

## OLIVE BRANCH SCHOOL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

### Minutes of the meeting of July 8, 2013

Trustees present: William Berry, Cyndie Gerken, Jane Manemann, Brad Martin, Susan Morgan, Pam Mustovich, Peter Scarff, John Sipe, Ken Strickland, and Virgil Studebaker.

Mr. Berry called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM, followed by Roll Call.

A motion to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2013 meeting was made by Cyndie Gerken and seconded by Susan Morgan. Motion carried.

Treasurer Pam Mustovich acknowledged a donation from the OB Class of 1947, bringing the current balance to \$4,108.79. She noted that the new system involving the Board office was working well.

Finance Committee: In the absence of Chairman Howard Stahl, Mr. Berry reported that although the committee had not met, Howard Stahl was seeking advice from others with expertise in fund raising.

Old Business: Mr. Berry reported that Ray Lowe completed the required annual audit, and found all the OBSPS financial records to be in order through December 31, 2012.

The 1023 form to renew the Society's status as a 501(c)3 organization was re-filed along with a \$300 filing fee. Although we disagreed, the additional renewal was required because IRS believes that we had previously filed for the wrong year. In answer to a question by Peter Scarff, Mr. Berry stated that this should be a very simple procedure, and we are just waiting to hear back from them.

In answer to a query about the possibility of OBSPS having an article and our donation form in the *Connecting Link*, Brad Martin stated that the downside is that it would be considered advertising and that other non-profits would then have to be allowed to advertise.

In reply to William Berry, Cyndie Gerken stated that OBSPS could not do reduced-priced mailing because we do not have our own Bulk Mail permit. All mass mailings now go through the Tipp City Post Office. In answer to Pam Mustovich, Virgil Studebaker replied that from his experience as a businessman, the permit is too expensive, and the rules are very stringent. Pam Mustovich and Brad Martin emphasized that mailings must fall within the limited dimensions to qualify for Bulk Mail rates.

Ken Strickland had previously mentioned that WBGU, the public television station in Bowling Green, had shown a documentary on historical school buildings in northwestern Ohio. Bill Berry stated that he will contact Channel 5 in this local area to see if they would have any interest in doing a segment on Olive Branch. Perhaps a program could demonstrate the negative side of not restoring a building, such as the New Carlisle School to show the advantage of a restored Olive Branch School. Mr. Berry will do this at the end of summer, when school starts. Jane Manemann noted that Public Channel 23 is mostly a political channel, but may have been useful in advertising our Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> open house. Brad Martin pointed out that Channel 5 has had funding cuts.

New Business: On behalf of himself and the OBSPS Society, Mr. Berry congratulated John Sipe on the recent THS alumni choir concert, which honored him and featured his students from 1956 to 1982.

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Mr. Sipe thanked Brad Martin and the Tecumseh Local School District for their total cooperation in planning the concert. Virgil Studebaker remembered that the choir members still arose as one. He relayed that his cousin, Jerry Studebaker, stated that this was the greatest performance he had ever witnessed. More information can be found on the web site [www.tecumsehsipeyears.com](http://www.tecumsehsipeyears.com). Virgil also announced that there will be a documentary on the value of music in the public schools. Virgil reiterated that the administration was in complete support of the concert, and noted the good effect on community morale.

Cyndie Gerken discussed an application she was writing to the Della Selsor Trust to update our brochure and distribute it to our mailing list as well as to Clark County residents. Without a Bulk Mail permit, our cost just for mailing brochures to recipients of *The Connecting Link* would be \$4,700. The printing cost for 5,000 revised brochures would be \$499. Virgil Studebaker noted that it is better to send brochures rather than information in an envelope. Susan Morgan reminded us that weight was of primary concern. After additional discussion by the Trustees, it was decided that Cyndie will get our financial figures together and apply for a \$2,500 grant by the end of August. John Sipe stated that \$2500 is reasonable inasmuch as the Choral Arts Group receives that amount annually from the Della Selsor Trust.

