

**TOWN OF WILLISTON
OLD BRICK CHURCH TRUSTEES
MEETING MINUTES
May 13, 2024**

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Butterfield (Chair), Alice Beisiegel, Marge Butterfield, Sara Fitts-Pratt, and Lauren Koumjian
ADMINISTRATION: Bruce Hoar, Director of Public Works
ABSENT: None
OTHERS PRESENT: Jason Starr - Williston Observer, Chapin Kaynor

Call to Order

The meeting was convened at the Old Brick Church 1 Library Lane, Williston, VT 05495. Chair John Butterfield called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Public Comment

None

Approval of Draft March 6, 2024 Meeting Minutes

The draft minutes of the meeting held on March 6, 2024, were presented for approval. A motion for approval of the minutes was made by Lauren and seconded by Alice.

Update on Town Fair

Lauren provided a summary of the Town Fair. The Trustees had a table which was manned by Rick McGuire and David Yandell. There were some informational flyers available on the history of the Town that included the OBC. Lauren made some posters that showed the OBC in various stages of its life over the years. Jack Price, former Trustee, was at the church available for tours. Melanie Stultz-Backus, a former member of the Federated Youth Group who, in 1969, worked to revitalize the church after at least 40 years of abandonment and deterioration was also at the church to talk with visitors. Melanie also wrote a historical timeline for visitors and Trustees. Rick McGuire collected a list of people interested in reviving the Old Brick Church Music Series and Lauren collected names of people interested in helping out at future events.

Update on ADA Compliant Accessibility Study

No information was available on this topic in time for the meeting. The Town is awaiting reply from Tyler at Freeman French and Freeman on the status of the study. Bruce will follow up.

Review Trustees recommendation to Selectboard on Verizon Project

John discussed the March 7, 2024, memo from Chair to Selectboard. The memo presents the Trustees decision on the Verizon proposal. Jason Starr, from Williston Observer, was given a copy of the Memo. John is scheduled to attend an upcoming Selectboard Meeting to discuss the memo. Due to other pressing business, this item may be scheduled for a July Selectboard meeting.

Update on Fire Suppression System

The only update provided was that we should be seeing plans and documents in the near future. The plans will be shared with Trustees once they are completed. The bond for installation of the Fire Suppression System was rejected at the March 5, 2024 Town Vote and will be proposed again at a later date.

Discussion on guidelines concerning offering OBC Tours/Educational opportunities

Bruce explained the Town's concern about offering tours and other opportunities and that this topic would require more discussion with the Town Administration. The Town does not carry insurance for OBC events. OBC renters/users are required to provide insurance. The lack of ADA access is also a potential issue.

Orientation for New Trustees and review of OBC Charge

Information was distributed to the Trustees, including a copy of the charge to Trustees that is in the Town Charter along with guidelines for the use of the OBC. There was some discussion on changing the Charter and it was explained that Charter amendments require Public Hearings, Selectboard approval, as well as Legislative approval and is a lengthy process often coordinated when there are several amendments proposed to reduce the frequency of charter change requests.

Tour of the Church Grounds

The Trustees extended their thanks to Conservation Volunteer, Chapin Kaynor, who has collaborated with Public Works in maintaining the church grounds for several years. The Trustees wholeheartedly endorsed Chapin's offer to continue his improvements to the church grounds. The Trustees toured the church grounds with Chapin, and he presented his observations and recommendations for continued grounds improvements. Chapin's continued plan is to remove invasive species (e.g. Buckthorn), so that native plantings can be allowed to grow.

Other Business

Four suggestions were raised by the public at the March 6th Trustee Meeting. These were discussed in this meeting. The suggestions and discussion are:

- **Formation of a Friends of the Old Brick Church Group**: It was agreed that advertising the "Old Brick Church Williston Vermont" Facebook page, and making it public, would be the best way to begin this process. Further actions would depend on the responses.
- **Placement of a Keyboard Type Musical Instrument in the Church**: Wide variations in temperature and humidity would severely impact any type of acoustic instrument (eg. Piano) in the church. Live performances generally provide their own musical instruments. Donation of a used electronic keyboard may be considered in the future.

- Streamlining the Church Rental Process: The Trustees are unaware of any issues with the present rental process but will convey this comment to Erin Dickinson.
- Lack of Wi-Fi Service at the Church: Due to sporadic use, installation of wi-fi service in the church does not appear to be justified.

There was discussion on having the OBC open for the 4th of July and what it would take to allow that to happen? Bruce will follow up on this.

There was also a question of Trustees and their use of social media like Front Porch Forum. Bruce will follow up on this.

The Trustees agreed that the historic photo posters, developed by Lauren, should be permanently displayed in the church. Lauren will make final revisions to the posters. Placement of the posters will be decided by the Trustees at the June 17th meeting. Bruce offered that the Town would mount the posters on the walls.

Date for Next Meeting

The next Trustees Meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 17th at 5:00 pm.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

John Butterfield
Chair - Old Brick Church Trustees