

# **Handicraft Club Board Meeting**

**Date: March 20, 2018**

## **Held at The Providence Art Club**

**Members Present:** Kit Barnum, Alice Beckwith, Sharleen Bowen, Deb Drinker, Margie Edwards, Janet Jagger, Margaret Lederer, Jozy Mainelli, Nancy Moger, Trish Poirrier, Marilyn Shealey, Sally Whitin, Judith Wilson

**Members Absent:** Sara Carcieri, Heather Hahn-Fowler, Fran Gammell-Roach, Pamela Gardner, Izzy Goff, Vivien Jones, Kem O'Sullivan, Rebecca Rubin

**Meeting called to order at 10:05 am by Jozy Mainelli, President.**

**Secretary's Report:** The minutes of the Handicraft Club Board Meeting held February 20, 2018, were unanimously approved, with the correction of the name of the Club's financial advisors to read "F. L Putnam Investment Management Company."

**Treasurer's Report:** Filed electronically by Sara Carcieri. Jozy Mainelli noted the highlights of the report, including reduced income from food sales partly due to closure of the club for weather.

**President's Report:** Jozy Mainelli thanked Janet Jagger for overseeing our request for membership in the Providence Preservation Society as well as their providing us with a new plaque for our house.

**1<sup>st</sup> V P Report:** Filed electronically by Fran Gammell-Roach. She included documents which were used in discussion of the potential purchase of Hoppin House later in the meeting.

**2<sup>nd</sup> V P Report:** No report.

**Corresponding Secretary's Report:** Filed electronically by Judy Wilson.

**Finance Committee Report:** Filed electronically by Sara Carcieri. Jozy Mainelli reported that credit cards will now be accepted for dues payments, with a five dollar fee assessed per card.

**Long Range Planning Report:** Filed electronically by Sharleen Bowen.

**Class Report:** Filed electronically by Margaret Lederer and Deb Drinker.

**House Report:** Kit Barnum reported that the heat is working efficiently due to the new split system. The annex now has air conditioning. Work is still needed in the Decorative Painting studio due to this installation.

**Garden Report:** No report.

**Membership Report:** Filed electronically by Izzy Goff and Heather Hahn-Fowler.

**Investment Committee:** No report.

**Societies Report:** No report.

**Program Report:** Trish Porrier reported that the spring program is fully subscribed. She is looking into offering a trip to the Kips Bay Decorator Show House in New York City.

**Nominating Committee Report:** No report.

**New Business:** Referring to information provided by Sharleen Bowen, Jozy informed the board that The Rhode Island Foundation is spearheading a new initiative called TogetherRI. The purpose is to create a space for civil and civic dialogue between people and organizations. This will be accomplished through a series of neighborhood gatherings. Several board members are planning to attend one of the sessions.

Sally Whitin proposed that we name the decorative arts studio at the Handicraft Club in Peggy Rodgers honor. After some discussion, it was decided that Kit Barnum would work with Sally to come up with a consistent way to honor teachers, especially Peggy.

## **Part Two: Old Business**

Jozy Mainelli stated that during this part of the meeting, as a board the group would review recommendations of the Parking Committee, House Task Force and the Financial Task Force, as related to the potential purchase of Hoppin House, located at 383 Benefit Street. The list of pros and cons compiled by Fran Gammell-Roach and all comments received by Jozy related to the issue would be reviewed, with open discussion to follow. Jozy thanked Sharleen Bowen and Nancy Moger for their efforts to identify the strengths, weaknesses and priorities of The Club. Jozy then reviewed the documents on hand for discussion.

Margie Edwards lead the discussion on information obtained by the Finance Task Force focusing on the financial implications of buying Hoppin House. A working comparison of line by line operating costs between our Truman Beckwith House, located at 42 College St., and the Hoppin House was discussed, noting the priority of putting in an elevator. The effect on the endowment was also discussed.

Kit Barnum read the report from the House Task Force of 2/23/18, summarizing the task force's impressions following a walk-through of the house, noting classroom space is comparable between the two houses. She recommended the Class Committee Chairs work with teachers to allocate space. As the carriage house at 383 Benefit would not initially be needed for classroom space, it is potential space for rental. Other topics discussed included ways to maximize parking, the option to keep part of the carriage house for large meetings, and whether solar panels would be beneficial.

Judy Wilson pointed out that some of the ideas associated with Hoppin House can also be applied to 42 College, although Kit noted there would still be no on-site parking.

Jozy Mainelli read comments from the membership that she had received following the email to the membership about the availability of Hoppin House for purchase. The suggestion to reach out to longstanding members of the club for their opinion was given.

Jozy then read the document compiled by Fran Gammell-Roach that noted the pros and cons of the purchase, as well as the list of unanswered questions. Alice Beckwith read a statement of her concerns about the move, noting her feeling that laws relating to non-profit board's use of endowment funds need to be more fully explored, and that the opinion of an independent appraiser and lawyer would be helpful, if not necessary, for due diligence. There was agreement to engage both an independent appraiser and lawyer. Alice outlined other options that might be done to make 42 College more accessible. A general discussion of the pros and cons ensued. Both Judith Wilson and Sally Whitin read prepared statements of their concerns with the potential purchase.

Although many concerns were discussed throughout the meeting, there was understanding that the sale of 383 Benefit Street offered a unique opportunity to address many of the priorities of the club, and that this offer was worthy of being brought to the general membership. A motion to inform and engage the membership in discussing the potential sale was made by Kit Barnum and seconded by Sharleen Bowen. Following discussion of the wording, it was withdrawn by Kit Barnum.

The following motion was made by Janet Jagger, seconded and passed unanimously:

**To inform and engage the membership of the findings and ultimate recommendation of the Parking Committee to pursue the potential purchase of the Hoppin House at 383 Benefit Street and the subsequent sale of the Truman Beckwith House at 42 College Street.**

An informational membership meeting was planned for April 6, preceded by an opportunity for members to visit the Hoppin House before the meeting. Jozy stated that all documentation used in today's board discussion would be available to members on the Club's website. Shortly following the April 6 meeting, a poll of the membership would be taken using a on-line survey, as well as a mail survey to members not using the internet.

**The meeting was adjourned at 12:29 pm.**

**Respectfully submitted,  
Marilyn Shealey, Secretary**