

## OLIVE BRANCH SCHOOL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Minutes of the meeting of April 11, 2011

Members present: William Berry, Cyndie Gerken, Jim Leathley, Jane Manemann, Brad Martin, Susan Morgan, John Sipe, and Ken Strickland

With a quorum present, William Berry called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

The minutes of the January 3, 2011 meeting were corrected to read Randy Young instead of Andy. The minutes should also read Sharon Leathley rather than Cheryl. It was moved by Cyndie Gerken to accept the corrected minutes. The motion was seconded by Jim Leathley. The motion carried.

William Berry reported a balance of \$1,000 in the treasury. Jim Leathley stated that he would make activity in the account, the following day.

William Berry advised the Society that Ray Lowe will do the required audit.

Mr. Berry wrote the annual report of the Olive Branch School Preservation Society, outlining activities up to the present.

Word was received from Franco Ruffini that public officials are not convinced that stimulus money should be used for historical preservation.

In response to a letter from Jean Baker Wierenga (38500 Beaver Dr. Beaver Island, Michigan 49782), Dr. Gay addressed the deterioration of the Olive Branch School. He wrote that the roof is kept in repair, the building envelope is weather-tight, the building has been placed on the National Register, and the Preservation Society has plans for restoration. The Society applauds Dr. Gay for such an extensive reply.

Jane Manemann moved to change Article 6, Section 2 of the OBSPS Bylaws to read the meetings will be held on the second Monday instead of the first. The motion was seconded by Susan Morgan, and approved by the Society.

Cyndie Gerken reported that she is composing a letter to be sent to potential donors. She noted that Randy has proposed to keep the name of the Society in the "New Carlisle News" and the "Springfield Sun". The letter will address membership. Checks may be made out to the "Olive Branch School Preservation Society." Cyndie also reported that the Society did not receive Brownfield funds from the American Recovery Act.

William Berry pointed out that the negativism from both the state and federal governments has been detrimental to our goals. Brad pointed out that government discussion about Social Security, Medicare, healthcare, etc. has not been beneficial to our project.

Jane Manemann stated that the community has wanted to preserve the Olive Branch building. This project is not a conflict with the current levy proposal, but is a separate issue. They cannot be totally separated, however, as there will be administrative offices in the restored building, which is owned by the Tecumseh Local Schools. The Society must go with the grassroots approach, and realize that a windfall is unlikely. Fundraisers would get our name before the public. A booth at the Heritage of flight and at football games would be effective. Money can be raised from the permanent improvement levy. Service Clubs, VFW, American Legion, Retired Teachers, Senior Luncheon, and the Eagles are likely sources of funds. She further suggested that a form for donations and memberships be placed in the local newspapers.

Jim Leathley stated that he believed the levy issue and the restoration project should be totally separate. A “thermometer” sign, indicating funds received would help separate the two issues in the public mind. According to Mr. Berry, the last quote for the restoration was \$1.3 million. Susan Morgan suggested that tours of the building be given in conjunction with class reunions. This would result in an emotional appeal. Brad Martin suggested a brochure for the tours.

John Sipe pointed out that this project is much more extensive than a local effort. Most alumni attending reunions are not local. He voiced concern about memberships vs. donations. William Berry suggested asking for a commitment of 4 or 5 years from donors. Jim Leathley pointed out that was how the athletic building was erected. In reply to a question by John Sipe, Brad Martin stated the school had never gone the endorsement route for a levy. Jim Leathley pointed out that there was no organized opposition. Mr. Berry asked for a consensus that a letter for donations be sent after the levy. John Sipe asked if this was the responsibility of the Finance Committee.

Cyndie Gerken stated that the first step is recruiting members. Jane Manemann stated that people don't like to join organizations, and suggested dropping the concept of members. Mrs. Gerken stated that the membership category had been created. John Sipe suggested the word “volunteer.” Mr. Sipe noted that the Society must be totally organized before soliciting funds. This should be a function of the Finance Committee. Mr. Berry stated that he will meet with Cyndie and Pam, and create a form and protocol for receiving funds. Funds, however, will not be requested at this time. Mr. Leathley replied to Mr. Berry that he was willing to call the Finance Committee after the levy. In reply to a question from Cyndie Gerken, Jane Manemann replied that volunteers could be asked to man a booth, organize plan, do paper work, and do mailings. Mr. Berry concluded the meeting by stating that the Society needs to get things in progressive order and move forward. Jim Leathley needs to get the Finance Committee together by mid-May.

Jane Manemann moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Cyndie Gerken. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Strickland, Secretary