

## **BERKLEY HISTORICAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, July 13, 2021

**Present:** S. Richardson (Chairperson), J. Tong (Vice-Chairperson), D. Carlson (Secretary), M.C. Mueller, J. Cauley, K. Schmeling, R. Patterson, K. Scharra-Eraqi

**Absent:** W. Mathis (Treasurer/non-voting), G. Rubright, City Council Liaison S. Baker

Regular non-voting attendee S. Hansen was present.

New non-voting attendee D. Callihan was present.

1. The meeting was called to order by S. Richardson at 7:01 pm. New Committee members Rachel Patterson, Katie Scharra-Eraqi and non-voting attendee Don Callihan were introduced. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. S. Richardson called for possible amendments to the meeting agenda. None were put forth. S. Richardson called for a motion to approve the meeting's agenda. K. Schmeling made a motion to approve the meeting's agenda. J. Cauley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously without discussion. S. Richardson called for citizen comments and none were made.
2. S. Richardson called for amendments to the minutes for the April 13th, 2021 meeting of the Committee. J. Cauley pointed out the misspelling of "Berkley" in bullet point 4-e. D. Carlson noted the needed correction and expressed his intent to make it. J. Cauley made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2021 meeting of the Berkley Historical Committee with the aforementioned correction included. D. Carlson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously without discussion.
3. **Treasurer's Report:** J. Tong made the Treasurer's report due to the absence of Committee Treasurer W. Mathis. There were no reported expenditures. Income totalled \$191.00 with a resulting balance of \$16,826.39. \$176.00 came from street sign sales, mug sales, miscellaneous museum sales and museum donations. \$15.00 came from Berkley Public Library sales. J. Tong also noted approximately \$1,000 in undeposited income from the most recent street sign sales and reported on two other miscellaneous financial items:

- a. Most of the Berkley street signs have sold out but sales of what remains continue. An unspecified number of Woodward signs are expected to be added to our inventory in the coming months.
  - b. 45 additional copies of "Berkley" will soon be delivered and the book restocked at the Museum. Royalty income generated from sales at other locations over the last two years was sent to the City and will soon be calculated and added to the Committee's account.
4. **Curator's Report:** Committee Vice-Chairperson J. Tong reported on a number of recent developments, some of which generated discussion and motions, some of which did not:
- a. Berkley's Department of Public Safety Building has recently expanded its lobby and is seeking items from our Museum to put on display. J. Tong made a motion that we loan to the Public Safety Department our current Public Safety display case and its contents. K. Schmeling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously without debate.
  - b. J. Tong noted the somewhat less than civil debate incited on the Museum's Facebook page by a recent post featuring a visit that the real-life Aunt Jemima made to Berkley in the 1950s and asked Committee members for suggestions on encouraging more polite public discourse among page visitors. A lengthy discussion ensued. D. Carlson suggested posting less politically charged material on the Facebook page but there was a general consensus among members that it would be wiser to avoid self-censorship or giving the impression of whitewashing. Discretionary deletion or hiding of offensive and rude commentary on the page was roundly suggested as an appropriate course of action in most cases. K. Patterson stated that she had some experience in this area and volunteered to compose a Facebook policy/disclaimer to be considered at a future meeting of the Committee.
  - c. Mug sales have continued to be brisk.
  - d. The Department of Public Works intends to soon donate to the Museum and Committee an unspecified number of Woodward street signs. These signs are expected to generate great interest among the public. J. Tong noted the possibility of realizing greater income from their sales than others. Suggestions from Committee members for possible methods of sale that might generate

premium values included raffle and auction. S. Hansen suggested that state licensing law might preclude an easy auction and suggested that some signs be saved for a post-expansion Museum “Grand Re-Opening”. S. Hansen also recommended members consider ways of expressing the Committee's appreciation to Berkley Department of Public Works employees Derrick Schueller and Mike Hunyor who were instrumental in the donation of the street signs. D. Carlson suggested that any attempts to maximize Woodward street sign income be accompanied by thorough public messaging regarding the uses of the funds generated, specifically that the funds will be used to finance projects beneficial to the greater Berkley community. Further street sign related discussion was tabled until the next Committee meeting.

