

Cordova Historic Preservation Commission

Meeting Minutes – Thursday, January 16, 2020

Members present: Jim Casement, Wendy Ranney, Cathy Sherman and Nancy Bird in Cordova, and via teleconference: John Wachtel and Sylvia Lange. Also via teleconference was former member Heather Hall (*note: Hall intends to re-apply for appointment by the city council*).

The meeting was called to order by Chair J. Casement about 1:05 pm.

Motion by Sherman, seconded by Ranney, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed without objection.

Approval of minutes

Motion by Ranney, seconded by Bird to approve the minutes of November 21, 2019. Unanimous approval was given.

Cordova Historic buildings survey – discussion

- a. Casement invited Wachtel to update the commission. Wachtel explained that the National Park Service had recently asked Regional offices (like Anchorage) to propose projects where the NPS might provide external assistance to partners. Wachtel proposed that NPS offer to assist the Cordova commission's effort to accomplish an updated historic property survey. That assistance would be through NPS contracting with a professional firm for up to \$10,000. Prior to the meeting, Wachtel had distributed to commission members a draft "Request for Qualifications" which would begin the process to choose a firm for hire on this project.

Discussion: **Casement** asked about the process and what/how the Commission can help right now for it to proceed. **Sherman** said she greatly appreciates this support from NPS and sees it as a great start for the project. **Bird** said she expects one of the first steps that the professional firm might take is to meet with Dixie Lambert who has started an updated inventory spreadsheet; she also said this work will provide a good foundation for the high school students (who the commission has wanted to involve in this project) to work from. **Hall** suggested that Commission members might review the websites of the three companies to which Wachtel is planning to send this RFQ. She is familiar with some of them and recognizes that they offer different strengths. **Ranney** also expressed excitement about this new development and reiterated that it will help strengthen the high school class curriculum she is developing.

Wachtel asked for a Commission contact to be listed in the RFQ; after discussion, consensus reached that the Secretary, Nancy Bird, should be listed as the contact. **Casement asked and received unanimous consent by the Commission in support of release of this RFQ by the NPS.**

Wachtel explained that a more detailed scope of work will be developed after a firm is chosen (in February or later) and will be based on the cost for services. He emphasized that this project's result will not be a complete inventory of historic properties but will likely establish a good foundation for that work which will likely continue in phases for a number of years.

- b. High School Class – Ranney reported that she is making progress in compiling a curriculum for the class. It has been more challenging since the school reduced the time for these classes this year (100 min. once per week). She is focused now on a semester long course. She's borrowing from several different curricula and trying to develop a course where students can do some

field work and also wants to end the class with a completed “hands-on” type project. She expects to have a draft to present within a few months to the Commission.

Certified Local Government grant requests

These grants must be submitted by Jan. 30th and require approval by the Commission. After discussion, there was consensus to support two submissions from Cordova:

- One will be a development grant to support a new roof at St. George’s Episcopal Church. Bird will draft this grant request and share it via email to Commissions members as soon as possible.
- A second proposal will be drafted by Sherman and Lange to do pre-development planning work to move for preservation the old mess hall known as the Castle Inn. This building is now owned by Copper River Seafoods and they intend to destroy it unless it can be moved off their property within the coming year. This grant proposal will also be shared via email to Commission members.

Election of Officers

Chair Casement invited nominations for the three officer positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. After discussion, **Motion** by Lange, seconded by Casement to nominate Sherman for Chair, Ranney for Vice-Chair and Bird for Secretary. Motion passed unanimously.

Casement was thanked for his three years of service in the Chair position.

Miscellaneous

Bird requested that Commission members not “reply all” to emails but instead submit any correspondence they want all Commission members to see through the Secretary. This is to ensure we don’t violate the Open Meetings Act.

She also said the City Clerk informed her that the City Council has now approved the amended version of code establishing the Commission, Chapter 18.90. This is, in essence, the bylaws for the Commission.

Next steps – next meeting date

Sherman will follow up with all Commission members to schedule the next meeting, tentatively in late March.

Motion to adjourn by Casement, seconded by Ranney. **No objections.** The meeting adjourned at 1:46 pm.

These minutes were approved February 19, 2020.