

CANAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK STATE  
Board of Directors  
November 2, 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 November 2, 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: Tom Beardsley, Steve Boerner, Anita Cottrell, John Hatch, David Kinyon, Tammee Poinan Grimes, Andrea Rebeck, Darrin Rooker, Ruth Rosenberg Naparsteck, Bill Schollenberger, Bruce Schwendy, Andrea Seamans, Will Van Dorp, Dan Ward, Dan Wiles, and Craig Williams; also present was Derrick Pratt, representing the Erie Canal Museum.

Mr. Williams called the meeting to order at 10 AM.

On a motion by Mr. Ward, seconded by Ms. Seamans, the **Minutes** from the meeting of August 24, 2024 were approved.

Ms. Cottrell presented the **Financial Report** dated November 2, 2024, noting the \$36,414.76 for expenses in connection with the operation of the Port Byron Erie Canal Heritage Park, the \$25,000 of expenses for restroom construction at the Samuel Center, and the income and expense report for the Fall Study Tour. Recent stock market earnings have increased the value of the Merrill Lynch portfolio to \$108,428. In addition to the receipt of \$67,350 in Thruway Authority reimbursement, Mr. Williams stated that he will soon submit another reimbursement request to the Thruway for expenses incurred through the end of October. The Financial Report was approved on a motion by Mr. Rooker, seconded by Mr. Ward.

Mr. Kinyon presented the **Nominating Committee** report, and on a motion Ms. Cottrell seconded by Mr. Schwendy, the Board approved the following slate of candidates for election to serve three years terms each beginning April 1, 2025: Thomas Beardsley, John Hatch, Tammee Poinan-Grimes, Bruce Schwendy, Andrea Seamans and William Van Dorp. Mr. Kinyon noted that this will be the final three-year term that both Mr. Schwendy and Ms. Seamans will be eligible to serve.

Mr. Williams stated that the **Human Relations** Committee will meet December 6 to review pending staffing recommendations, dependent on receipt of a grant from the NYS Council on the Arts. Mr. Wiles has agreed to serve as Facilities Superintendent rather than as Park Manager.

In his written report, Mr. Williams updated the Board regarding Matton Shipyard Records, the Barbara Rivette, Richard Palmer and David Ennis donations, as well as a wheel bearing from the Parker Bridge in Castorland donated by Mr. Schwendy. In order to accommodate some of the

recent additions to the collection, storage shelving has been installed in the basement of the Samuel Center.

Mary Stalker is progressing in her use of the Neon **membership** software system, and membership dues invoices will be sent soon. In addition, Mr. Williams plans to send the Annual Appeal mailing in early December.

Mr. Boerner shared a new front cover design for the next issue of ***Bottoming Out***, which is expected to be published at the end of November. He also plans to utilize a different paper stock to improve photo quality.

Mr. Van Dorp invited Board members to provide him with content for his new **'Dispatches'** blog, which had 636 hits in October. Mr. Van Dorp hopes that this communication vehicle appeals to a younger audience. Mr. Beardsley distributed an article regarding boating; he encouraged others to submit information to the editor about boating as well.

Mr. Schwendy thanked the local volunteers and businesspeople for their involvement and support with the **Fall Study Tour** of the Black River Canal. Mr. Ward commended Mr. Schwendy's narration aboard the bus during the tour.

Monroe Community College has approved co-sponsorship of the **Winter Symposium** and Ms. Poinan-Grimes will assist with online registration for the March 1 forum. Assistance with publicity is needed, according to Mr. Schwendy. Four presenters have been confirmed to date.

A coach bus has been reserved in connection with the April 4-6 **Spring Study Tour** in the Mohawk Region, announced Mr. Williams. He also suggested that a date be identified for a 2026 **NYS Canal Conference**. Mr. Williams is exploring opportunities for co-sponsorship of the Canal Conference, with such statewide organizations as the Preservation League of NYS.

Mr. Wiles applauded the lifting of the ***Lois McClure***, and noted that the project was well documented. Mr. Williams thanked all those involved in the removal of the vessel from Seneca Lake, especially Mr. Beardsley, and for the use of the dock site owned by the Verdi family. The \$155,000 project was possible due to the donation of professional services by C&S Engineering. Ms. Seamans exclaimed about the large size of the boat. Mr. Wiles noted that the boat will have a high profile in the Port Byron canal prism. Barbara Benedict donated \$20,000 when she saw photos of the lift, stated Mr. Williams. He also expressed concern that the Society's CFA application for additional funding for the *Lois McClure* project may not get funded. The Society needs to work with the Thruway Authority for permits in order to trailer the boat to the Park. Due to the removal of the boat from the water, it will be added to the Society's assets under the current liability insurance policy. He also pointed out that repairs to the *Lois McClure* must be made over the winter.

Mr. Williams provided the following updates regarding pending **grant applications**:

- NYS Council on the Arts – hoping for a multi-year grant
- State Parks – still finalizing paperwork
- Emerson Foundation - \$50,000 received in 2023; will apply for a 2025 grant

- Erie Canalway – may apply for funding for musical event and for Park bike racks and wayside signs

In addition to his written report about attendance at the **Port Byron Heritage Park**, Mr. Wiles noted that 2024 donations had increased although retail sales declined slightly. Visitors' countries of national origin were very numerous, and he suggested that the arrival of the *Lois McClure* will have a significant impact on attendance. Mr. Williams commended the accomplishments of Ms. Seamans in working with Port Byron schools and the installation of billboard signs. Ms. Seamans noted that the heritage garden will benefit from being a combined Junior/Senior Class project. She also expressed her pleasure about the interest in the Park by State Assemblyman Jeff Gallahan. Mr. Rooker noted that the completion of the canal boat model had been well received. Mr. Williams has requested cost estimates from Hadley Exhibits for interpretive signage.

Mr. Williams expressed his pleasure with progress on the construction of the new restrooms at the **Samuel Center** and he thanked Ms. Seamans for opening the Center on the days the contractor has been on site. Mr. Wiles has contacted Herrtronics about the installation of a security system at the Center, but funding is still needed for this project.

Mr. Williams noted that the recent State Canal Recreationway Commission meeting focused on the **Canals2050** master plan. He pointed to the need for a boating/marine focus in the strategy and the need to maintain a navigable waterway for the entire Canal system.

The *Day Peckinpaugh* was recently sold at auction for \$5,050; Mr. Williams stated that the disposition of the historic Barge Canal-era vessel is very disheartening, especially given the Canal Society's efforts to preserve the boat and due to the amount of public money previously invested to repurpose the vessel.

Mr. Williams brought to the Board's attention the threat to the **Poorhouse Lock**, located at Lock 56/next to the Lyons Drydock.

A **Doug's to Go** benefit for the Canal Society is planned for between November 29 and January 6, according to Ms. Seamans, with proceeds to help pay for replacement of the Erie House awning.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:54 AM on a motion by Ms. Cottrell, seconded by Mr. Ward.

Respectfully submitted,  
David Kinyon, Secretary