

El Cerrito Historical Society

Minutes of Meeting April 21, 2020

Present: David Weinstein, Dianne Brenner, John Falconer, Tom Panas, Chris Treadway, Joanne Rubio, Ed Crowley

We met virtually, over Zoom, due to the Covid-19 emergency. It worked very well.

****** indicates action items.

- 1.) Minutes of prior meeting:** There wasn't a meeting in March, so we skipped over this.
- 2.) Treasurer's Report:** Pat Shaw reported Income for the prior month (dues) totaling \$1,250 and no expenses. Restricted funds total \$5,500.00 and Unrestricted funds total \$10,721.53.
- 3.) Covid Pandemic in El Cerrito:** Dave is collecting NextDoor posts and photos showing how people are responding to the pandemic. Chris T. is collecting photos, as is John F. Joanne R. is collecting El Cerrito (city) reports and statistics. ******Dave suggested we should all keep in mind that we should collect info for a future Covid-19 file. Joanne suggested that Tom P. talk to Theresa (Last Name?). She was a baby during the flu epidemic of 1918, and her father had the flu. She might have an interesting perspective
- 4.) Forge:** The new and improved Forge seems to be appreciated by readers. It costs more than the previous version (about double), and the Treasurer has raised the issue of how we will cover this increased cost. John F. asked if there had been any feedback from readers regarding the new and improved format. Dave says yes, 2 that were positive. The Police Chief posted it on a bulletin board for his staff to read. Cost mitigation ideas:
 - a. Different printer? ****** Chris T. says he will see if a printer in Walnut Creek would cost less.
 - b. ******Chris will also look into various iterations of limited use of color. We could use color only when merited, not otherwise. Could we save money by doing color only on an insert page? We could have it in color on-line and Black and White in print. We'll discuss again at the May meeting, when we have additional cost info.
 - c. Membership drive? We don't do member-only events, but sometimes we do have "member priority" for events. Events are a good opportunity for recruiting members. We could consider charging higher fees for a membership that includes a print copy of the Forge, rather than digital, but the print Forge

is the only thing that goes to members only. **Next Board meeting we should talk about membership.

- d. Charges at events: The Board has not wanted to charge for refreshments at events.
- e. Paid ads in the Forge? This would be work. Who would be willing to sell ads? Anyway, these days, we could hardly ask small businesses for money.
- f. Frequency: We could publish it less often. Dave wants it to be quarterly.

5.) Sparks: Dave reports that he and John have been posting interesting historical material on our website, including added links to the history of Stege and the Recycling Center. They have also posted Tom P.'s interview with El Cerrito pioneer and retired firefighter Don Bonini. **Dave will write up a Sparks promoting these links as ways for people to learn history while sheltering. The website is becoming easier to navigate to all the great, new items that we are linking to.

- a. Tom P. has been working hard on a Context Statement. He has completed the required footnoting, and now that project is stalled, so he is working on converting the format back to the original document. In a week or so, this should be completed.

6.) Placing Cerrito Theater on the National Register: Friends of the Cerrito Theater would like to apply to have the theater listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Jerri Holan, a preservation architect who designed the restoration of the theater, would be the perfect candidate to hire to write the nomination. Dave has talked with her and she is confident the theater would qualify. The Friends only has \$3,000, and for Jerri to do the entire application would cost probably \$10,000. The Friends would need to do some fundraising for this effort, and the question is whether the EC Historical Society would be the fiscal agent (501 C3) for the Friends for the purpose of this project. There was agreement, as long as it can be assured that this won't become a liability for the EC HS. **Dave will get a firm cost from Jerri. If the fundraising doesn't reach its' goal, Jerri would do less, Dave would do more, and Dianne offered to help. At the right time, Dave may also discuss this with Rialto, the owners of the theater. **Chris and John agreed to make a plan for fundraising via the Historical Society FB page. Dianne said the Friends could also do a campaign to contact prior donors, assuming she still has all the records from the Friends' previous fundraising campaigns.

7.) Procedures Manual: Dave has drafted a procedures manual to standardize and codify what we do and what the various responsibilities are. It will ultimately be posted on the website. Items to be amplified include:

- a. More on Board member roles
- b. Add collections policy
- c. Develop process for backing up membership list. We need to decide if this should be separate from the mailing list (gmail list). We currently have 2 email accounts – ECHistSocSec@gmail.com, which is used for mass mailings, and ECHistorial@gmail.com which is the identity that goes with the FB page and

YouTube accounts. **Ed and John will work on consolidating this so we can be sure that all incoming correspondence goes to one, monitored identity.

Dianne, as Secretary, will also be involved in the conversation.

8.) July event: Earl “Flat Top” Smith

9.) Website/YouTube: **Dave and John will work together to put more films on the YouTube channel. There was also a discussion of the possibility of continuing to hold events, but via Zoom. There is a TrailTrekkers Zoom event coming up. Dave will see how it goes and whether that would suit us. Another possibility would be to live-stream a pre-recorded event via Zoom.

The meeting was adjourned.