

Muscatine County Historic Preservation Commission Minutes of Meeting on Tuesday, March 20, 2018

The Muscatine County Historic Preservation Commission (MCHPC) met at 12:00 p.m. on March 20 with commissioners Lisa Wertzbaugher, Lynn Pruitt, Mary Beveridge, Tom Furlong, Becky Allgood, Bill Koellner, Bette Schneider and Brian Wright present. Jim Nepple was excused. Also present were Sherry Seright and Paul Carroll.

Chair Becky Allgood called the meeting to order and minutes of the February meeting were approved as corrected. Treasurer Tom Furlong reported a balance of \$11 962.23 including \$1 725.00 grant for the Old Barn.

Becky announced our new meeting date as the third Thursday of the month.

The National Preservation Caucus is being held in Des Moines July 18-22. As it is a national caucus, it is more costly this year: registration is \$250 and the deadline is the end of March. Lynn, Mary and Becky will plan to attend.

Reporting on the status of the Historic Jail, Sherry said that 2 bids came in yesterday: one over \$78 000 and the other over \$79 000. We have \$60 000 available. Michael Nolan will talk with the Board of Supervisors at their meeting Monday. The concrete floor is an issue, but the piping will be left in the building. Tom Furlong can be at the meeting next Monday to represent the Historic Jail. There was some discussion about whether keeping the Washington Street facility might change the scope of the design a bit.

Sherry suggested that so much has been done to restore the building, and Lisa said she would investigate the possibility of obtaining an HRDP grant, as grants for museums are available. Mary and Bette will be meeting with Paul Carroll to continue planning for a Friends' group.

Reporting on the Fairgrounds, particularly on the Heritage Hall, Tom said the plan is to move ahead with a new building that is historically similar to the old building. Tom, Bill and Lynn attended the meeting. They are now proceeding to get bids. He also said the Fairgrounds Building Committee has submitted a grant request to Ryan Trust for approximately \$100 000 to cover the cost of this new building, but they cannot get the money from Ryan Trust until the tax credit status is reinstated. Tom will keep us informed.

Becky reported on the status of the Wilton Façade project and said they are working on adding another façade with another HRDP grant. They are hoping to bring other sites, including country schools, into the restoration process.

Reporting on the status of the Old Barn, Lynn said that Jennifer Price is working on nominating the Old Barn as a Heritage Farm and is moving ahead on this with the Conservation Board. Sherry said that funding is in place to pay for this nomination through donations from the Community Foundation and \$500 from Friends of Historic Muscatine Preservation plus \$1 000 from our Commission. The schedule includes new restrooms, electricity and road/parking improvements.

Reporting on the Nichols project, Lynn said we need to wait for matching funds before applying for a grant to help with the NRHP nomination, which is priced at \$7 485. Commissioners agreed to ask Jennifer Price to assist with the NRHP nomination application, which is due April 25. Lynn said that once the application is prepared, we will have a better idea of the local cost share and should be able to come up with the required amount, which is expected to be less than 25% of the total.

In regard to fundraising, Becky said she would rather our Commission allocate our funds to county-benefitting projects rather than to specific town projects. Lisa suggested asking Jennifer Price to contact the Community Foundation to help us with matching funds. In the meantime, Lisa will talk with Rebecca McCarley about funding sources, particularly matching funds.

Reporting on the status of the Downtown West Liberty project, Lisa and Bill have been initiating all funding request planning. Lisa said the Board of Supervisors communicated that we, as a Commission, should not lead the fundraising if the Community Foundation does not hold the funds. Lisa and Bill met with Supervisors and Sherry to discuss fundraising policies. Bill and Lisa now have a limited roll with the Downtown West Liberty project, one of advisement but not actual fundraising. They see their role as a support role, advising them of historic tax credits and other funding opportunities. Both Bill and Lisa are staying on in this role one more year.

Lynn reported on the Rural Schools project, distributing a 2-page draft, which included guidelines for funding as well as research procedures and the information to be gathered, including very specific information regarding location, current ownership, photographs and GPS data. Also included was information about the rural school collections at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls. Lynn said he has a particular interest in standard signage of country schools throughout the county. The consensus of the Commissioners was to pursue a CLG grant for this work. Lynn will contact Paula Mohr to get a list of consultants we might contact for scoping and budget ideas. At this time, Lynn estimates a \$20 000 budget. Paul Carroll suggested obtaining an APP for GPS scoping and will keep us posted.

Mary and Bette met recently with Paul Carroll to discuss fundraising for the Historic Jail. Paul suggested applying for a grant from the Community Foundation. Lisa said she would apply for it for the Historic Jail.

Our next meeting will be **Thursday, April 19 at 12 p.m. at the County Administration building in Muscatine.**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Beveridge

Muscatine County Historic Preservation Commission