



## **Trustee Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** September 19, 2023.

**Time:** 7:00 PM

**In Attendance:** Peter Griffin, Chair; Lisa Thornton, Vice Chair; Michael Mazalewski, Secretary; Neil Fallon, Trustee; Jim Bull, Trustee, Frank Merchel, Trustee; Rich Parow, Trustee, Cheryl Haas, Searles Coordinator

**Excused:** Elizabeth Gill, Trustee, Ross McLeod, BoS Representative,

**Agenda:**

1. Introduce Michelle (open/closer) and do walk through of open/close procedures.
2. Review minutes of August 15<sup>th</sup> meeting
3. Dave Knight Bay State Tent
4. Friends of Searles Report
5. Coordinator report including financials and discretionary funds
6. Front step repair & rail installation update
7. Review meeting with Bob Carrier (Carrier Funeral Home) and meeting with Searles Castle staff
8. Review rate/bylaws update
9. Marketing update
10. Discuss required Open House
11. Other business

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM

**Meeting Minutes:**

The following meetings were reviewed by the board:

Meeting Min. Date	Motion to Accept	Seconded By	Discussion/Comments	All in Favor
August 15, 2023	Lisa Thornton	Neil Fallon	none	7 - 0

**Coordinator Report:**

- **Searles Revenue Fund:**
  - Current balance \$50,800
  - Cheryl suggests updating the amount that can be spent out of the fund at the next town vote.
- **Lightning Strike Update:**
  - Only the burglar alarm and possible mold issues from the broken pipe remain to be fixed.



- **Building Shut-Down for Improvements:**

- The last function will be held on November 5<sup>th</sup>. The first function after closure will be helping hands for Thanksgiving baskets. They have been told bathrooms may not be available.
- Floor resurfacing will begin November 7<sup>th</sup>. There is to be no foot traffic for 7-10 days after.
- There will be storage units outside in the parking lot for tables/chairs etc..

- **New Hampshire Guitars Parking Lot Use:**

- Cheryl has concerns about abutters' use of our parking lot during events. There is a sign on 111 directing patrons to use our lot and their website states to use the Searles parking lot.
- Trustees agreed we should clarify use with the abutter. Neil and Jim will talk to owner.

### **Review Rate / Bylaw Updates:**

- Peter met with the Town Selectmen on September 18<sup>th</sup> to introduce the proposed new rate schedule.
- Town attorney Bernard Cambell will be consulted to verify the legality of having separate resident and non-resident rates.
- The Selectmen will schedule a public hearing to vote on adopting.

### **Friends of Searles Report:**

- The Friends are in the process of developing a website on which they plan to have a link to our website once we gain access to it again.
- They are forming fundraising ideas.
- Lisa checked the Festival of Trees website again. It is active but the links are not. She will continue to pursue an application this year.

### **Front Step Repair and Rail Installation Update:**

- We have one quote from Mill City Ironworks for the railings.
- Peter is working on obtaining a second quote.
- Frank suggested that we explore the implications of renovating the stairs because doing the project may require them to be brought up to current code. Frank will find out what the current code entails and town code enforcement will be consulted.

### **Review Meeting with Carrier Funeral Home and Searles Castle:**

- The purpose of the meetings was to improve communication with them and to hopefully get future referrals.
- Peter, Jim and Cheryl met with Bob Carrier of Carrier Funeral Home. They may refer mercy meals in the future.
- Sean at Searles Castle stated their focus is on weddings and they will not book other types of events more than a few months out. They may refer other types of events to us.

### **Dave Knight of Bay State Tents:**

- Peter asked Dave Knight to meet with us to gather information on the tent industry so the Trustees could make better informed decisions regarding tent use at Searles in the future.
- Different styles of tents were explained:
  - Canopy tent (traditional pole in middle) is good for short term use.



- Frame tent (fabric lays on frame) was not recommended.
- Engineered / Kedder tent (fabric integrated with frame) is good for full season setup.
- Fabric Structure (engineered aluminum structure with cover) is good for permanent / year-round installation.
- Dave suggested staking the tent is the best installation, if using ballast use concrete, not water
- Dave suggested buying a tent may not be a good fit as there is a large upfront cost, we would still need a tent company to set up, tighten and take down the tent, we would need liability insurance, and there would need to be weekly rental use to make financial sense
- Dave suggested those who rent tents to use at our facility should:
  - have a vendor list to choose from who know where stakes can be installed
  - make sure their vendor has a tent permit from the Windham Fire Department
  - provide us with a Certificate of Liability naming us as additional insured

### **Marketing Update:**

- The marketing subcommittee recently had a meeting.
- The subcommittee is working on a unique value statement and website access.
- Frank brought up the need for better on-line visibility. The Trustees discussed methods to increase visibility not just on Google, but Trip Advisor, Yelp, etc.

### **Annual Open House:**

- The Trustees discussed promoting an open house during the Pop-Up Gallery.

### **Other Business:**

- **Review of Open/Close Procedures:**
  - Cheryl (Michelle was not able to attend) reviewed building opening and closing procedures, building safety, and how to operate building features and mechanicals.

**Next Meeting:** October 17, 2023 @ 7:00 PM.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:33 PM. Moved by Neil Fallon, seconded by Rich Parrow, all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted  
Michael Mazalewski  
Michael Mazalewski,  
Searles School & Chapel Board of Trustees Secretary