



FRIENDS of DENNIS TOWNSHIP OLD SCHOOLHOUSE MUSEUM

May Meeting Minutes

Mr. DiCicco led the pledge of allegiance. Mr. Rebmann called roll. Absent with prior notification were Bevan O'Grady and Sarah Matthews. Present were DiCicco, Gooch, Laughlin, and Rebmann.

Also in attendance were Thomas Champion, Rev. Fred Marz, and Bob Penrose.

Mr. Gooch offered the treasurer's report. There were two membership applications since the April meeting. No other deposits. No expenditures. Mr. Gooch recommended renting PO box annually after the current (six months) lease expires.

April meeting minutes were approved by board members present at that meeting. Mr. Rebmann will forward copy of the minutes to Mr. Laughlin to post on the Friends website.

Mr. Laughlin updated on the Friends' logo in Ms. O'Grady's (anticipated extended) absence. He recommended paying a professional to perform the work. He will request copies of work already in progress.

Mr. Gooch asked if there was a way of getting the work done for free. Mr. Rebmann indicated he will contact his daughter Alena, a professional artist with extensive experience developing computer graphics and related art work.

The board agreed to go through Vistaprint. Com to create simple business cards (without individual names). Estimated cost is under \$20. Mr. Rebmann will do this prior to June meeting.

Mr. Rebmann updated the meeting on activities at the museum with special emphasis on the upcoming visit by the Dennis Township Elementary School. Mr. Champion will be on hand to tell students about Belleplains State Park. Mrs. Rebmann will conduct a presentation about raising Seeing Eye puppies.

Mr. Penrose suggested creating a "Seek and Find" questionnaire for students, based on exhibits at the museum. Mr. Rebmann agreed to do this.

Mr. Gooch recommended having the grass cut again prior to the visit, as well as emptying exterior trash receptacle. Mr. Rebmann will contact the township to have this completed. Mr. Champion presented a check for \$500, donated by the Dennis Township Senior Association at its May meeting. Press release has already appeared in the Cape May Gazette. Photos were taken with Mr. Champion presenting the check to Mr. Gooch. Mr. Rebmann will write a release to go with the photo. The Cape May County Herald has indicated it will publish the photo. He'll also send copies to other papers as well as the township committee and senior center. He'll also write a thank you to the association, inviting members to select a time/date to visit the museum (at their convenience). Mr. Laughlin will post the photo on the Friends and museum websites.

In Open Discussion, members talked about contacting painting contractors to solicit estimates to paint the exterior of the building, to get an idea what is needed in terms of work and money. Mr. Penrose pointed out that the exterior paint is "probably" lead based which would require a different approach. Lead based paint can't be power "washed". Other repairs are needed for the shutters and carpentry work on the building and steps.

Guest for the night's meeting was Anthony Monzo, an attorney who recently assisted Friends of Fishing Creek School House develop its by-laws. Mr. Monzo donated his time/expertise to be at the meeting.

Mr. Monzo opened by clarifying the Friends relationship to the township vis a vis ownership of the building. He noted that with Fishing Creek, that local area's governing body turned over operational control of the building to the Friends group, subject to the building being made available to the public. Lower Township leases the building, originally owned by the school, to the Friends for a nominal amount.

In Dennis' case, the museum is operated by the township through its curator. The Friends have no ownership or lease stake. Mr. Monzo suggested discussing with the township lease options (without assuming costs of operation. He clarified this to suggest a "management agreement" to run the museum for the township, with the owners still assuming costs while the Friends provide access for the public., as well as maintaining exhibits etc.

Mr. Monzo also discussed the titles/roles of group officials, a concern of Mr. DiCicco's. Mr. Monzo pointed out that various titles (president, treasurer, etc.) have specific duties that should be spelled out in the by-laws. While routine matters are decided by the board, major decisions (e.g. "large" expenditures) should be voted upon by the membership. He added that there is no conflict with an officer holding more than one title. Responding to a question from Mr. Rebmann who is curator of the museum as well as serving as an officer of the Friends, Mr. Monzo suggested that this did not present a conflict and Mr. Rebmann can recuse on any issues that might arise that might present conflict (or the appearance of same). Similarly, Mr. Laughlin an officer of the Friends and operator of a business that could potentially do work for the Friends, can recuse himself.

Mr. Penrose offered an example of a successful nonprofit, describing the arrangement in neighboring Avalon with which he is familiar, stressing the differentiation between operating boards for the non-profit in relation to the municipality and that museum. He noted that the non-profit status the Friends have obtained will open possibilities for grants. Mr. Rebmann added that the group has already filed for several but must wait until it has completed one year until qualifying for a number of others.

Mr. Penrose added that as the Dennis Friends grows, much of the work being done by the main board could be delegated to specific committees.

In addition, Mr. Monzo touched upon the topic of copyright for the eventual logo the Friends adopt. While not emphasizing the need to obtain a copyright, he did suggest registering with the state for a trademark once a logo is developed.

Mr. Monzo has offered to review a brief draft of by-laws drawn up by the Friends to determine what should be added/deleted/modified.