

Olive Branch School Preservation Society

Minutes of the meeting of February 1, 2016

Note: The OBSPS quarterly Board meeting (which had been scheduled on January 11th) was postponed due to scheduling conflicts and was held on February 1st.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Chairman William Berry. Trustees present were: Bill Berry, Cyndie Gerken, John Sipe, Howard Stahl, Jane Manneman, Susan Morgan, Peter Scarff, Virgil Studebaker, and ex officio member TLS Superintendent Norm Glisman. Guests Connie Sample and Earl Reeder were also in attendance.

Secretary Susan Morgan called the roll and after review, a motion to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2015 meeting was made by Howard Stahl and seconded by Cyndie Gerken. Motion carried.

In the absence of Treasurer Sharon Leathley, a written report (prepared by Sharon) showed an ending balance as of January 31, 2016 of \$7,360.00. It was noted that the report included the 2015 Della Selser Trust award in the amount of \$800.00. Cyndie Gerken volunteered to send a thank you to the Trust noting how the funds would be used.

Chairman William Berry reported that on November 30, 2015 he attended the joint meeting with the Tecumseh Board of Education, Township Trustees, and New Carlisle Council. He noted that in January of 2007 that group had given historical status to the Olive Branch School (Little Round Building.) Mr. Berry reported that he also had attended the December 15, 2015 TLS Board of Education meeting for the purpose of requesting their approval to designate, by letter of intent, the Olive Branch (Little Round Building) as an Archival Retrieval/Museum/Community Center. Peter Scarff reported that the Board had not yet acted upon that as the January meeting was the organizational meeting of the year. The TLS School Board is to meet again February 23, 2016.

Mr. Berry then introduced Mr. Earl Reeder of Reeder Associates, Inc., in Dayton, Ohio. Mr. Reeder reported he has been in the architecture business for 30 years. Some of his firm's work includes the Cox Arboretum historical restoration and the restoration of the Masonic Temple. His firm cannot only design, but can manage construction, permits, etc. on restoration projects. Mr. Reeder stated that he reviewed our notebook on the Olive Branch Building and commented that the information was very detailed and organized, which helped him get a "picture" of what we have done so far. He stated he had contacted the Ohio Historic Preservation Office regarding our project as in his past experience, if restoration met their guidelines, some tax credits were awarded to donors. This might be an avenue we could explore to entice donors. He also emphasized that we needed a clear statement on future use of the building, how it would serve the community, and how it would generate income to pay for maintenance, as prospective donors will want this information. He also noted that intended use may be affected by building codes. For example, different codes may need to be followed if used for a community center rather than a museum.

OBSPS Minutes of the meeting (cont'd)
February 1, 2016

Mr. Reeder stated that the next step he would recommend would be to have a physical assessment of the building. He stated that the \$25,000.00-\$50,000 estimate for this sounded high and unrealistic to him for an organization such as ours. An alternative he suggested would be to approach local contractors and see if they would give us an estimate in different areas, such as plumbing, etc.

A discussion followed on where possible previous plans or drawings of the building might be as Mr. Reeder stated that old plans could be updated at less cost than making all new plans. Mr. Stahl stated he thought that Chris Widener may have some from awhile ago. Mr. Reeder stated he knew Chris and would check on this with him. If no plans could be found, Mr. Reeder said he would recommend proceeding with cost estimates by contractors. He stated that about 40% of restoration costs come from mechanical and electrical updates. He suggested after that to get estimates on projects such as the stucco, windows etc. At that point having drawings and a budget would be needed in order to approach donors for funds for the project. In summary, he stated he recommended to : 1) Get cost estimates, 2) Make a budget, 3) Generate drawings, 4) Raise funds –benevolent if possible and, 5) Make good choices so that the project would be well done as well as benefit our benevolent donors (such as qualifying them for tax credits.)

The meeting ended with discussion on such topics as grant writing and even online fundraising possibilities. Doing the project in stages as funds became available was something Mr. Reeder felt was doable also. He also mentioned that 3-D models done on computer would be less costly than physical models and they do a good job of helping prospective donors visualize the plans in presentations. Mr. Reeder further suggested we check with the Wright State University Archives for microfilm that may have the building plans on it and that we also obtain the Department of Interior's booklet on standards on restorations.

Cyndie Gerken stated the Board of Preservation Ohio meets next month and asked if we wanted her to request that the Olive Branch building remain on the "most endangered historic sites" list. Following a short discussion and noting that a roof had been put on the building since that determination, the group verbally agreed not to request that status this year.

At 8:42 PM a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jane Manemann and seconded by Howard Stahl. Motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned by Bill Berry.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Morgan, Secretary