

Gay Head Lighthouse Advisory Board
Notes of Meeting 12/7/2017
Aquinnah Town Hall Selectmen's Meeting Room

Members present: Chairman Len Butler, Richard Skidmore, Elise LeBovit, Jim Pickman*, Kathy Rainey *, Betsey Mayhew
*on conference phone

Others Present: Town Administrator Jeffrey Madison, Selectman Gary Haley, Selectman Jim Newman, Lewis Colby, Phil Wallace, Berta Welch, Kathy Olsen, Barbara Bassett

- The meeting began at 4:34pm

- First on the agenda was a review of the 11/7/17 minutes. Richard made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Betsey seconded. The Board voted 6-0. The motion passed.

- Len asked to shuffle the order of the agenda. With no objections from the Board, Kathy Olson gave a presentation on her grant research ability at the request of the Board. Kathy introduced herself to the Board and discussed her past work with grants. In addition, Kathy passed out a sample of what she thought the Board was looking for in terms of a grant calendar. She estimated that this project would require no more than 8 hours of work and informed them of her \$60/hr rate. Kathy asked the Board questions regarding grant application, what types of funds are needed for the Lighthouse (restoration and program), past grantors and the current stage of the Lighthouse restoration. The Board informed Kathy that there is a priority list of tasks concerning the restoration of the Lighthouse but that they are interested in a broader spectrum of grants available for preservation, cultural, historical and tourism grants for the Lighthouse. The cost of the restoration of the Lighthouse is approximately 1 million and the Board noted that they are seeking grants of \$5000.00 or more. The Board asked if Kathy could assist in writing grants after the calendar was completed. Kathy didn't want to commit to anything but felt that if her schedule allowed it she would like to help. The Board felt that Kathy was qualified for the proposed project and asked her to begin working on the calendar. The Board thanked Kathy for her time and asked for her to return to the January meeting with a progress report. Based on Kathy's \$60/hr. and her feelings that the project would only require about 8 hours, Richard suggested that a motion be made to allocate \$1000.00 from the budget for the project. Elise felt that the Board should vote to allow Kathy to begin work and to wait until the next meeting with Kathy to figure out the number of hours and funds that the project will require. Kathy noted that she would only bill for the time she works and not the full approved amount. Richard made a motion to allocate an initial budget of \$600 to fund the research that Kathy has suggested. Betsey seconded with the condition that there is enough money to pay Kathy. Jim, noting that there is sufficient funds for the project, amended the motion to increase the amount to \$1000.00. Betsey second the amended motion. The Board voted 5-0-1. The motion passed.

- Next on the agenda under New Business, the Board discussed visitor operations for the 2018 season. Jim gave an operation report for the 2017 season. He reported that the Town took in approximately \$29,000.00 in net operations. Based on what the Museum spent this year with some modifications and assuming the visitor numbers would be the same, Jim reported that the net operation total for the 2018 season would be close to \$45,000.00 if the Town were to manage the Lighthouse. Len passed out a distilled version of Jim's report showing a comparison between the 2017 season revenue and expenses with the Museum

operating the Lighthouse and a projection of 2018 revenue if the Town were to take over the Lighthouse operations. Both Len and Jim noted that these numbers are only background information for the Board of Selectmen to review when they discuss 2018 management. Phil Wallace, MV Museum, stated that the Museum wants to do what is best for the Town and if the Town feels it is ready for a management shift then the Museum is ready to help with that process. If that is not what the Town decides, the Museum is more than willing to continue operating the Lighthouse and improve operations in any way that the GHLAB and Selectmen see fit.

Elise gave notes on how she felt the 2017 season went and ways in which the Museum could improve management. She stated that she never saw a Museum staffer on site, that the money wasn't handled in a business-like fashion (money was being stored in the guides' pockets), there was no ability to take charge cards for patrons who wanted to give a donation or pay with a card, there was no accounting of people coming and going (only accounting for free admission people), she felt that there should have been another person on site, and finally, in the final weeks that the Lighthouse was open there were no pamphlets for patrons. Elise continued to state she didn't feel that the wages the guides received were comparable to the work they were doing. She noted that she had a letter from one of the guides that worked this year reflecting on the season. Elise commented that the Museum should have a check and balances in place for the money. Betsey thanked Elise for her comments and suggestions. She agreed that it would be ideal to have another staffer on site, but to pay another guide it would cut into the profits that the Town and Museum makes. She noted that the Museum reached out to other businesses to get a range on wages for the guides and felt that what they were paying was comparable. In addition, Betsey was open to taking credit, but that would mean having internet access. She felt that there was accountability with the money and that it was always counted 3 times between the guides and Betsey. In addition, Betsey noted that the guides are Museum staff. Elise asked how many hours Richard, Lighthouse Keeper, is on site every day. He responded that he bills the Town for 1hr. every day for anything he does but that he doesn't have a regular schedule. Within the first opening weeks, Richard is there every day or every other day for various amounts of time. There was discussion on the on-site staffing expenses. Betsey noted that the reported \$27,000.00 for on-site staffing included payroll taxes and workers compensation. There was a brief discussion on volunteer numbers. Betsey thanked Beverly Wright for all her time volunteering. Jim noted that there is a time crunch regarding the 2018 season management and operation decision and asked for the Selectmen to set a meeting time to discuss this matter. Jim Newman noted that his suggestion to the other Selectmen will most likely be to have the Town continue with the Museum as the operator/management and he felt that the Town isn't prepared just yet. However, the Selectmen will have to send out an RFP and discuss it. Jeffrey informed the Board that the Selectmen will be meeting on January 4th, 2018 and this matter will be on the agenda.

