

## OLIVE BRANCH SCHOOL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

### Minutes of the Annual Meeting on October 11, 2023

The Annual Meeting of OBSPS was called to order at 4:00PM by Vice Chairman Cyndie Gerken. Trustees present were **Cyndie Gerken, Susan Morgan, Howard Stahl, Virgil Studebaker, Sara Suver, Scott Suther, Alec Ashbaugh, Don Wallace**, and ex officio TLS Superintendent **Paula Crew** and TLS Director of Facilities and Safety **Brian Dixon**. Trustees not in attendance were Jim Leathley and Sharon Leathley who were out of town. Guests present were Reed Romine, Roberta Schneider, and Barbara Hensley (all members of Medway Area Historical Society).

Secretary Susan Morgan read the minutes of the July 12, 2023 modified meeting that was a “meet and greet” style meeting. No additions or corrections were made; a motion to approve the minutes as written was made by Scott Suther and seconded by Paula Crew. Motion carried.

A printed financial report, prepared by Treasurer Sharon Leathley, was distributed by Vice Chairman Cyndie Gerken. She highlighted that our current balance was \$14,528.21. She also mentioned that we were awarded a \$5,860.00 grant for 2023 from The Turner Foundation but that by July 2023 it was noted that they had not sent the check. This was unusual as they normally send awards in January. Cyndie then contacted the Foundation and was told the delay was due to a “web site issue” and that they would send part of the money in July and the rest in October 2023. Cyndie also noted that Kevin Rose, an employee of the Foundation, had left their organization to be Executive Director of Hartman Rock Garden. Cyndie expressed concern as to how these events would affect the Foundation and future grants. Cyndie also pointed out the William G. Pomeroy Foundation grant money had been used to re-do our website to be more user-friendly with hand-held devices. (These funds could only be used for that purpose.) Miscellaneous notes on the Treasurer’s Report mentioned the denial of 2023 grant money from the Della Selsor Trust from whom we have always received funds in the past. There was no explanation for the denial. Also the Springfield Foundation sent a denial letter to our 2023 grant request.

Under Committee Reports, copies of Chairman Jim Leathley’s Annual Report were distributed and highlights were reviewed by Cyndie Gerken. This included Chairman Leathley’s concern about the future viability of the OBSPS with our difficulty in obtaining funds. (See Annual Report.) Discussion followed including Don Wallace asking for clarification on how our current funds of \$14,528.21 would be spent. He stated that he understood that an amount had previously been donated specifically for the drywall and painting of the SE room. Cyndie commented that she was unaware of that specified usage of the donation but could look into it. In addition, paint for the exterior of the building and paying Alec Ashbaugh’s worker(s) to help repair and paint would come from that. (Alec is generously donating all other costs.) Virgil Studebaker asked what percent of the recently-submitted Turner Foundation grant application would pay on the drywall and paint estimate of \$7,200.00 Cyndie reviewed this and said that it would hopefully cover 80%, which was the \$5,760.00 requested. Reed Romine commented that he felt we should advertise more on what our vision is for the use of the building once it is restored to inspire more interest in giving funds. Some discussion followed regarding the fact that we do not own the building which may keep some of the foundations from awarding grant money. Cyndie read to the group (word for word from a grant application) how she describes our intentions for use of the building when renovated. This included use as a community building. She also mentioned that our area of western Bethel Township does not have any kind of community building. As a result, Cyndie stated that she could work with Digital Graphics to put a similar statement on our website to clarify our intentions to the community/possible donors. In regards to this, it was also mentioned that several years ago former TLS Superintendent Norm Glismann signed a letter of intent for us that the District totally supported our

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### **Minutes of the Annual Meeting on Oct 11, 2023 (cont.)**

renovation and plans for the building. Current TLS Superintendent Paula Crew agreed that this is what she envisions for the future of the building. Alec Ashbaugh brought up that he has a friend Matt Davis that has a “Co Hatch” business where a town or city will give them a building needing renovation for nothing or very little cost. His company renovates it and then leases out space to local businesses. Alec said it is a win-win for his company and for the community the building is in. Director of Facilities and Safety Brian Dixon stated that Ohio law restricts any sale of a school building privately without first offering it to other educational organizations such as charter schools, etc. and then to the public. Alec said he will talk to Matt Davis and see if he has any suggestions on how to get funds in our situation. He will also invite him out to see our building. Pros and cons on a possible long-term lease from the school were discussed. It is unclear if that would make any difference to grant awarding foundations. Barbara Hensley mentioned that Carillon Park in Dayton sometimes moves buildings to the park for preservation. She also mentioned that there was a similar-looking “round” school in Idaho, Ohio (Pike County) where she grew up. Cyndie stated that she had previously been unable to find any building like ours and she will investigate to see if the one in Idaho, Ohio is still standing; she will also contact the Pike County Historical Society.

Under Old Business, the renovation projects progress was discussed with Blind Eye Restoration having completed the window and door renovation in the SW classroom, and exterior power washing that was completed by Aqua Force (funded completely by a Medway Area Historical Society donation and clean up donated by Alec Ashbaugh and his workers). Cyndie also reported that she had submitted 2024 grant applications to the Della Selsor Trust (for printing costs of brochures and invitations, postage, and maintenance of the website) and to The Turner Foundation (for drywall and paint for the front entry foyer and SE classroom).

Under New Business, three board members (Jim Leathley, Sara Suver, and Scott Suther) have terms expiring on 10/31/2023. Cyndie noted they all agreed to serve again, if reappointed. A motion to reappoint the three trustees was made by Don Wallace and seconded by Brian Dixon. Motion carried. Their new 3-year term will end 10/31/2026. Election of officers for 2024 was also needed and Cyndie asked if there were any nominations other than the current slate (Chair Jim Leathley, Vice Chair Cyndie Gerken, Secretary Susan Morgan and Treasurer Sharon Leathley); none were offered. A motion to close nominations and re-elect the current slate was made by Virgil Studebaker and seconded by Don Wallace. Motion carried. Under Miscellaneous Business, Cyndie noted our website update and its ease of use even on small screens such as cell phones or tablets, etc. and she encouraged everyone to check it out. Alec Ashbaugh reported on the progress of exterior painting of the building. They are doing some repair of the soffit and finding more rotten areas than anticipated, but he will continue to work on it as his schedule allows. He is not sure when he can get the paint on; it may be next spring. Cyndie also reminded us that annual dues are due.

With no further comments or discussion, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Don Wallace and seconded by Sara Suver. Motion carried and Cyndie adjourned the meeting at 5:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Morgan, Secretary