

Historic Society Minutes

Thursday July 14, 5 p.m.

Present: Dave Weinstein, Tom Panas, John Falconer, Pat Durham. Member of public, Michael Martin

Meeting **called to order** just after 5 p.m.

Minutes: We had notes on the last meeting, not minutes, as due to lack of quorum it was not an official meeting. John asked whether we should post such notes in place of minutes on our website. Consensus is, no. Instead John will post a note that no meeting took place, just so visitors don't think we simply forgot to post the minutes.

Treasurer's report. Tom, a former society treasurer who has stepped in as interim treasurer while Pat Shaw gets well, said he has no report, after just having stepped into the role.

He reported that he has **collected most of the treasury material from Pat**. He deposited about 10 checks. There were two requests for reimbursement, from Dianne Brenner and Dave, for society publications to be printed and materials for July 4. He paid them.

Dave asked about our policy of requiring two signatures on every check we write. When Ed Crowley was considering becoming treasurer, he had questioned the need for that, especially for small dollar checks.

Tom agreed but said the hassle of working with the bank to change that might not be worth it at this point. The dual signature policy has not been a problem. (Authorized signers are Tom, Pat Shaw and Dave.)

Tom raised the issue of whether we should **have our books audited**. Dave said he raised it not because he was concerned with malfeasance, but because the other organization he helps run, Trail Trekkers, discovered that its account had several thousand less than we had thought; so why not check the historical society?

Tom said the amounts listed in treasurer's reports agree with what the bank statement says so he feels there is no discrepancy. He will include the bank statement in the next treasurer's report.

Comments from board members/Live events: Dave proposed a return to live events in the fall, all outdoors due to covid concerns. He proposed tours of **Blake Garden and Camp Herms**. Tom said he would do a tour of **Sunset View Cemetery** as well. Dave will reach out to UC about Blake, and the Boy Scouts.

Tom said Sunset View had expressed concern that the large numbers on our past tours impacted people visiting the cemetery. We **need to limit numbers**, require reservations. Tom will check with management to see if 40-50 people work.

We discussed giving preference to members, but didn't decide on that.

John and Tom said Blake Garden is for sale; a tragedy if this wonderful historic place is lost, we agree.

Dave also reported that Craig Lazzeretti is making real progress in finishing **Chris Treadway's gambling book**, finding the most updated chapters in a laptop that has previously

been locked. Craig has said the book could be done within a year. Dave said he will approach Heyday Books soon about publication.

Public comment: Michael says the historical society has won national attention since he posted a photo of himself and his father Gerald Martin at our July 4 booth on.

Addition to the board. Members of the board say they are looking forward to working with **Michael Martin** as he becomes a board member. Dave notes Michael told us about himself last time and asks if Michael has more to say about himself or why he wants to be on the board.

Michael cites Betty Reid Soskin, famous ranger-interpreter at Rosie the Riveter Park, who has spoken about working as a Rosie and seeing history unfold on the Richmond shipyard waterfront. That gave her an understanding others don't have, one worth sharing.

Michael said he grew up here, since 1958, and that in the wake of George Floyd's murder, when the society took more interest in the Black Community, it makes sense for him to become involved.

Dave said it is great to have people, like Michael, Pat Durham, and John, who grew up in El Cerrito, become leaders of the society, mentioning also Tom, not a native, but someone who through scholarship has learned so much about our history.

John moves and Tom seconds that we appoint Michael to the board. Unanimous.

Recycling center anniversary. Dave says all is set for the Aug. 5 event. The first table people pass will be the society's, where we will display material on recycling history and about the society and get signups. John and Pat D. volunteer to help run the table.

Dave shows the brand new plaque that Dianne edited and shepherded to completion, commemorating Joel Witherell, longtime city official who oversaw the center. The society created it and it will hang permanently in the recycling center and be on display Aug. 5

Creedence program/exhibit. Consensus is this is a good idea and we should do an exhibit again and a talk, once we know when the movie opens.

Should we honor the Chung Mei boys who died in WWII? Consensus that we should look into this a bit more and that it sounds worthwhile. Tom raises the point that we should check with the Chung Mei community, the former boys and their families. Perhaps an event or some other commemoration is something they want to do themselves? Or with us? Tom will reach out to them; Dave will check with the man who put on the San Francisco exhibit about Chinese veterans in general.

Tom also says Chung Mei boys served in Korea; they too should be honored.

July 4. John suggests we need to **buy tripods** to better display our materials for next time.

Security certificate for website. John notes that someone told him they would not visit our site because of the warning of danger. He and Michael will try to get this done over the next two weeks so people can feel safe using our website.

Buy a light? New Images of America books? New Join Us! Handouts. We agree to get a light for the Shadi room. Dave will look into buying one; no vote needed. We decide to hold off

on buying new Images books; 16 isn't many, Tom notes, but says we also don't sell many. We should sell some at the recycling event. Tom says he believes you need to buy a minimum of 20 books from the publisher, Arcadia, to get a discount; also not many.

Tom notes there is an issue in our selling the books because we don't have a sales tax license.

On spending \$298 for 2,000 historical society handouts, Tom moves that we do it, John seconds and the vote is unanimous.

Sparks/Forge. Dave said he and Ed will get out a Sparks in advance of the recycling event. Michael said he would contribute an article to lead the September Forge. He has written several touching on growing up in El Cerrito and similar topics.

Removing copyrighted material from our website. Some confusion about where this stands; Tom will talk to Dianne when she returns from vacation to clear it up.

We **adjourn at 6 p.m.** with Tom, Pat, Dave and John expressing appreciation that Michael has joined the board, and Michael saying he is looking forward to working with us.