

Sandy Mush Community Center

Minutes

February 2, 2018

Attending: Peggy Baldwin, Martha Ball, Frank Barbara, Jean Barbara, Bob Campbell, Kathleen Campbell, Kevin Campbell, Vanessa Campbell, Mark Diaz, Erin Duckett, Kurt Eckel, Dave Everett, John Gavin, Ruth Gavin, Ray Hearne, Christopher Jayne, Bruce Larson, Barbara Vassallo, Betsy Weinschel, Barbara Wells, Keith Wells

The meeting was called to order by President Keith Wells at 7 pm.

MINUTES AND FINANCIAL REPORTS

Financial Reports. The January Financial Reports were prepared by Treasurer Erin Duckett and distributed by email. Erin noted that for January Total Income was \$2,600 and Total Expenses were \$6,924; Net Income was (\$4,324), that is, a deficit of \$4,324. **The Financial Reports were approved as submitted.**

Erin said that she would be glad to keep track of volunteer hour totals. For that to happen, the volunteer hours of relevant activities would have to be collected and communicated to her. In relation to this, Peggy Baldwin said that volunteer hour information is helpful for grants.

Dave Everett raised the notion of raising funds for the Center by selling hats. Funds are available to further this activity. Later in the meeting Dave expanded on the idea that hats would be purchased for \$10 each and sold for \$20—with a goal of selling 50 hats. **A motion to go forward with the hat project was moved, seconded, and approved.**

Minutes. The January Minutes were prepared by Secretary Bruce Larson and distributed by email. **The Minutes were approved as submitted.**

NEW BUSINESS

Building Matters. Frank Barbara reported. Frank welcomed Kevin Campbell to the Building Committee. It was noted that there has building activity has expanded a lot over the last year, so now activities are taking place five days a week. As a result, the Committee is now considering ways of reducing costs, for example by controlling heating and using motion detectors for lighting.

In the context of the report, Dave indicated that a clear understanding is needed of the impact of the playground on the building, for example, parking and disability matters, and walking trail plans. In relation to building plans and playground plans, Kurt Eckel noted the desirability of all needs being on the table so that projects might be carried out

efficiently. A factor to consider in this discussion is the capacity of the Center, as noted by Dave. Keith indicated that capacity would be determined by the Building Inspector.

Online High School Equivalency (HSE). Bruce reported for Terri Wells. The Center has the opportunity to help facilitate progress toward HSE certification for members of the community. This grew out of conversations Terri had with community members during the January Food Pantry. Subsequently, she has contacted the relevant parties at AB-Tech, which will provide the HSE courses. Toward that end, Bruce read the following:

We would appreciate the Board's approval and support in proceeding with discussions on partnering with AB-Tech to help provide much needed educational support services to our community, specifically, at this time, offering the HSE online class if AB-Tech is willing to do so.

Bruce responded to questions about the capacity of the Center to field these online courses. He noted that all students did not have to be online at the same time and that there seems to be plenty of available capacity for students during the current open Internet hours. There being no more questions, **the motion inset above was moved, seconded, and approved.**

REPORTS AND STATUS UPDATES

Communications. Martha Ball reported. Martha asked people to get material to her soon for the upcoming Center newsletter.

Internet Project. Mark Diaz reported. Mark noted that the Center had its first outage, likely due to the cutting of a cable on Leicester Highway due to the construction underway. Service was restored in a timely way.

As of this time, the Center has had 465 users, 376 of which are returning users.

Food Pantry. Jean Barbara reported. During the last month the Pantry served 48 households encompassing 120 people. Jean has put together a list of available food pantries in the area that community members can use for reference. It could be placed on the Center website or Facebook. Jean introduced the possibility of having non-perishable food drives at community events. **The concept was moved, seconded, and approved.**

In a related matter, the possibility of church involvement in the monthly Pantry was noted. Kurt is looking into this.

Jean noted that the Center was on the list for a second freezer—there are 10 organizations on the list. She has also been looking into wi-fi thermostats for the freezers, which are now being monitored manually. Three such thermostats can be had for \$120.

Recreation Team. Vanessa Campbell and Christopher Jayne reported. Chris has been looking into permits for the proposed playground, noting that there must be a handicapped parking space with walkway access to the playground. Typically, there are substantial permit fees—\$1,700 was noted—but the fees might be reduced or waived. It seems that handicapped parking will not affect the planned location of the playground. Question asked about a timeline for completing the project and Chris noted it is hoped that the project can be completed by 4/21. (This would be in time for the Spring Fling.)

In related discussion, it was mentioned that there may need to be “Official Playground Hours” to address accessibility issues. In looking at the need for handicapped parking for the playground and the building, Peggy indicated that it would be nice to solve those needs simultaneously.

Building. Frank reported. He noted:

- It has been determined that given the prospective uses of the 3rd floor, no elevator will be needed.
- Two bids have been received on the 3rd floor work, falling in the \$27,000-\$34,000 range.
- The recently installed storm windows have really made a difference. The old storms have been saved and may be reused.
- Garbage and recycling scheduling still needs to be done, i.e., putting things out and bringing them in.
- Programming the minisplits has proved to be challenging. Further exploration is underway.
- The current budget for the cleaning service may need to be revisited given that the building is now in use five days a week.
- Upcoming work includes replacing window sash ropes and reworking floors, beginning in the children’s room.

Insurance. Kurt reported. He has been looking at insurance for directors and officers, speaking with White Insurance. Our current underwriter/policy is good, but we could have it serviced by White Insurance. **It was moved, seconded, and approved that the Center should move its insurance to White Insurance.** Kurt will continue to investigate our insurance needs, getting a quote for insurance for directors and officers.

4-H Update. Kurt reported. He introduced Ruth Gavin, one of the people working with our local 4-H group, which is looking forward to relocating to the Center on the 3rd floor when possible. She was one of three 4-H leaders, the other two being Jackie Gillespie and Crystal Ball, who met with Board members of the Center earlier in the week. Kurt noted that the Center’s evolving partnership with 4-H would be relational, not transactional. Kurt and Jackie are looking to develop a Memorandum of Understanding, with a sunset clause of December 2021, so our relationship can develop with intention and understanding for all concerned.

Updates from Peggy.

- The Strategic Partnership Grant has been submitted: \$36,000 for building improvements and \$9,000 for Internet. We are likely to hear about the grant in June with fund release to take place in July.
- Rental fees have been a matter of interest in recent months. In Peggy's judgment, there is little room for upward movement in fees given the hardship they would likely bring about. **It was moved, seconded, and approved to retain the current fee structure for the time being.**
- The April Spring Open House/Earth Day event is currently under discussion.
- Youth. The Mountain Lady Farm Project has an upcoming event on February 10th. Barbara Vassallo, who leads the Project, thanked the Board for its support.
- Some monies have been used to purchase new educational and play materials for the Center's children's room.

Regarding youth activities, Frank mentioned that play time on Sundays has been very successful, with new faces coming out. In his judgment this is a good reason to push the play time initiative out to March. He went on to note that "Every program needs to promote the other programs out there." Along those lines, Jean said that she really likes seeing the SMCC events on Facebook.

Library Team. Betsy Weinschel reported. She alerted the Board to be looking for some information on volunteer recognition in March.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Ray Hearne spoke about the possibility of having monthly or quarterly presentations from area people on matters of general interest. She noted that Fridays and Saturdays currently seem to be the only evenings when presentations could take place, although others might be possible. Chris suggested that this is something that could be written up and made into a proposal. Frank indicated that Ray might want to take charge of this project.

Frank, returning to the topic of Sunday open times, mentioned the possibility of a set aside time for "old folks" pickle ball from 4 to 5 after square dancing.

As the meeting moved toward its end, Vanessa asked for further clarification about handicapped parking, both for the playground and for the building. Meaningful discussion ensued. It was agreed that it would be good for the Recreation Team, the Building Committee, and other concerned parties to get together so that playground planning and development could proceed in a timely fashion. Although a grand opening of the playground might be optimistic, Dave suggested that completion by summer seems to be a good target. There should be further information on the playground at the March Board meeting.

The meeting was adjourned by Keith at 8:55 pm.