- e. J. Tong stated that it now appears the Museum's upcoming expansion will double its size and called upon Committee's members for ideas on how to best utilize the new space. S. Hansen suggested that the expansion presents the best opportunity to begin cataloguing the Museum's collection using Past-Perfect. It was also suggested that cataloguing developments could be publicly reported within D. Callihan's proposed quarterly newsletters (see bullet point #7), and that G. Rubright and S. Hansen's Museum collection photography be properly integrated into Past-Perfect cataloguing.
  - f. The reporting of donations to the Museum was tabled until the next meeting of the Committee.
5. The Committee's Berkley Village Hall & Fire-Police Station historical marker project was discussed. D. Carlson reported the general consensus among City officials and historical marker sub-committee members that the marker be applied to the building as opposed to upon posts, thus making the marker one-sided rather than two. D. Carlson then presented the first draft of his proposed historical marker text. Discussion of its content ensued with mostly positive feedback. The portion in quotes was the most roundly criticized and including information about the building's most recent renovations, additions and uses was suggested by multiple Committee members. D. Carlson stated his intention to edit the text to reflect Committee suggestions and present his second draft at the next meeting. D. Carlson also noted his intentions to apply for the Village Hall's inclusion on the National Registry of Historic Places. J. Tong noted the City's plan

to renovate the space surrounding the immediate area around the historical marker's proposed location, upon the facade of the Coolidge-facing side of the Village Hall, and to make a more inviting community space out of it. Proposed dates for a public revealing of the proposed historical marker were discussed. D. Carlson suggested the evening of Friday, March 10th, 2023 which would be the exact 95th anniversary of the Village Hall's 1928 dedication. Other Committee members suggested that the afternoon of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Village of Berkley, Sunday, April 2, 2023, might be a more favorable date. A general consensus was reached that the latter date works best, most specifically because it will be later in the Spring and the weather is slightly more likely to be pleasant, plus 100 year anniversaries are obviously more notable than 95.

6. S. Richardson announced that the Berkley Art Bash will take place on Saturday, September 11th and called upon Committee members to volunteer time manning the Committee's booth. Volunteers are needed from 9:30am to 6pm. D. Callihan suggested the possibility of retail sales of photography and other appropriate merchandise as part of the Committee's Art Bash activities. The subject was tabled for further discussion at the next meeting of the Committee.
7. D. Callihan presented to the Committee a proposal for a quarterly Berkley Historical Museum newsletter and passed out copies of the text for a proposed article to be included in the first edition. D. Carlson stated his willingness to provide photography. S. Hansen suggested that it might be an effective promotional tool for the Museum. S. Richardson spoke upon the "Friends of the Berkley Museum" proposal of past meetings and suggested that it might be integrated into the newsletter proposal, and that if sufficient benefit were developed for members of such a group that it could be a formidable fundraiser. D. Callihan also suggested the possibility of sponsoring an "Old Photo Contest" at the Museum, increasing both community interaction and the quality of Museum's holdings. Discussion of these proposals was tabled until the next meeting but with a general consensus to move forward with them.
8. D. Carlson stated his intention to investigate the City Charter interpretations that are said to prevent former Berkley residents that are long standing Committee members from

continuing to vote on Committee matters, and furthermore, to report his findings at a future meeting of the Committee.

9. S. Richardson informed the Committee of our return to monthly meetings and passed around the Museum volunteer schedule for sign-ups.
10. S. Hansen reported that both Glenn Rubright and Waneda Mathis are recovering nicely from their recent health ordeals and that both members will likely be present at the Committee's next meeting.
11. J. Tong made a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:40 pm. K. Schmeling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously without discussion.