Forgotten Frontier"; coming from many different countries due to the shipping trade, slavery and indentured servantry and with various religious beliefs; the "stranger-danger" that all this evoked in people; how these differences created tensions and accusations (such as those of witchcraft); and the alliances that were formed

Tracey began the meeting by explaining that a paper, circulating around the room, invites members to host refreshments. Only looking for very simple refreshments for each meeting and should be very doable by two members working together.

She then thanked outgoing president Paul Johnson for his support and encouragement as she takes over the leadership role as president. She then presented to Paul, on behalf of the members of the Historical Society, in thanks and appreciation for his many years leading the Society and the work on the schoolhouse, a card signed by members and three gift certificates.

The meeting then paused, before the start of the business portion, for refreshments, provided by Julie Johnson and Tracey Graffam-Dixon.

### BUSINESS

- [Rosanne A-Fisher, Secretary] Minutes of December 5, 2022 were read, motion made, and voted to approve.
  
- [Rosanne A-Fisher, Secretary] Minutes of the December 5, 2022 Annual Meeting and Election were read, motion made, and voted to approve.
  
- [Kathy Runey, Treasurer] Treasurer's Report was read , motion made, and voted to approve.

## Committee Reports

- [Rosanne A-Fisher/Jan Cerabona, Programs] The program for February has not been set yet pending discussions under New Business, at this meeting
- [Sylvia Moynahan, Membership] Sylvia explained the membership dues levels and amounts and explained they are due in January. She then passed around a paper for those present to put their contact information (email address, phone number), in preparation for a meeting on January 13th with the president and secretary and programming committee, to go over the membership list. Tracey explained that the goal is to reconnect with members, past and present, make sure they are aware we are meeting again, update the list and make sure members are getting the newsletter.
- [Jan Cerabona, Education] Jan talked about the latest display installed at the Great Works School in South Berwick - "Then and Now". She spoke with Mr. Burnell, principal, to see if they would be interested in continuing displays with the idea that we would reach out to Old Berwick Historical Society and work with them in creating joint displays to represent the blending of our two town's histories. Mr. Burnell was supportive of this and so we will proceed in that direction. At Eliot Elementary School, for National Reading Month, the display will focus on the books that staff members enjoyed as children. Children will be encouraged to guess which book a teacher most liked. With help from staff members and the EES school librarian it should be a colorful display of books.

## OLD BUSINESS

- Tracey reminded and urged members to be participants in the *Eliot Comprehensive Plan* Process and to reach out to family and friends, also, to fill out the survey.
- Tracey asked if there was anyone who was not receiving the Newsletter to please let her know.
- Tracey reminded people that dues are due in January.
- Paul reported that there was a great turn out for the *Wreaths Across America* program at EES and for the laying of the wreaths, the following Saturday. Jan reported that it is unusual for all the wreaths for a location to be sponsored the first year, but Eliot was able to do it their first year, with over 750 wreaths being sponsored for the Mt. Pleasant and Brooks cemeteries.

## NEW BUSINESS

- With the start of a new presidency and new year Tracey opened a discussion about our meeting schedule, asking if there were any changes the membership might want to make regarding the time or day of the meetings. Discussed were meetings possibly during the day or on weekends, only by ZOOM during the hardest winter months.

There was consensus that it was very important to have both an in-person and ZOOM component (where possible) at each meeting. Unless there was bad weather (where we could go to just a ZOOM meeting) that Monday nights with July off and in August a picnic, were working well and should be continued. In addition/replacement, to our regular meeting we could have some off-site meetings.

It was agreed to meet Monday meetings, 7PM, with in-person meetings in February and March, (weather permitting) with option to move to ZOOM only, if necessary.

Paul suggested that we should look into improving the quality of our ZOOM capabilities at our meeting, and that we would do well to invest in some new and additional equipment. The laptop is outdated and should be replaced; an extra camera, with speaker search ability, much like the town has with its OWL, would provide those on ZOOM to see each speaker; better sound system so those on ZOOM can hear those in the room and vice-versa. A Zabra speaker was suggested. Tracey volunteered to research some options and cost and bring the proposal to the next meeting.

- Programming Tracey expressed that she would like to see us set up a program schedule that we can then publicize, give out at Eliot Festival Day, etc. Suggested future programs included - how to conduct genealogy research; a tutorial as to how Eric and Rosanne research property information; Ann Gass and woman's suffrage movement in Maine. Jan said that the Programming committee has someone willing to speak on the "Nightingale", with possible meeting at EES where the mural is; looking this year to take a visit to the Seashore Trolley Museum combined with a monthly program about Mildred Obrey and the book written about Teddie Roosevelt's ride on the *Narcissus*; possible visit to an area blacksmith. They also have some online videos that could be shown for a meeting. Members are asked to contact Jan or Rosanne with any ideas they have about programs.
- Publicity It was noted that we really do not have anyone working on publicity for the Society other than what is being done on our website and FaceBook page and those submitted by the Education Committee. Tracey asked, if there is anyone who would like to take this on, to reach out to her. She suggested that perhaps we should pay for a running ad and will bring more information about that to a meeting.
- Monthly Meetings Tracey asked if we might want to have some of our meetings with a shortened business portion ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) and with more focus on the program and socializing,

given that people are starting to come back to meeting in-person. She suggested perhaps a Quarterly, longer Business Meeting which would, those months, have a shorter program.

It was proposed to have our longer Business Meetings, with a shorter program, during the December, March, and June and September meetings and a shortened business portion, and longer program, for the meetings during January, February, April, May, October and November, and to keep July as an off month and August as our annual picnic gathering. A MOTION was MADE, 2nd, and it was VOTED, in the AFFIRMATIVE to accept this proposal and start with our MARCH 2023 meeting as the first with a short program and longer business meeting.

Discussed was the sending out the Minutes with the newsletter each month so members could review and come prepared at the December, March, June and September meetings to approve them. By doing this we would not have to read them at each meeting, saving time. If there was something important to discuss, it could, of course, be discussed and brought up at any of our meetings, during the business portion, and not have to wait for the longer quarterly meeting.

Kathy brought up her concern that the financial reports would not then be looked at each month by the membership. It was suggested that they also could be sent out to the membership with the minutes.

- Speaker Stipend Amount. Rosanne asked what we would like to give to tonight's speaker. In the past we've had a yearly amount. After discussion a MOTION was MADE, 2nd, and VOTED to send our speaker \$100 for tonight's meeting. There was discussion concerning cost, going forward, for payment of speakers. This subject will be brought up for further discussion at our March meeting.
- Refreshment schedule people were reminded about the refreshment signup sheet being passed around.
- Tracey thanked Julie for the refreshments tonight and thanked all the outgoing officers, committee chairs and board members for the work they have done for the Society and thanked those incoming for their service.

Next Meeting February 6, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

Rosanne M. Adams-Fisher, Secretary