

## **LISBON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

### **Minutes of Meeting**

**December 18, 2023**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Rebecca Hess at 4:32 p.m. Present: Rebecca Hess, Alexandra McKendree, Marc Mohn, and Ann Opatz. Absent: Amelia Kibbie. Guests: Council Liaison John Bardsley.

Moved by Opatz, seconded by Mohn, to approve the agenda. The motion passed on a voice vote of 4-0.

Moved by Mohn, seconded by McKendree, to approve the minutes of the November 16 meeting. The motion passed on a voice vote of 4-0.

Discussion and Possible Action on Reappointment of Rebecca Hess and Marc Mohn to the Lisbon Historic Preservation Commission. Moved by Opatz, seconded by McKendree, to recommend the reappointment of Rebecca Hess to a new three-year term for the calendar years 2024, 2025, and 2026. The motion passed on a voice vote of 3-0-1, with Hess abstaining. Moved by Opatz, seconded by McKendree, to recommend the reappointment of Marc Mohn to a new three-year term for the calendar years 2024, 2025, and 2026. The motion passed on a voice vote of 3-0-1, with Mohn abstaining.

#### Pleasant Grove Heritage Park

a. Report on Site Visit by Linn County Conservation Commission: Opatz reported on the November 30 site visit to Pleasant Grove Heritage Park by Dennis Goemaat, Director of the Linn County Conservation Commission, and Deputy Director Daniel Gibbons. A summary report of the site visit is appended to these minutes.

b. Master Site and Interpretive Plan/January 2024 Public Meeting: Hess suggested a meeting involving representatives of the City, Parks & Rec, Tree Board, History Center, and LHPC to plan the public session to gather input for use in developing a master site and interpretive plan for Pleasant Grove Heritage Park. Hess will speak with Parks & Rec Director Drayton Kamberling about coordinating this meeting. McKendree will reach out to Edwards Creative with an invitation to visit Pleasant Grove Heritage Park and seek a general estimate of the cost of developing a master site and interpretive plan for the park (needed for budget purposes).

c. Establishment of Non-Profit: Opatz has drafted Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws for the new non-profit, and will send those documents to commissioners for their review and edit. The group has tentatively settled on "Lisbon Cultural Enrichment Alliance" as the official name of the non-profit. Mohn will serve as the incorporator, the official contact person for the non-profit. The group discussed potential members of the non-profit, noting that not all members need to be residents of Lisbon.

### Meyers Farmstead Historic District

- a. Preservation Plan Project: Hess reported that the donations from Miriam (Butterfield) Johnston and Steve McElmeel have been received, and that the City is prepared to sign the contract with OPN. There has been a two-week delay in signing the contract due to an issue with securing the Mayor's signature, which will likely push the start date for OPN into January.
- b. Discussion and Possible Action on Invoice from Blinks Brothers: Moved by Opatz, seconded by Mohn, to approve the December 1 invoice from Blinks Brothers in the amount of \$365 for recent work on the roof of the corncrib/hog house. (Note: The invoice total is \$865, but payment has been reduced by \$500 due to overpayment on the last invoice.) The motion passed on a voice vote of 4-0.
- c. Update on Stabilization Efforts: Hess reported that City Administrator Siggins will meet with Curt Blinks to inform him that no further stabilization work will be authorized until after the preservation plans have been received and reviewed. Opatz reported that \$20,485 remains unspent from the insurance funds received for stabilization efforts. Opatz will send a written request to the Council to take official action to reserve these funds for work on the barns and as a match for possible grants for future work to be done in the Meyers Farmstead Historic District.
- d. Iowa Farm Voices Project: Opatz reported that she has received the video footage of Steve McElmeel's oral history interview with Bob Neymeyer of the Grout Museum. The video is one hour and 14 minutes in length and is unedited. LHPC has full rights to the video and is free to edit for our purposes.

Discussion and Possible Action on Meeting with New Council Member: The group discussed inviting new City Council member Kevin Steele to an informal meeting to share information about the role of LHPC and to summarize projects undertaken in recent years. She will send Steele the "Talking Points" document and our 2023 Goals and Action Plans in advance of a possible meeting.