Cyndie Gerken stated that at the Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> Open House, Jim Gastineau mentioned knowing someone who can remove the asbestos from the Olive Branch School. Bill Berry replied that he has talked with him, but is uncertain of his involvement.

Miscellaneous: Mr. Berry spoke about the economic situation, and noted that as a result, the Society has been able to have the Olive Branch building placed on the National Register, but is stalled in the renovation phase of the project. Mr. Berry stated that part of the problem may be the issue of the Board of Education owning the building. Because of that, it may be that the community does not support our efforts. He posed the question that perhaps OBSPS needs to back away and allow the Board of Education to deal with the renovation. Brad Martin stated that he does not foresee the Board selling the building, but he is uncertain whether the community can financially support the effort. At one time, the Briggs family donated \$25,000 for scholarships. The Board, however, seldom receives five-figure donations, so the Society will need large corporate partners to accomplish its goals. Pam Mustovich pointed out that to receive corporate sponsorships, the School needs to incorporate. Mr. Berry indicated agreement. He noted that the Clark County community raised \$100,000 for the Kuss Center. Jane Manemann agreed that the community will support what it wants. For example, \$100,000 was raised for the fire department, and Virgil Studebaker said that his church raised \$600,000 in just three weeks. He also noted that \$20,000 was raised in the first day for the John Sipe Scholarship. Pam Mustovich pointed out that we also expect the community to support the PTO, Booster organizations, etc. Mr. Berry noted that donations for other school facilities, such as scoreboards are donated by Pepsi and other sponsors.

Peter Scarff pointed out that we are the ones who are most impassioned about the Olive Branch building, but that many Tecumseh students did not begin their education there. Mr. Berry replied that this may be why donations from classes have been so disappointing. Jane Manemann proposed that instead of spending money on additional mailings, perhaps grant money could be used to hire a professional fundraiser. She stated that we need something special to attract and acknowledge donors.

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They could be recognized with plaques on the doors, but she stated that we need to "hit the nerve." Mr. Berry stated that we need to let people know that this will serve as the Board of Education center and will be an archival center. He stressed that we need to get national level government grants. Virgil Studebaker and Brad Martin informed the Society that Jan Hillman, a professional fund raiser is returning to the area. Mr. Berry stated that he will be willing to talk with her. Cyndie Gerken has contacted Nathalie Wright, who suggested that we contact the National Trust again, but concern was raised, however, since we do not own the building. Peter Scarff suggested that the Board of Education may be the applicant. Mr. Berry noted that an attorney he had contacted stated that there is a way in which the Board of Education and Society may work in cooperation. Jane Manemann noted that it may be advantageous to learn how the athletic building was built using donations and then was turned over to the School Board. In answer to a question by Mr. Berry, Brad Martin stated that Sue Young was the attorney for the Board of Education, but the concept of the Society and the Board of Education working in cooperation was probably never broached. Mr. Berry stated that the Board of Education should get an opinion on the matter in order to eliminate a possible conflict of interest with the Society. Jane Manemann said that she had heard from a number of people who were adamant about not tearing down the subject building. She also thought perhaps we need to rethink the relationship between the preservation of the building and the failures of the levies. Perhaps restoration would have a positive effect on the levies. Virgil Studebaker stated that he believed community attitude would improve with the passage of the levy. Virgil reiterated that the Society needs corporate or multi-corporate sponsorships, and he didn't feel they would not be concerned with ownership of the building. It was concluded that the Society should invite Jan Hillman to a meeting to get her suggestions. Cyndie Gerken asked which group would pay her. In reply to Virgil Studebaker, Jane Manemann noted that Jan brought in \$150,000 twenty years ago, and that she got a percentage for her work. Mr. Berry asked Brad Martin to contact Jan Hillman and to talk to the Board's attorney about the subject relationship and possible conflicts.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Jane Manemann and seconded by Cyndie Gerken. Motion carried. Mr. Berry adjourned the meeting at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ken Strickland, Secretary