

CANAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK STATE
Board of Directors
January 20, 2024
In Person Meeting at Samuel Center for Canal History, Port Byron NY;
Meeting also Conducted Remotely via Zoom

Committee Reports submitted via Dropbox for the January 20, 2024 Board of Directors meeting are part of the record for this meeting, although they are not attached. The reports remain accessible online, and were reviewed as part of the deliberations of this Board meeting.

MINUTES

Those attending were: Anita Cottrell, John DiMura, Lisa O'Hara, Ronald Grube, David Kinyon, Bill Miles, Tammee Poinan-Grimes, Darrin Rooker, Ruth Rosenberg Naparsteck, Bill Schollenberger, Bruce Schwendy, Andrea Seamans, Will Van Dorp, Dan Ward, Dan Wiles, and Craig Williams.

Mr. Williams called the meeting to order at 10 am. The **Minutes** from the meeting of November 11, 2023 were approved on a motion by Mr. Ward seconded by Ms. Seamans.

Ms. Cottrell noted that in her **Financial Report** there was \$85,250 received for Transfers/Donations for the *Lois McClure* as well as a \$50,000 grant received from the Emerson Foundation. The \$9,289.18 received to date for the Annual Appeal is nearing the \$10,000 goal, although not all Board members have contributed. Although Mr. Williams had submitted a \$66,422.10 request for Heritage Park expense reimbursement to the Thruway Authority on December 5, payment has not been received. Mr. Williams had previously distributed a proposed **2024 Budget**, which reflected a 2023 year-end surplus of \$11,867.22 over expenses; he noted that the Society had performed well in 2023 in controlling expenses. He cautioned that the cost of insuring the *Lois McClure* just through the month of April is \$10,000. The grant from the Emerson Foundation will enable the Society to retain the services of Amie Flanigan to catalog the Society's collection. Mr. Rooker noted that at its recent meeting, the Finance Committee had reviewed the Society's current financial condition, and that the committee is confident that the Society should have the capacity to cash flow upcoming expenses for renovations for the Samuel Center restrooms and some of the anticipated costs for the *Lois McClure*. Mr. Williams pointed out that the proposed budget reflects that the Canal Society is now approximately a \$400,000 annual operation. On a motion by Mr. Grube, seconded by Mr. Schwendy the Board approved the Financial Report and the 2024 Budget.

Mr. Kinyon presented the **Nominating Committee** report, and on a motion by Ms. Cottrell seconded by Mr. Ward, the Board approved the nomination of the following to serve three year terms on the Board beginning April 1, 2024: Steve Boerner, Anita Cottrell, Lisa O'Hara, Janice Fontanella, David Kinyon and Bill Miles. Subsequent to the adjournment of this meeting, Mr. Kinyon informed the Board by email that Ronald Grube had submitted a letter of resignation from the Board effective March 31, 2024. As a result the Nominating Committee had recommended that Tom Beardsley be nominated to fill Mr. Grube's vacancy. The Board approved this recommendation. The names of these candidates will be presented to the

membership in the form of a ballot, with the results of the balloting to be announced at the Society's Annual Meeting on March 2.

In the absence of Janice Fontanella, Mr. Kinyon reported that the Human Relations Committee will meet March 8 to continue its work on production of a **Personnel Manual**.

Mr. Williams displayed the new shelving for the **Samuel Center** that had recently been received from the National September 11 Memorial & Museum; this should enable the Society to house the rest of the Society's collection currently stored at the Erie Canal Museum. Mr. Schwendy inquired whether Ms. Flanigan is able to direct researchers to the proper resources; Mr. Williams explained that the Past Perfect computer software that the Society and Erie Canal Museum utilize has a 'search' function that enables researchers to be properly directed to the resources. In response to a question from Ms. Seamans, Mr. Williams stated that Ms. Flanigan has been assisting the Society with its collection since 2014. Mr. Williams also stated that the Schoharie Aqueduct drawings are public documents in response to a question from Mr. Ward.