2024-25 Budget Planning: Opatz will prepare a budget to be approved by LHPC at its January 18 meeting, to be presented to the Council at its January 22 meeting. In addition to the LHPC budget, she will prepare written budget requests for (1) continuation of the \$20,000 allocation from TIF for the Downtown Reinvestment Grant Program; (2) designation of unspent insurance money for stabilization of the barns in the Meyers Farmstead Historic District; (3) inclusion of the cost of a master plan and interpretive plans for Pleasant Grove Heritage Park in the Parks & Rec budget; (4) consideration of new funding to Sauerkraut Days Committee, Lisbon History Center, Parks & Rec, and the City for costs of a sesquicentennial celebration in 2025. Opatz will also ask City Administrator for information about LOST funds and the process for requesting funds through this fund.

Review of 2023 Goals and Action Plans: The group reviewed the goals and action plans for 2023; nearly all of what we set out to do for the year has been accomplished and will be noted in the CLG Annual Report.

CLG Annual Report: Opatz reported that she has finished a draft of the CLG Annual Report and will send the draft to LHPC members for their comments and edits. As required, LHPC must present a summary of the report at a Council meeting prior to submitting the report to the State.

Volunteer Hours: Commissioners were asked to submit their hours for the month of November.

#### Updates

a. Historic District Signs for Main Street Historic District: The new signs were installed by Mohn two weeks ago. Hess thanked Mohn for his work on this project.

b. LHPC Website: Hess will seek assistance from former commissioner Zahorik to update the LHPC website.

#### History Center Rehabilitation Project:

a. Final Report for HRDP Grant: Hess and City Administrator Siggins will meet this week to complete and submit the final report.

b. Review of Remaining Work to be Done on History Center Building: Opatz suggested sending a memorandum to the City and History Center Board informing them of the work that remains to be done on the building, and encouraging them to use funds in place for 2023-24 for projects that can be completed prior to June 30, 2024, pending confirmation from the City that these funds are not earmarked for other projects. The December 18 budget report shows an allocation of \$20,000 for Building Maintenance & Repair, with only \$641.72 spent to date. Another budget line for Building Maintenance & Repair shows an allocation of \$1,000 with no expenditures to date. Hess and Opatz will prepare a list and separate the items into two categories: preservation and annual maintenance. LHPC will advise the History Center Board/Foundation to request funding for items in the preservation category from the Linn County HPC for work to be done in the 2024-25 fiscal year.

#### Library Rehabilitation Project:

a. Review of Remaining Work to be Done on Library Building: As with the History Center building, Opatz suggested sending a memorandum to the City and the Library Board informing them of the work that needs to be done on the building, and encouraging them to use funds in place for 2023-24 for projects that can be completed prior to June 30, 2024, pending confirmation from the City that these funds are not earmarked for other projects. The December 18 budget report shows an allocation of \$3,470 for Building Maintenance & Repair, with only \$524.10 spent to date. Another budget line for Building Maintenance West Wall Fund shows an allocation of \$10,000 with \$6,341.72 spent to date. Hess and Opatz will prepare a list and separate the items into two categories: preservation and annual maintenance. As with the History Center, LHPC will advise the Library Board/Friends of the Lisbon Public Library to request funding for items in the preservation category from the Linn County HPC for work to be done in the 2024-25 fiscal year. The memo will also include the name of a qualified mason to contact regarding replacing the failing bricks on the west wall.

Discussion and Possible Action on Reimbursement to Rebecca Hess for 2024 Zoom Subscription Renewal: Moved by Opatz, seconded by Mohn, to approve reimbursement to Hess in the amount of \$160.39 for a 2024 Zoom subscription for LHPC. The motion passed on a voice vote of 3-0-1, with Hess abstaining.

Discussion and Possible Action on Payment for 2024 WIX Subscription and Domain: Moved by Opatz, seconded by McKendree to recommend the City pay \$203.52 for the WIX website subscription and \$14.95 for the domain name for 2024. The motion passed on a voice vote of 4-0.

