

Warner Free Lecture Trustees Meeting

In-person at the Harvard Public Library

Minutes for December 12, 2023

Trustees Present: Jeff Boudreau, Michael Kilian (Chair), Nancy Meyer, Steve Peisch, Billy Salter, Sheila Simollardes.

Chair called the meeting to order at 6:22 PM.

1. Review and approve minutes from November 13, 2023

VOTE: Sheila moved, Steve seconded approval of the November minutes. All in favor.

2. Next meeting Tuesday, January 16 at 6:15 PM. Location TBD

3. John Hanson Mitchell, "Gardening in the Age of Climate Change," January 12, 2024

Garden Club is co-sponsoring. Mike will include them in the website blurb. Jeff will share that blurb on social media. Mike will talk with *The Press* and with the Harvard Climate Initiative Committee about publicizing the event. Steve will reach out to Bromfield principal.

Nancy spoke with Town Executive Assistant Julie Doucet about including our lectures in the town calendar and "News and Announcements." Nancy will send our calendar to her. There are no more schedule cards on the table in Town Hall entrance. Sheila will bring more over.

4. Finances

Billy gave a review of finances. From July to November, we spent almost \$1,300. Cash balance swings with investments. At current time, the balance is approximately \$28,000.

Jeff reminded us about getting grant application windows on future meeting agendas. We looked at the Massachusetts Cultural Council Festivals and Projects grant, which provides one-year grants of \$2,500 to support public activities incorporating the arts, humanities, or sciences. The application will open March 28, 2024, with applications due May 23, 2024, for funding starting in FY25 (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025). Consider creating a subcommittee of 2-3 people to draft a proposal. Grant discussion tabled till January meeting.

5. Potential Speakers

We reviewed the list of potential speakers and removed from consideration the names of people who have spoken recently or are low probability to accept our invitation.

6. Next year's speakers

We began forming a list of speakers for the WFL 2024/25 season. Trustees will contact speakers about their schedules and ask them their speaker fee. Selling books at the event would be part of their compensation.

- Randy Hodgkinson. Pianist Randall Hodgkinson, Grand Prize winner of the International American Music Competition sponsored by Carnegie Hall and the Rockefeller Foundation, has performed with orchestras in Atlanta, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Boston, Cleveland and abroad in Italy and Iceland. Steve has contacted him.
- Harvey Leonard. WCVB-TV Chief Meteorologist Emeritus. Possible topic could be “Changes in Meteorological Reporting.” Sheila has reached out to him but hasn’t heard back yet.
- Jim Sullivan. Staff writer for the *Boston Herald* and 26-year music critic for the *Boston Globe*. Author of, *Backstage & Beyond Vol. 1: 45 Years of Classic Rock Chats & Rants*. Jeff contacted him. Speaker fee: \$250.
- J. Dennis Robinson. “The Smuttynose Ax Murders.” Robinson is a writer, historian and steward of Smuttynose Island, and author of *Mystery on the Isles of Shoals: Closing the Case on the Smuttynose Ax Murders of 1873*. Nancy has contact him. Speaker fee: \$350.
- Allen Rutberg. Billy spoke with Allen about a talk about some of the ways that experts try to control invasive species populations. Talk would include ethical, scientific, and political aspects. Allen agreed to speak. Speaker fee: \$350.
- Francine Nolde. A pioneer pilot and a World War II commander of the Reading Courier Station in the Pennsylvania Wing of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP). 5 Sparks is interested in hosting a talk with her and approached us about collaborating. Sheila will speak with Francine to see if we can influence scheduling the lecture in the fall.
- Joseph Dadigian. Mike will contact him, if additional speaker is needed.

We discussed applying for MCC grant funding to attract higher profile speakers, e.g. Bill McKibben, Marty Baron, Sy Montgomery. Steve stated his opposition to putting grant funds to one high profile speaker. This could impact our ability to attract presenters who agree to present at fees much lower than their usual rate. Add to the grants discussion in January.

7. Meeting adjourned at 7:26 PM.

VOTE: Steve moved, Sheila seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Nancy Meyer, Secretary.

NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS:

- Debrief Hanson Mitchell
- MCC Grant – possible impact. If we pursue, timeline and subcommittee for proposal
- Continue to build the WFL 2024/25 Speaker Calendar

ACTION ITEMS:

- Mike, Jeff, Steve, Nancy follow-up on publicity tasks for January 12 lecture
- Nancy send WFL calendar to Julie Doucet
- Sheila bring more WFL cards to Town Hall
- Trustees will continue to reach out to speakers to get info about their schedules and speaker fee (see item #6, above)