Ms. O'Hara reported that production of the next issue of ***Bottoming Out*** is nearing completion; this will be the first issue in a year. The cost of printing *Bottoming Out* is approximately \$3,500. Mr. Wiles suggested that the Society offer members the option of obtaining an electronic copy of the publication. Ms. O'Hara reported on updates she has made on the **Society's website**, including the provision of a Volunteer sign-up form, the ability to pay membership dues online and the availability of an online store as well as many other canal-related resources. Mr. Rooker noted that in addition to the value of online sales, the merchandise offers great promotional value for the Society.

Mr. Kinyon distributed a proposed itinerary for the **Spring Study Tour** to be based in Lockport the weekend of May 3-5. The theme will be 'The Power of the Canals of Niagara County', and it will begin with a Friday early bird tour of the Longshed Building at Canalside in Buffalo, featuring the replica *Seneca Chief*, Saturday bus tour of the site of the former hydraulic canals of Niagara Falls and the Niagara Power Project as well as hydro power generation sites in Lockport and the Lock Tenders Tribute Monument. A tour of the Canal Basin in Medina and the Medina Aqueduct on Sunday will conclude the Study Tour.

There was limited discussion regarding any future New York State Canal Conferences. Mr. Williams requested that three Board members work with him to consider a **2024 Fall Study Tour** in Kingston or at another site.

Mr. Schwendy reported that 10 presentations are scheduled for the March 2 **Winter Symposium** at Monroe Community College; one of the presentations will be pre-recorded and two sessions will be live-streamed. Registration materials for the Symposium will be distributed via email and available online at the newyorkcanals.org.

The ***Lois McClure*** has been properly covered for the winter by Mr. Wiles and a team of volunteers. C&S Engineers will develop a plan for transport of the boat to Port Byron. Mr. Williams affirmed that the intent is to move the boat onto land.

Mr. Williams had submitted a \$50,000 application for a **NYS Council on the Arts Capital Grant**; if approved, these funds will be used for the Samuel Center restroom renovations. He is seeking additional bids from contractors for the restroom project. Nearby resident/accessibility advocate Doug Hamlin, who is also a member of the Society, recently toured the Samuel Center to advise about accessibility needs in the design of the improvements. Ms. Seamans has requested the Society to submit an application on behalf of communities surrounding Port Byron for designation as a **Trail Town**. Cheryl Longyear of Montezuma is preparing the application.

Mr. Wiles began his **Park Manager** report by relating his recent illness in December and that he is presently doing well. Mr. Williams stated that the HVAC system at the Park needs to be addressed. Port Byron schools are working on a lock model and the Port Byron Library has donated filing cabinets to the Samuel Center. Ms. Seamans related how she is encouraging Port Byron school students to plant a vegetable garden on the grounds of the Port Byron Heritage Park to grow food products that were popular in the 19th Century. Ms. Seamans also announced that the Friends of the Port Byron Erie Canal Heritage Park will sponsor a March 8 'Doug's to Go' fish fry at the Samuel Center.

There will be a program about the Society's efforts to bring the **Lois McClure** to Port Byron on January 27 at the Samuel Center. Ms. Poinan-Grimes announced that **Canal New York** would like to offer a joint meeting with the Society at the Samuel Center in the Spring. She also announced that the Canal System will open to navigation on Friday, May 17. Ms. Poinan-Grimes expressed concern about the low clearance over the Erie Canal planned in connection with **replacement of a bridge** spanning the canal on the I490 in Rochester by the NYS Department of Transportation. It was noted that the Governor announced that there will be an **Erie Canal Bicentennial Commission** in her State of the State Address and that limited events are planned on the Erie Canal for the April 8 partial eclipse of the sun due to the canal not being watered.

Mr. Williams stated that he expects that a new representative from the Erie Canal Museum will be attending future Canal Society Board meetings.

Upcoming Board meeting dates were agreed as follows:

- March 23
- June 1 (rather than May 25)
- August 17
- November 2

On a motion by Ms. Cottrell, seconded by Mr. Rooker, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 12:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
David R. Kinyon, Secretary