

Town Hall Preservation Committee

January 19, 2022

Committee members present: Nicole Briand (Town Office), Betsy Steen, Sarah Stapler, Brett Thompson, Rachelle Tome, Paul Baines, Brad Foley. Absent: David Grogan

Community members present: Kate Brimsmade, Payal Gangishette

The Committee was called to order at 4:29 pm. Minutes from 12/15/21 were reviewed, with corrections noted. Motion to accept revised minutes (Paul/Betsy) Unanimously passed.

Updates from Committee members

Paul Baines shared that he had tried to contact Helen Watts but had not heard back. After further conversation with Nicole, it was decided that this committee may want to pursue a different approach.

Betsy Steen provided an update regarding donations indicated that donations in the jars which have been place around town have not started yet. She also indicated that she had not been able to contact David Berry and was concerned about the impact of weather. Her hope was that David Berry may have connections to John Galler, a metal roofer, who is also known for his connection the Town Hall through Contra Dances. Betsy will continue attempts to connect with David Berry.

Rachelle Tome indicated that thank you cards had gone out to donors. Paul shared a concern about the expectations for sending cards to all donors. Betsy clarified that there have not been large numbers of donations yet and updated the group on four donations recently received. Rachelle suggested a threshold of \$25 for a thank you card. Committee members agreed. To date, \$1500. has been donation, which will result in a total of \$3000. Thanks to a match for the Bowdoinham Historical Society.

Work on the Town Hall Preservation Survey has been completed and a copy will be included in the next Bowdoinham News and online.

Brett Thompson shared that the Town Hall funding thermometers were not done, but that he was planning to continue.

Next steps

The groups discussed next steps with the building. Paul indicated that getting an engineer will be expensive. Perhaps someone could be hired to look at specific areas. Paul offered to do a more comprehensive review. Betsy proposed using local talent whenever possible. Brett suggested no one go up into the building alone. The group agreed to have Paul take another look at the building.

Paul shared concerns about the bat guano and a need for removal and protection for future work areas. The open areas of the roof (eaves) make it difficult to close up the area completely. Betsy offered to contact Frank Connors for ideas regarding removal.

Information was shared about the Maine Preservation Grant application, with Jennifer Foley identified as a contact. More information is needed to see if this is an option for our work. Betsy had applied as part of the Historical Society's efforts. Questions rose regarding the Town Hall's possible eligibility as an historic building and eligibility for funding. The Town Hall's designation as a municipal build could create challenges for funding.

Other business

Topics for the next meeting were discussed, including priorities indicated from the survey and exploring improvements to the foundation. Betsy and Brett offered to talk with Tom Deforest, who is familiar with the contractors (Copp) for Merrymeeting Hall. Paul suggested we plan for addressing the interior of the Town Hall to make the building more accessible. Different types of heating options were discussed, however any decision would require more information and understanding of the structure.

Motion to adjourn (Betsy/ Sarah) Meeting was adjourned at 5:35 pm.

Actions

Paul- Review of structure

Betsy- Contact David Berry (building repairs); Frank Connors (bat guano)

Rachelle- Send Thank you cards to donors

Brett- Finish funding thermometers

Betsy/ Brett-Contact Tom Deforest (Copp foundation work)

Agenda Items for Next Meetings

- Survey update; determine community priorities
- Update from Paul
- Updates form Betsy/Brett re: contacts
- Discuss interior repairs
- Donation/ funding updates

Next meeting: Wednesday, 2/16 at 4:30 PM (Venue TBD). The public is welcome.