- With all New Business discussed, the Board reverted to Old Business. Under Review of Accounts, Jim reported that there was no change from last meetings account review. There is still about \$14,000.00 in the bank account. Elise informed the Board that there was a total of \$1,107.00 from the donation jars and will give Sibel the corrected total amount. There was brief discussion on donation jar responsibility and proper receptacles. Richard said he would take responsibility of the jars next year.

- Next under Old Business, Richard gave a Lighthouse and Park report. He noted that the reseeded is still not growing in well. Len noted that it is a tough spot to grow grass and needs more work. Richard reported that as a result from the request of an earmark, Kaylea Moore has informed him that there is now a Capital Projects Bill in the House that includes \$300,000.00 for the Gay Head Light. The Bill would need to be passed by the House and Senate. Kaylea will inform Richard of any lobbying opportunities.

- Len gave a restoration update. The Selectmen have executed a contract with International Chimney Corp. and the work is scheduled to begin sometime in April 2018.

- Next under Fundraising and Grant Research, the Board briefly discussed the suggestion of a brick walkway. Len informed the Board that Liz will attend the next meeting to report on t-shirt sales.

- Under Other Business, the Board reviewed the Planning Board Plan Review Committee Special Permit Amendment for the operation and management plan for the Lighthouse. The PBPRC voted to change a few things in terms of the operations of the Lighthouse. One condition that was amended was the number of days that the Lighthouse is permitted to be open for sunset hours. The PBPRC voted to permit up to 4 nights/week (excluding Saturday) for the Lighthouse to be open during sunset. There was discussion on who had voted on these decisions and who was present at the PBPRC meeting. Kathy stated that one of the Condo owners who was at the PBPRC meeting disagreed with the increase of sunset hours, which is what Kathy had said in the GHLAB meeting the previous month. However, Kathy reiterated that they were amendable to the discussion of slight increase in the number of events that occur in the months of July and August. Len informed everyone that the PBPRC voted to increase the number of events for the months of July and August to 8. Kathy asked for clarification regarding the approved increase of sunset days. She pointed out that the sunset hours have gone from 1 day/week to 4 days/week, however, it could be 5 days/week given that the events have gone from an allowable number of 4 to 8 during the months of July and August and if there were events scheduled in the Lighthouse every weekend in July and August there could conceivably be sunset hours 5 days/week. Kathy asked if her statement was accurate. Richard responded stating that technically there wouldn't be a 5th sunset day because during those summer months sunset is after 7pm and the events end at 7pm. Len stated that not all events have access to the Lighthouse but have the option for an additional fee. Kathy asked what the event hours are. Richard stated 4pm to 7pm. There was further discussion concerning the sunset and event hours in regard to the recent Planning Board decision.

- Under Other Business, Elise asked for the Board to discuss the operation reports that had been handed out and discussed earlier in the meeting, specifically the promo and Town management figures. Jim stated that the promo figure was based on what the Museum had spent with a little increase. The figures presented were based on past season numbers but would certainly need to be looked at carefully. As for the Town Management line item, Jim stated that would be the salary for the person responsible for the Lighthouse operations. Betsey stated that the \$15,000.00 that the Museum receives from the Town does not cover the guides duties it covers the backend management. Lastly, Elise asked for clarification on the \$17,000.00 figure for DPW Grounds and Maintenance. Both Len and Jim responded that the figure came from what the Town had spent on maintaining the grounds in past years including the following duties: trash pickup, cutting the grass, preparing the park for the season and maintaining the fencing and pathways. Len stated that this figure is a Town fixed expense.

- With no other business to discuss the Board agreed to meet again Wednesday, January 3rd, 2018 at 4:30 pm. A motion was made and seconded to adjourn.

The Board voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

- The meeting ended at 6:20 pm.

*Respectfully submitted,
Sophia Welch
Board Administrative Assistant*