

Muscatine County Historic Preservation Commission Minutes of Meeting on Thursday, June 21, 2018

The Muscatine County Historic Preservation Commission (MCHPC) met at 12:00 p.m. on June 21 with commissioners Becky Allgood, Lynn Pruitt, Mary Beveridge, Bill Koellner, Bette Schneider and Brian Wright present. Jim Nepple, Lisa Wertzbaugher and Tom Furlong were excused. Also present was Sherry Seright.

Minutes of the May meeting were approved as corrected: Pending reinstatement of tax-exempt status, any donations made to the Heritage Hall at the Muscatine County Fairgrounds will be made to the Community Foundation with the tag line Muscatine County Fairgrounds Heritage Hall. Sherry Seright reported for Tom Furlong that there was no change in the Treasurer's report.

Becky reported that the Preserve Iowa Summit this year will be held in Des Moines. She plans to attend for one day. The registration deadline was supposed to have been at the end of March, but she will make more inquiries about this.

Mary and Brian reported on their "walk-through" of the Historic Jail on Friday, May 18 (following our last meeting on May 17). Michael Nolan conducted the tour, which included work completed in the stabilization phase, with most work completed in the basement of the building. Mary recorded about 50 photos during the tour. Mary and Bette have contacted potential members of a Friends group. At this point JoAnn Carlson will join the group, as will Carol Steinmetz. Joni Axel will be unable to join the group at this time. After contacting interested members, the group will schedule a meeting during late July or early August. Lynn distributed brochures for the Historic Jail, which will also be distributed at next month's Muscatine County Fair.

Bill reported on the Fairgrounds Project and said one position must be filled. Lynn will fill Lisa's spot on the Fair Board until next year. Meetings are held once a month on the third Monday. The tax status is still undecided. The Ryan Trust and other donors will be making donations directly to the Community Foundation, pending notice of tax-exempt status. Bill said we have \$80,000 in the bank designated for the Heritage Hall and construction will follow demolishing the old structure after this year's County Fair in July. So construction will probably begin next spring. A rendering of the plan or blueprint will be made. Sherry suggested we obtain photos along with the rendering and include them on the website. Bill suggested putting our top 10 projects on the website and having Kristin work on this.

Becky reported the Candy Kitchen is now finished and it looks good. She will take photos. She said the major problem is working with building owners and their understanding of the funding available.

Discussing funding for county projects, particularly for signage and consultants, Sherry suggested having local residents of each community raise funds. Eventually, we can go to the Board of Supervisors to obtain funding, but funding should begin at the local level.

Lynn reported on the status of the Old Barn and said he has talked with Jennifer Price about the application for its National Register listing. He thinks she has submitted the application to the state office. He said Jennifer hopes to have the approval of the Old Barn's listing by October. In the meantime, Lynn is trying to start a Friends of the Old Barn group.

Lynn said the Nichols project is still awaiting an HRDP grant.

Bill reported on the Downtown West Liberty project and said they are now working on educational and cultural buildings, including theaters. The plan is to conduct walking tours and a CDBG grant should be decided in the early fall. Around 130 local donors have made donations of various amounts but no city money. Bill said we do not always need government to get a job done. Commissioners were reminded that business owners' names cannot be listed on grant applications.

Because of the Muscatine County Fair, it was decided to cancel the July meeting of the Commission. Our next meeting will be at noon on Thursday, August 16 at the Wilton Candy Kitchen.

The meeting was adjourned at 1 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Beveridge
Muscatine County Historic Preservation Commission Member