

Raritan Historical & Cultural Committee

Minutes of February 5, 2013

Attending: James Fidacaro
Jane Fidacaro
Karen Eastlund
Marie Lombardy
Tim Rack
Deb Thomas

1. We recited the **pledge to the flag**.
2. The **minutes** from the January meeting were reviewed. Jim Fidacaro moved they be approved. Jane Fidacaro seconded. All voted in favor of approval.
3. The amount in the **treasury** is the same (\$905).
4. **Museum status - Grants** – Deb spoke with Stan Schrek. He said that the Historic Trust and county funds are pending, but they will not be enough to finish the job. People are trying to get more from the state. The borough has hired an architect firm to go after grant monies. The project will be done in pieces. Jim Fidacaro asked about the third phase funding. Deb replied that it may well be there but it isn't enough. This news is not encouraging. Deb had hoped that either the mayor or Greg Lobell would be present to explain, but they were not.
5. **Membership rules** – A question was raised about our rules for membership. Marie Lombardy said she is open to appointment now, as is Tim Rack. We were all advised to review the borough's 2010 ordinance before the next meeting. Deb asks all appointees to please advise us if you cannot attend a meeting. Another question: What should be the consequence of multiple unexcused absences?
6. **Walking Tour Script** – Jane read it and likes it. Tim needs to know more. He will email the script to all of us. Please remind him if this doesn't happen.
7. **Raritan River Event, January 10, 2013**
Deb summarized after attending: This was a very nice event. There was a lovely movie about the entire river including the Perth Amboy park, removal of the dam at Robert Street, regeneration of wildlife along the river, etc. We wondered if the movie will be reshown anywhere, or if we could get the movie to show at our meeting, or at Duke Farms, or at the library? Deb will find out about Duke Farms getting it.

As an aside, Jane mentioned that the new fire codes at the Raritan Public Library are very strict as far as number of people allowed in rooms. This is affecting program attendance.

Marie mentioned that the Lutheran Church has two meeting rooms, one that holds 60 and another that can hold 110 people.

8. Miscellaneous – Jane has talked with ex-mayor DeCicco about going to the senior's lunch again to ask if they can help identify people or events in any of the historic pictures. Jane will attend in April.

Tim Rack scanned Kathy Reiner's pictures and returned them.

Jane got new pictures from Doug Hill. His mother was Doris Van Nest Hill. Doug supplied team pictures with all the players' names written in.

Marie mentioned that the sign upstairs at the library about the Raritan Woolen Mills is not correct. The weaving of cloth ceased in the 1940s or 1950s. Middlesex Chemical came into the building after the mill closed. Jim Fidacaro mentioned that he has two bricks that were once part of the mill. (There was chemical contamination on the site, so perhaps the bricks themselves were contaminated.)

Discussion turned to American Cyanamid and the vats that changed color. These water vats were used as the swimming pool for Bound Brook schools' swim teams. Jim Fidacaro's dad was the captain of the swim team, and he swam in the vats.

There was discussion of the Frelinghuysen Mansion, of the arson there and then the bulldozing of everything. China remained in the basement, but everything was bulldozed.

9. The meeting was adjourned. Jim Fidacaro made the motion and Tim Rack seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 8pm.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 5th at 7pm in borough hall basement.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Eastlund, Secretary