

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
ST. CLAIR SHORES HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**MacHarg Room
Tuesday, February 7, 2023**

PRESENT:

Chairperson	Mr. Gerald Sielagoski
Vice-Chairperson	Mr. John Cilluffo
Treasurer	Mrs. Kathleen Campbell
Member	Ms. Janet Horan
Member	Ms. Kay VanDeGraaf
City Librarian	Mrs. Rosemary Orlando
Assistant Library Director	Ms. Stephanie Fair
Museum Curator	Ms. Kim Parr
Council Liaison	Ms. Candice Rusie

ALSO PRESENT:

Councilperson	Mr. John Caron
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I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Sielagoski called the Annual Meeting of the St. Clair Shores Historical Commission to order at 7:00 PM

Moved by Horan, supported by Cilluffo to appoint Campbell as acting secretary.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion Carried.

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by Horan, supported by Cilluffo, to adopt the agenda.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion Carried.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Cilluffo, supported by Horan, to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2022, Regular Meeting of the St. Clair Shores Historical Commission with amendments. The meeting held on January 3, 2023 was unofficial, due to the lack of a quorum. As a result, no minutes were taken.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion Carried.

IV. INFORMATION REPORTS

A. Guest Presentation

Councilperson John Caron addressed the Historical Commission regarding the soon to be completed pier and park at Blossom Heath. There are presently three planting beds established by the Waterfront Environmental Advisory Board, two of which have “kiosks” pertaining to different aspects of Lake St. Clair: fish species found in the lake and the Clinton River Watershed. Caron would like the third planting bed to also have a kiosk (historical marker) representing the history of commerce on Lake St. Clair. The marker should reflect the following major topics:

- Early Indigenous Tribes and Uses
- European Discovery and Naming of the Lake
- Early Settlements Along the Lake and Early Commerce Travels
- Commerce Expansion with Canal and Channel Creation
- Prohibition Era Smuggling Operations
- Beginnings of Marinas, Transition of Shoreline to Canals, and Transformation into Recreational

The Historical Commission has agreed to begin efforts to create the marker later this year with funds provided by the Pier project.

B. Museum Activities

Parr supplied a Calendar of Events for 2023 and also provided a calendar listing scheduled docents for the Selinsky-Green Farmhouse Museum (SGFM) during the months of February, March and April 2023. The recent Sewing Saturday events have been well attended.

Parr questioned the procedure for handling funds for events. A discussion followed with the decision to continue to handle as-is and in alignment with the submission of a budget for approval and receipts for expenditures following approved purchases.

Parr questioned her mission at the SGFM. She inquired as to whether she should focus on just keeping the museum open or to continue with providing programs, as well. The Historical Commission expectation is that she should be able to do both; however, it will require some pre-planning. Parr is expected to keep the Historical Commission informed of her plans before the initiation of any project. She also needs to focus on identifying and addressing repairs for the museum.

Luke Anderson has been working on repairing the inner garden fence at the SGFM for his Eagle Scout project; but has not completed the project. Anderson is requesting permission to split the branches in half. Discussion followed concerning the durability of split branches and the Historical Commission does not want Anderson to split the branches.

Parr has not met with the Library Communications director yet but has indicated that she has a problem with 3 different people handling the promotion of museum events. Parr feels that time is being wasted when she could be handling it all. The recently hired Assistant Library Director, Stephanie would like to have all events shared across all city formats in a timely manner.

Discussion followed about the museum curator posting content to social media/internet without prior approval from the SCS Historical Commission and SCS Communications Department. All information shall be approved by the SCS Historical Commission and the SCS Communications Department prior to posting.

Parr showed everyone the finished plaques for the donated bench from Jefferson Beach Amusement Park and for the Gus Blumline Memorial bench located in the SGFM garden. The plaques will need to be attached to the benches. Sielagoski had questioned whether a thank you note had been sent to the Welsh family for their donation. John Cilluffo will provide the last email address used for communication with the family, so that a thank you note can be sent.

C. Historical Society Report

Form 990 has been filed online for FY2021. Form 990 for FY2022 will be filed online in the near future.

Bank account balances are: \$25,219.16 Investment account, \$8,004.15 in 2nd investment account, \$5,429.06 in the checking account.

D. Genealogy Group Report

No report.

E. Comments by Individual Commission Members

Rusie thanked John Caron for attending the meeting and proposing an additional Historical Commission marker at the Blossom Heath Pier. She also thanked the Commission for all the work they do with so few members. Because the Historical Commission is defined by City Charter, the number of members constituting a quorum cannot be easily altered. More effort will be made to attract additional Historical Commission members.