Other Business: Opatz reported that Candy Streed of Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area informed her that the National Alliance for Preservation Commissions will feature Silos & Smokestacks in the Spring 2024 issue of its publication, The Alliance Review. Candy plans to give the LHPC and its work to protect the barns in the Meyers Farmstead Historic District a shout-out in the article, which will note the importance of this historic district to the development of Pleasant Grove Heritage Park and include at least one photo.

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Submitted: Ann Opatz, Secretary

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebecca Hess, Chair

**From:** Ann Opatz <annopatz@yahoo.com>

**To:** Brandon Siggins <lisboncityadmin@cityoflisbon-ia.gov>; Lisbon Historic Preservation <lisbonhpc@gmail.com>; Amelia Kibbie <ameliamk1983@gmail.com>; Marc Mohn <moparmoondog57@gmail.com>; John Bardsley <jrbardsley@netins.net>; ROBERT Z. <robertzahorik@hotmail.com>; Steve McElmeel <stevemcelmeel@gmail.com>; Marianne Zahorik <mariannezahorik@hotmail.com>; Frances Owen <contact.francesowen@gmail.com>; Alexandra McKendree <admckendree@gmail.com>; Drayton Kamberling <lisbonparkandrecdir@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Friday, December 1, 2023 at 03:09:20 PM CST

**Subject:** Summary of November 30 meeting with Linn County Conservation Commission

For the record and for the benefit of those who were unable to attend, here is a brief summary of the meeting with representatives of the Linn County Conservation Commission on November 30 at Pleasant Grove Heritage Park. If I've left out any important points, please "reply to all" so that we have an accurate record of yesterday's meeting.

**Attendees:**

Dennis Goemaat, Director of the Linn County Conservation Commission  
Daniel Gibbons, Deputy Director of the Linn County Conservation Commission  
Rebecca Hess, chair of the Lisbon Historic Preservation Commission  
Marc Mohn, member of the Lisbon Historic Preservation Commission  
Ann Opatz, member of the Lisbon Historic Preservation Commission  
John Bardsley, member of the Lisbon City Council  
Drayton Kamberling, director of Lisbon Parks and Recreation Commission  
Frances Owens, member of the Lisbon Tree Board  
Steve McElmeel, former owner of the property

**Not able to attend:**

Brandon Siggins, City Administrator  
Amelia Kibbie, member of the Lisbon Historic Preservation Commission  
Alexandra McKendree, member of the Lisbon Historic Preservation Commission  
Robert Zahorik, former member of the Lisbon Tree Board  
Marianne Zahorik, former member of the Lisbon Tree Board

**Key take-away points:**

1. Dennis and Daniel were very impressed with the site and noted that the park is unique in Linn County, but somewhat similar to Ushers Ferry in Cedar Rapids.
2. They commented on the exciting opportunity a project like this is for a community of our size, and noted that the park has the potential of becoming a major attraction in Lisbon and Linn County.
3. They are willing to provide contact information for those who can help with various elements of the park and offered to provide us with information about grant opportunities.
4. They were pleased to hear that the City had recently been awarded a REAP grant for prairie reconstruction and were impressed by the size of the prairie.

5. They seemed particularly interested in being involved in the development of the wetlands.
6. Some advice on the development of the trail/walking path was offered. Concrete, asphalt, and crushed limestone meet ADA compliance requirements; other materials were discussed, as was the necessity of working with an engineer and regular maintenance.
7. The Linn County Conservation Commission has a special initiative for building wetlands and trails; funding for this comes from Linn County Local Option Tax.
8. We walked over to the pond and spent some time talking about the low water level and effectiveness of the windmill.
9. They acknowledged the importance of collaborating with others as planning and development get underway, and were complimentary of our partnerships with Silos & Smokestacks, Linn County Historic Preservation Commission, and Lisbon Community Schools.
10. The importance of having a master plan with interpretive plans was mentioned several times. They asked for a copy of the master plan, assuming this had already been completed.
11. This organization will be a valuable partner in our efforts, so we'll keep them informed as planning continues.