

OLIVE BRANCH SCHOOL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Minutes of the meeting of April 13, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM by Chairman Bill Berry. Trustees present were: William Berry, Cyndie Gerken, Sharon Leathley, Susan Morgan, John Sipe, Howard Stahl, Ken Strickland, Virgil Studebaker and ex officio member TLS Interim Superintendent Paula Crew.

The roll was called by Secretary Susan Morgan; a motion to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2015 meeting was made by Howard Stahl and seconded by Cyndie Gerken. Motion carried.

Treasurer Sharon Leathley handed out a written report showing an ending balance on 3/31/2015 of \$5,545.37. A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made by John Sipe and seconded by Howard Stahl. Motion carried.

Chairman Bill Berry reviewed our progress on the restoration of the Olive Branch building. Two "ball park" estimates are in progress to see how much it would cost to renovate the building. Mr. Stahl mentioned that one of the estimators, C&N, had worked on the restoration of the Bushnell Building (old Wren's department store) in Springfield and that they may be helpful in approaching The Turner Foundation for renovation funds. Mr. Berry reemphasized the need to determine the future use of the building with the Board of Education and that the OBSPS Trustees previously agreed it is not conducive to being used as a Board office. Virgil Studebaker asked for clarification on the building use as he thought at a prior meeting that it was decided that part of the building was to be used by the Board of Education and part would be for historical/community uses. It was determined that idea had been previously discussed as a possible way to use the building, but that no decision had been officially made; since then the Society has decided that would not be the best use. Mr. Berry related that the Board of Education was contacted about meeting with us and that they preferred to wait preferably until summer due to some other especially difficult concerns they are dealing with at this time. Good timing and the need for very specific plans were also mentioned as being very important in getting help on this project.

Under Old Business, the leaky roof on the Olive Branch building was discussed. Howard Stahl and Bill Berry remarked that on their walkthrough with the estimators it was raining and the roof was leaking. Paula Crew stated that she is trying to expedite repair of the roof, gutters, etc., and that there may be need for some repair under parts of the roof. She is working with Roger Diller to get three estimates as required by the school system. She states she will compare repairing to replacing costs and relative benefits before proceeding and that she will keep us up to date. Types of roofing were discussed including tile (to replicate the original), the "PVC" that looks like tile but wears better, and shingles. Mr. Berry commented that when Rex Manemann did a walkthrough of the building for estimate purposes, he also noticed some water in the basement that he felt was coming down along the foundation. Mr. Berry stated also that C&N felt the restoration could be done in phases. In addition, Mr. Berry stated that he had done some research to try and find the original plans for the building, but after looking

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in the Clark County records, the Heritage Center in Springfield, or the Dayton History Center (associated with Carillon Park), he was unable to locate the O.B. 1908 or 1914 building plans. Wright State University was mentioned as another place to research for the original plans. Mr. Sipe mentioned that John Landess, Executive Director of The Turner Foundation, does have an interest in architecture and he may be able to help us gather interest in the project.

Mr. Berry also stated that although he had suggested in months past that we should suspend our activity due to timing concerns (such as community not supporting school levees), he now feels we should continue to meet and plan even if we have to “tread water” until the time to move forward arrives. We all agreed that our biggest stumbling block is that the building is owned by the TLS Board of Education and that causes concerns with the community and grant awards as the money technically would go to a public school owned building. Mr. Berry asked Paula Crew to investigate whether the TLS Board of Education could sell the building to the Society at some future time or if there are any alternatives to our situation. Discussion followed on what other cultural centers were in Clark County and if we would create any conflicts with them. The Davidson Interpretive Center on Lower Valley Pike (that deals mainly with the Indian heritage of the area) and the Heritage Center in Springfield were mentioned and the group generally agreed that we would not be in competition or conflict with them. The restored one-room school house on New Carlisle Pike (that is owned by the Retired Teachers Association) was discussed. In their case, the building was purchased from a church and they have a yearly car show to earn money for its upkeep; it is used for educational purposes. In concluding this discussion, Mr. Berry suggested that next steps be: (1) we get the restoration estimates in and review, and (2) clarify with the TLS Board of Education how we would want the restored Olive Branch Building to be used. Paula Crew agreed to see if we could send a statement to the Board regarding this rather than meeting with them.

Under New Business, Mr. Berry mentioned that in October 2015, trustees Howard Stahl, Ken Strickland, and Virgil Studebaker’s terms will expire and he asked them to think about continuing on the OBSPS Board. Cyndie Gerken also mentioned that Preservation Ohio meets on April 18 to determine what buildings will be on their 2015 Most Endangered Historic Sites list. She stated that she has re-nominated the Olive Branch building to remain on the endangered list. Preservation Ohio does not award funds but does help with awareness in the community.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Howard Stahl and seconded by Cyndie Gerken. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Morgan, Secretary