Sielagoski received an email from Theresa Bertolini's grandson, Nick Nieto, who saw the article in the *Shores Magazine* and requested additional photos of Theresa, if any were available. Jerry sent pictures that he received from Rusie and Cilluffo. Theresa's grandson, Nick, was very grateful to the Commission for providing the photographs.

F. Librarians Report

Orlando introduced the new Assistant Library Director, Stephanie and is delighted to have her joining the library staff.

Mr. Roger Laske from the Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan has requested information regarding donating \$700.00 for a memorial bench in memory of Kenneth Merique. Orlando will be in contact with Mr. Laske and will provide more information as it becomes available.

The Library is hoping to start a *Living History Program* that would include people such as Mr. Morley or Maurice VanCoillie. Orlando asked for suggestions. The library is also looking for “famous” St. Clair Shores residents for a series of posters; and has been advertising for residents to donate or loan photos for the digital archives.

Friends of the Library will be having a one-day book sale on February 28th.

The Cultural Committee is hosting a trip to the Zekelman Holocaust Center in Farmington Hills on March 7th. Tickets are available for \$15. The Cultural Committee is also planning a trip to the DSO, *Hollywood Rocks*, for one of their Friday concerts. Tickets on sale for \$40.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Historical Markers for Residences/Businesses Update:

Cilluffo will contact the homeowner, Karen Pelham, at 30114 Jefferson to see how their research is progressing. Campbell will provide him with Pelham’s contact information.

No additional applications have been received.

City Historical Marker Update:

Rusie has approved the reorder of the Eagle Pointe marker. The Trinity marker has also been ordered. Production time is running about 8-10 weeks right now.

Campbell has approached Redeemer Lutheran and Lake Shore Churches about historical markers. Lake Shore has invited the commission to a meeting on February 27 at 2:00 p.m. Campbell left messages at Redeemer Lutheran. She has not heard back yet, but will continue to pursue contact.

Shores Magazine:

Towar Productions (*Shores Magazine*) has terminated its agreement with the SCS Historical Commission as part of cost cutting measures for the magazine. As a result, they will no longer be featuring the “Stepping Back in Time” articles in the magazine. They will continue to include ads for the Historical Commission if there is room and would welcome composed articles. They did not provide any feedback as to the appeal of the historical articles.

V. OLD BUSINESS (Continued)

Senior Center Historical Mural

Horan contacted Celeste Frasad regarding making changes to the historical mural at the Senior Center to include Frasad's grandfather's name. It is not possible to alter the existing mural and an apology was made for the unintended omission.

Commission Membership Update

The resignation of Michael Leydet was effective December 6, 2022. Amanda McLaughlin has been removed for cause (excessive unexcused absences).

St. Gertrude Cemetery

Sielagoski investigated the management of the St. Gertrude Cemetery and found that it is not managed by Archdiocese of Detroit (AOD) Catholic Funeral and Cemetery Services. However, Mooney Real Estate Holdings, an AOD corporation, holds title to the property. They consider the property as a land holding, since there will not be any more burials there. The property is not being maintained.

The Water Tower on Masonic

Councilman Rubello still inquiring about the history of the water tower. Sielagoski referred him to old issues of *Muskrat Tales*.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Digital Photo Project:

Intern working on digitizing donated or loaned photos. Photo use form has been approved. Campbell will send final form to all Commission members as well as to Orlando and Christein.

Correspondence Sent to the Historical Commission email address

Sielagoski received an email from Gerard Santoro from the Macomb County Planning and Economic Development Commission regarding wanting to connect with someone from the Crocker House about the Belvedere and St. Felicity sites. Parr believes that Santoro may be trying to contact her because she was employed at the Crocker House in the past. Sielagoski will send Parr the contact information.

VI. NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

Election of Officers

Sielagoski asked for nominations for officers.

Moved by Horan, supported by VanDeGraaf, to nominate the current officers as follows:

Chairperson	Mr. Gerald Sielagoski
Vice-Chairperson	Mr. John Cilluffo
Secretary/Treasurer	Mrs. Kathleen Campbell

All nominees accepted and were elected.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion Carried

VII. AUDIENCE

Councilman John Caron was in attendance.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Horan, supported by Cilluffo to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 PM.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion Carried

The next regular meeting of the St. Clair Shores Historical Commission will be held on Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at the SCSPL in the MacHarg Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Campbell,
Acting Secretary