

**Sugar Hill Historic Preservation Society Meeting
Wednesday, December 18, 2019, 6:00 P.M.
City of Sugar Hill City Hall – Art Museum Room
Meeting Minutes**

Approval of the Agenda

Chris Walker, Sugar Hill Historic Preservation Society (SHHPS) Chairman, convened the meeting at 6:05 p.m. He called for a motion to approve the agenda. Holli Stouffer, Board Member, made a motion to approve the agenda. Stephanie Isaacs, Board Member, seconded the motion. The agenda was approved unanimously.

The following individuals were in attendance:

NAME

Kathryn Baskin*	Secretary/Board Member
Joann Burel	Treasurer/Board Member
Charlie Butts	Youth Member
Ryan Butts	Guest Member
Varessa Butts	Guest Member
Tiffany Hale Carter*	Board Member
Amber Chambers	Guest Member
Ryckie Fernandez	Board Member
Brandon Hembree	Board Member/City Liaison
Harvey Isaacs	Guest
Stephanie Isaacs*	Board Member
Kim Landers	Guest Member
Margaret Neal*	Board Member
Darrell Pruitt	Board Member
Holli Stouffer*	Board Member

*Indicates committee chair

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Chairman Walker called for a motion to approve the November 20, 2019, meeting minutes. Holli Stouffer made a motion to approve the minutes and Margaret Neal, Board Member, seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Chairman Walker called on Joann Burel, Board Member, to update the members on the status of the Society's funding. Ms. Burel reported that as of December 19, 2019, the remaining funds will be \$2,051.97. She noted that the two markers would not be paid out until December 19th but she had included them so she could report the actual year-end balance.

Chairman Walker called for a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. Kathryn Baskin, Board Member, made the motion and Holli Stouffer seconded the motion. The Treasurer's Report was approved without objection.

Committee Chair Reports

Chairman Walker announced that the next item on the agenda was for the committee chairs to report their progress thus far.

Museum Committee –Tiffany Hale Carter, Board Member and Chair of the Museum Committee, reported that the Request for Proposals (RFP) on the history museum had been released by the City of Sugar Hill. She said that she had been told it would be a couple of months before a selection is made. Ms. Carter added that the museum and art gallery designs are combined in the RFP. She told members that the design and layout concepts along with other recommendations developed by SHHPS had been included as an addendum.

Research Committee –Next, Mr. Walker called on Stephanie Isaacs, Chair of the Research Committee, to provide her report. Ms. Isaacs reported that she had gone to the Sugar Hill Elementary School to obtain the signed forms for the items the school had donated to the Sugar Hill Historic Preservation Society. She informed members that she had passed the forms on to Margaret Neal, Chair of the Digital Archives Committee. Ms. Isaacs commented that she had received approval from the school to scan the yearbooks for inclusion in the SHHPS archives. She added that she had updated the inventory file as well as the research outline and she would distribute those to board members soon.

Ms. Isaacs continued her report noting that she had been working with Amy Stanton who believed she has ancestors buried in the Sugar Hill area and wanted to be able to access those graves. Ms. Isaacs said that after some research she believed that the Army Corps of Engineers may own the land where the crypts are located and that the land was actually in Buford. Ms. Isaacs said that Ms. Stanton had informed her that the Gwinnett Historical Society was taking the lead on researching the grave sites. She added that Ms. Stanton had donated a book on the Hammond Family to include in the SHHPS archives.

Mr. Walker inquired if members had seen Councilman Hembree’s recent posting of an 1883 article that Stephanie Isaacs had found on gold mining activities in the Sugar Hill area. He commented that he thought it was the earliest accounting of gold mining on Level Creek in Sugar Hill.

Next, Varessa Butts, Guest Member, commented that she believed some artifacts may be stored in the “old barn” and that there may be some other items located in her old office at City Hall. Chairman Walker reported that he had written a letter to Troy Besseche, Assistant City Manager, regarding some dedicated storage for SHHPS artifacts in a central location. He added that he had not received a response yet since the letter was recently sent but he would report back as soon as he received a response. He noted that items were being stored in various locations and his goal was to have them all stored in a dedicated, central location with limited access.

Joann Burel asked Mr. Walker about the scan day and how it went. He responded that SHHPS members volunteering that day had accomplished a number of needed tasks and that items in the museum were scanned and added to the database.

Scholarship Committee – Next, Vice-Chairman Pruitt called on Holli Stouffer, Chair of the Scholarship Committee, to give an update. Ms. Stouffer inquired if there was interest in providing a scholarship in 2020. The members agreed unanimously that there should be a SHHPS scholarship award in 2020. Chairman Walker commented that he felt the 2019 scholarship was successful and he would like to move forward with it next year and incorporate the improvements the committee had identified. Ms. Stouffer add that “timing” was considered a crucial factor and releasing the announcement earlier should be achievable. She said that if everyone agreed then she would pursue approval for funding in January. Councilman Hembree advised that since the City had approved the budget for SHHPS that the scholarship funding could be approved in 2019. Chairman Walker stated that based on the Councilman’s advice that SHHPS should go ahead and approve a

budget of \$1000.00 for the 2020 SHHPS scholarship and he called for a motion. Ms. Baskin made the motion and Ryckie Fernandez, