Shelburne Historical Society

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

26 June 2019

Members Present: Mike Hartigan, Terry Redmond, Sandy Redmond, Cathy Holmes, Sue Deschene, Dawn Harding, Cady Berardi, Louise Lindsay, Valerie Martin (by phone), Sherry Thorburn Irvine, Sharon Burrill,

Chris Sharpe.

Apologies for absence: Wayne Butler, who informed Louise that today was his 48th wedding anniversary. Those present agreed that this was a good reason for he and his wife to be elsewhere.

**1. Approval of Minutes**: It was moved (Terry Redmond/Cathy Holmes) and carried that the minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting be approved.

**2. Thanks and Acknowledgments**: President Louise Lindsay expressed the gratitude of all the members of the Board to the staff of the Shelburne Museums for their exemplary performance during a difficult year. Because of a scarcity of applicants for summer student positions, and the resignation of the Museum Director in June, the Museum was severely understaffed during most of the 2018 season. All the staff went above and beyond the normal limits of their duties to ensure that the Museum and its programs continued to operate. In the absence of more tangible rewards, Louise wanted all the staff to know how much their extraordinary efforts were appreciated by the Board.

**3. Report of the Board of Directors:**

Staffing

Shauna Allen, Director of the Musem, resigned on the 25th of June 2018 with a departure date of mid-August. A Search Committee was formed which includes Louise Lindsay, Norman Wallet, Janet Maltby of the NS Museum with Kim Walker and Chris Sharpe as observers. Seventeen applications were received and scored to determine whom to interview. Four candidates were selected for interview and unfortunately, one withdrew. Of the three interviewed, the Committee made unanimous selection, but the reference checks were such that the Committee decided that the selected candidate was likely to be unsuitable. Consequently, it was agreed the search should be deemed unsuccessful and terminated.

After discussion, it was agreed that the position should be re-advertised as a Manager’s position, rather than Director. Original deadline for applications was the 26th of April. It was discovered that Service Canada had mis-identified the nature of the position and the ad was corrected, reposted, and the application deadline extended to the 18th of May 2019. More than 45 applications were received, most of them unsuitable. The Committee members have now created a short list of 11 candidates. The committee will meet next week to decide how many, and which candidates to interview.

Leona Ringer resigned her position as retail manager when she was offered a full-time position at the Nova Scotia Community College. Kim Robertson Walker has been appointed as the new retail manager, in addition to her duties as Senior Interpretor at the Dory Shop.

Ashley McDaniel, Senior Interpreter in the Dory Shop, resigned at the

end of last season since her husband had become the CAO for Mahone Bay and they were moving. Kim Walker, who was a Senior Interpreter at the Ross Thomson House, chose to move to the Dory Shop. As a consequence, Murray Hagen, who was hired as a temporary summer Interpreter last year, was offered, and accepted, the position of permanent Interpreter. He & Greta Mossman are now handling the interpretation duties in the RTH. Brian Ogilvie has accepted the seasonal position of Interpretor at the Dory Shop.

Lorraine Oake was hired as the bookkeeper in October to replace Debbie Mader.

Last year we received approval for 11 summer student grants. Although the Director started advertizing these position earlier and in more locations than we historically have, we only received three applications from students. These three were all offered positions; however, one declined as he had already taken another job. As a consequence, we were very short staffed last season which a strain on all the other staff and meant we had to reduce programming and often close museum on a rotating shift for lunch which we have never had to do in the past.

License Agreement

The Shelburne Historical Society (SHS) has operated Shelburne’s Museums by the Sea as a complex for more than 30 years, in the absence of a written agreement with the Province. Operations have, so far, always been undertaken on the basis of informal understandings. More than 10 years ago, site agreements were drafted by the Province to formalize the management of the two Nova Scotia Branch Museums, but the Board of Directors of the SHS, and other Boards, refused to sign them because they were inconsistent with the long-term, generally-accepted principles of operation. The matter was raised again in September 2018 when a new draft Licensing Agreement was sent to all participating Museums. The Board has had a preliminary discussion of the draft and identified several problematic clauses. The draft makes constant referent to the Operations Manual which downloads to individual museums many of the maintenance tasks that were formerly undertaken by the Department of Public Works. The Board will hold a special meeting in the near future to discuss the draft and prepare a response.

Facilities

Last July we received a $16,000 grant for repairs to, and painting of, Nairn House, home of the Shelburne County Museum. That work has not yet begun, but Karen Parusel of the Grant Office of the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage has arranged for the grant to be rolled over into the current fiscal year. It is anticipated that work on the building will commence very shortly.

Cathy Holmes asked whether the Board intended to employ the painter who had agreed to complete the work last year, but who has not yet started. Louise replied that she hoped so, but that she has so far been unsuccessful in making contact with the individual in question, and that the matter may have to be reviewed by the Board.

Fuel Costs: During the winter of 2018-19, furnace oil for the complex cost about $12,000. This level of expenditure on heating is unsustainable. The Facilities Committee is currently making enquiries of contractors to determine the cost and feasibility of augmenting the current heating system at the SCM with heat pumps.

It was moved (Lindsay/Martin) and carried that the Report of the Board be accepted.

**4. Financial Report:** Valerie Martin (Secretary-Treasurer) presented the financial report for the fiscal year 2018-2019. A copy is attached to these minutes. She outlined the main points of interest, and offered to respond by email to any enquiries that members might have.

Income:

Earned income was down about $21,000, due to a $4,000 decline in admissions, perhaps because of the staffing difficulties experienced last year; a decline in consignment revenue which offset an increase in gift shop receipts; and an apparent decline in dory sales. However she noted that the $12,000 decline reflected the unusually large dory sale income experienced in the previous year. Dory sales in the year under review had returned to their normal level.

Total donation and fundraising income increased by about $3,000 due to more individual donations and revenue from special events.

Public funding decreased about $14,000 (7 percent) from the previous year because of reductions in both Federal and Provincial government grants

Total revenue was $302,400 compared with $334,000 in the previous year: a $32,000 difference, of which $12,000 was due to the return of dory sale revenue to historical levels.

Expenditures:

Total expenditures were down by about $53,000 because of a combination of unusual events. Programming expenses were less than the previous year, no doubt because the shortage of staff curtailed some of the activities. Salary and benefits were about $36,000 less than in the previous year. This was the result of fewer summer students (only 3 of the 11 summer student grants were used, because of the dearth of applicants) and the resignation of the Director.

The cost of insurance was higher than previously because we added an environmental waiver to protect us in the event of a fuel tank lead.

The cost of furnace oil was up by more than $3,000, and electricity by another $1,000.

The net loss for the year was $4,050, but Valerie warned that had we paid a Director for the entire year, the loss would have been in the order of $30,000. This is not a sustainable situation, and it is imperative that the Society find ways and means to reduce expenditures and/or increase revenue.

It was moved (Martin/Harding) and carried that the Treasurer’s Report be accepted.

5. Appointment of a Third Party Reviewer: It was moved (Martin/Terry Redmond) and carried that the Board be empowered to name a Third Party Reviewer for the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year.

**6. Election of Directors:** There was no response to the President’s call for nominations from the floor. It was moved (Terry Redmond/Burrill) and carried that the proposed slate of Directors be accepted. The Board of Directors for 2019-2020 will consist of: Sharon Burrill, Sherry Thorburn Irvine, Louise Lindsay, Valerie Martin, Rachel Yellin, Chris Sharpe, and Bill Cox (Honorary Lifetime Member of the Board).

**7. New Business:**

The Board has approved a request from the Board of the Osprey to rent them office and display space in the Shelburne County Museum while their own facility is being refurbished after the fire. The current arrangement will terminate on 31 October, 2019, but renewal of the lease on a month-by-month basis may be approved subsequent to that date if renovations to the Osprey/Yacht Club building have not been completed.

Adjournment: It was moved (Thorburn/Martin) and carried that the meeting be adjourned at 1950 hours.