

Olive Branch School Preservation Society

Minutes of the Annual Meeting on October 10, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman William Berry. Trustees present were **William Berry, Cyndie Gerken, Sharon Leathley, John Sipe, Howard Stahl, Virgil Studebaker, Peter Scarff** and **Ken Strickland**. Ex officio Superintendent Norm Glismann and guests Connie Sample and Don Wallace were also in attendance.

In the absence of Secretary Susan Morgan, Vice Chair Cyndie Gerken called the roll and took the meeting minutes. With no questions regarding the minutes of the July 11, 2016 meeting, a motion to approve was made by Ken Strickland and seconded by Howard Stahl. Motion carried.

Treasurer Sharon Leathley presented an oral report with an ending balance of \$7705.43, which was unchanged from July. A written report will be filed for audit. As stipulated, the OBSPS financial records will be audited at year's end.

Chairperson Berry presented copies of his 2016 Annual Report to the trustees, as required by the OBSPS bylaws. A copy of the report is posted on the OBSPS web site and will be retained in the Minutes Book.

Under Old Business, Peter Scarff (as our Tecumseh Local Schools Board of Education representative) was in attendance to respond to questions that had previously been submitted to the TLS Board regarding Resolution 46-16 "Resolution of Intent Regarding the Olive Branch Building." A copy of an email which detailed the Board's response was provided to the trustees. Per that written response, the TLS Board is in support of the OBSPS efforts to fund raise and apply for grants, etc., but will not fund any of the assessment or planning for the refurbishing of the Olive Branch building. Once it is refurbished, their Board would plan to use the OB building for periodic Board meetings and possible history classes/tours, and would use one wing of the building to store pallets of paper. The TLS Board would consider a long-term lease with the OBSPS, the specific details of which would be worked out in the future. These responses led to more questions by the OBSPS trustees, including concern raised by Cyndie Gerken over the difficulty of fund raising and grant writing for a building not owned by the applicant (OBSPS). Mr. Glismann will check with the District's attorney about how to help OBSPS handle this. Mr. Stahl questioned Mr. Scarff and Superintendent Glismann about the possibility of TLS using Permanent Improvement Funds to pay for the assessments needed to determine the costs of refurbishing, but both stated that no funds would be made available for that purpose. It was suggested by Mr. Scarff that the Society might go to the Springfield Foundation and the Turner Foundation to ask them for guidance and/or recommendations as to how we might proceed. Discussion turned to the future of fund raising given the current economic situation, and Mr. Scarff reiterated that the TLS Board will not be involved in any of those efforts. The discussion concluded but will remain an on-going issue with details to be resolved in the future.

Under New Business, Mr. Berry stated that he, Cyndie Gerken, and Susan Morgan all have terms expiring as of October 31, 2016. However, Mr. Berry has decided not to be re-appointed and will be leaving the Board at the end of October. As this came as a surprise, discussion began

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in regards to how to move forward. Cyndie Gerken thanked Mr. Berry for his long-term work on the Society's behalf, and this sentiment was echoed by the other trustees. Cyndie also stated that she was not interested in becoming Chair, but would serve as Acting Chair until the January 2017 meeting. Mr. Studebaker wondered if we should once again consider suspending the activities of the Society in the coming year since we will have no help from the TLS Board to even assess the costs of refurbishing the OB building. Concern was voiced that if we suspend activities, it would be difficult to get a group back together again. The trustees discussed how the Society was formed, and how we had thought that the TLS Board would be willing to help with restoration estimates, grant applications, etc. since in 2008 they had been involved in hiring the consultant to do the National Register application for the Olive Branch building. Mr. Glismann and Mr. Scarff inquired about what "protection" (if any) that a listing on the National Register of Historic Places provided, and Cyndie Gerken reluctantly commented that two NR buildings had recently been torn down on college campuses, despite strong preservation support. OBSPS continues to be concerned about the future of OB, given the issues we face.

Guest Don Wallace was called upon to share an idea to promote local educational history. He hadn't realized the Society's challenges, and wondered if he should return at a future time to talk with us. He was encouraged to continue and began by sharing his family's five generations of background in the school system. In fact, Don's grandfather (as well as Peter Scarff's great-grandfather) was responsible for encouraging the construction of the Olive Branch High School building. Additionally, the Wallace Family Papers held in the Wright State University archives provided many of the historical documents and images that are included on the OBSPS web site. Don had talked with the *New Carlisle News* about his idea of Tecumseh Local Schools and OBSPS putting historic articles about the school system in the paper to create a local archive. Those in attendance felt like this was a good idea, but it will have to be put on hold until the Society is better equipped to undertake such a project. Mr. Wallace was asked if he would consider becoming a trustee of the OBSPS, and he will take it under advisement.

Continuing with New Business, a motion to re-appoint Cyndie Gerken and Susan Morgan to new three-year terms to expire October 31, 2019 was made by Virgil Studebaker and seconded by Ken Strickland. Motion carried. Ms. Gerken reminded the trustees that Mr. Berry's departure not only presents a board vacancy, but also will leave OBSPS without a Chairman. The election of officers was tabled until January. Cyndie will chair the January meeting, and in the meantime, we will all consider stepping up to assume a leadership role and seek new persons interested in serving on the Board. It was pointed out that the next regularly scheduled meeting date of January 9, 2017 falls on the same night as the National College Football Championship game, so it was suggested that we change our Board meeting. A motion to re-schedule it to Wednesday, January 11th was made by Mr. Berry seconded by Mr. Stahl. Motion carried. With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Stahl and seconded by Ken Strickland. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 8:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Cyndie Gerken, Acting Secretary