

Germania Historical Society, Inc.
General Membership Meeting - Sunday, April 6, 2025
10:00 a.m. at the Longbranch Saloon, Germania, WI

MINUTES

Board members present: President Kevin DeCramer, Vice President Kim Ross, Treasurer Missy Heller, Secretary Carole DeCramer

Attendees: Edith Wargula, Tom Wargula, Linda Syverson, Jon Syverson, Brad Syverson, Tom Gaulke, John Serio, Christine Johnson, Neal Cain, Jill Cain, Marian Heller, Miles Chambers, Callie Zorn, Diane Vosen, Mike Vosen, Nate Chambers, George Weiss, Don Heller

Call to order and welcome

10:03 a.m. President Kevin DeCramer welcomed the attendees and reminded everyone to sign in.

Approve the agenda

Motion by Marian Heller/Edith Wargula, unanimously carried, to approve the agenda.

Approve the minutes of 3/2/25

Motion by Tom Gaulke/John Serio, unanimously carried, to approve the minutes.

Approve the treasurer's report

Missy Heller presented the treasurer's report.

Beginning Balance	\$47,436.29
Deposits	\$ 0
Withdrawals	<u>\$ 8,107.72 *</u>
Total in General Fund	\$39,328.57
Certificate of Deposit	<u>\$50,000.00</u>
Total	\$89,328.57

*Withdrawals: \$3,533.74 final mortgage payment
\$3,088.00 new insurance annual payment
\$1,395.65 printing signs and booklets
\$ 51.00 Division of Gaming raffle licenses
\$ 39.33 electric bill (Adams Columbia Electric Cooperative)
Total \$8,107.72

Motion by Jill Cain/Miles Chambers, unanimously carried, to approve the treasurer's report as presented.

Committee reports:

- Go-Fund-Me Account (Kim Ross)

No update.

- Raffle (Don Heller)

A name was drawn from the bucket of tickets, and the winner of the gun is Jeff Bilberry. Don will call Jeff to give him the good news.

- Fundraisers (Missy Heller and Kim Ross)

Kim reported that flower baskets will arrive prior to Mothers' Day in May. The parade baskets will arrive in time to be sold the day of the Germania parade, April 26th.

- Facilities

1. Outhouses (Kevin DeCramer)

Kevin shared that most everything is done except for one half of the church outhouse.

2. School Projects (Bob Pickart)

The project list will be discussed in May. Kim Ross stated that the electric service at the school will be installed in April.

- School cleaning and painting (Sue Schatzke)

No update.

Ongoing project reports

- ACEC grant (Kevin DeCramer):

Kevin shared that electricity is needed at the school before applying for the ACEC grant. Once the prerequisites for the grant application are met, he suggested asking for grant money for 3 air conditioners for the church and the school. The various donated items will need to be in a climate-controlled environment. Regarding the other grant that was received (Oberreich Foundation), the site signs have been corrected and replaced and new booklets have been printed. A new sign has been placed at the site of the original dam which is located next to the bridge on Eagle Road.

- Membership (Kim Ross)

At the April meeting, Kim told the members that Justin Lynch contacted her about becoming a member. He also stated that his company provides volunteer help during work time. Kim said that he had hoped to be at this meeting. Hopefully he can attend in May. If there is something that he can have his crew do to help with projects, Kim should let him know. Missy Heller stated that there may be something that he could do to help her with

the parade.

- Social media and web page administration (Kim Ross)

Kim reported that she and Carole DeCramer still must meet for a training session. Both have been sick and will try to schedule that soon.

- Princeton papers chronicle (Kevin DeCramer):

Kevin continues to glean information relating to Germania and its residents from the old Princeton newspapers, and is currently searching 1923 newspapers. He found it interesting that, after the railroad decided to bypass Germania and run through Neshkoro instead, he thought the Germania news would be much less. However, the amount of Germania news did not decrease, but remained active with news of the comings and goings of the Germania residents.

Old Business:

- Next steps for school renovations (priority list)

Will be placed on the May agenda.

New business:

- Cleanup of historical sites, i.e., site of the original Colony House

There are a couple of historical sites that could be cleaned up so that the sites are more accessible to the public. The original site of the colony house is one of the areas. That site is owned by Randy Gruber. Randy has agreed to having the members work on some cleanup but would like to be involved with that. Kevin DeCramer will coordinate that with Randy. The second site is the trail by the creamery owned by Missy Heller. Missy has agreed to creating a six- to eight-foot-wide trail along the river allowing the public to see where the creamery was located. There are also old boats located in that area that are the remains of boats made by a Germania boat maker years ago. Kevin will coordinate this project with Missy.

- Wine walk

Kim Ross discussed the September 13th wine walk. She talked to Lynn, owner of the Lunch Creek Winery, and Lynn stated that she could sell wine walk tickets at the winery. Jim's Halfway Bar would also sell tickets at that establishment.

- Pizza sale update

Missy Heller reported that 206 pizzas were made for a total of \$2,105 minus \$900+ for the ingredients. There are still pizzas left to sell (mostly pepperoni).

- April parade

Diane Vosen reported that the float committee will be meeting at her house this afternoon. The theme for the Germania Parade is the election of a Germania tour guide. With that in

mind, the Germania Historical Society float will have tour guides and tourists that will be searching for the missing hippo. Mike Vosen's hay wagon will be made to look like a duck boat (much like those seen at Wisconsin Dells). Some of the members were unaware of the hippo story. Don Heller was asked to repeat the story he has told many times before. Don was driving along and spotted a hippo that got free from the owners who have other exotic animals for their business. The hippo was in the Mekan River near Highway 22, and it was feared that, once it started swimming down the river, it would be extremely hard to catch. Because hippos can be aggressive, the animal had to be euthanized. It took two tow trucks to remove it from the river.

Mike Vosen asked to discuss the possibility of having someone walk before the floats to set an even pace. He explained that, because the historical society float has people walking handing out candy and trinkets, the floats in front of them get so far ahead creating quite a space between the first floats and the GHS float with the walkers. John Serio volunteered to oversee setting and keeping an even pace for the parade. John Syverson volunteered to be in the church for those who wanted to go inside and learn more about the history of the church. John Serio mentioned the bells for the church and the school. It would be nice to be able to ring the church bell on the day of the parade. John will get a new rope for the bell so that can be done. Tom Gaulke suggested selling opportunities to ring the bell, i.e., being able to ring the bell for \$1. Missy Heller said that after the parade, the float can be parked in the Longbranch driveway. The members discussed signage for the various events.

Motion by Tom Gaulke, Marian Heller, unanimously carried, to have signs professionally made for the various events (flower sale, wine walk).

- A little bit of history

Kevin DeCramer, at this part of the agenda, usually shares some bit of local history with the members. This time, he explained that he wanted to include the members in this search for interesting history. He asked that anyone that has a family member or an historical question, he would be happy to research that for them. He explained that his familiarity with Germania comes from his wife's family. He would like to include the history of the other members as well. Jon Syverson shared that the Mormon site, Family Search, is free and very helpful. Christine Johnson stated that Ancestry.com is having a sale on memberships right now.

May agenda items

No suggestions currently.

Next meeting date

May 4, 2025, 10:00 a.m. at the Germania Historical Society church, weather permitting.

Adjournment

10:49 a.m. **On a motion by Miles Chambers/John Serio, unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned.**

Approved

May 4, 2025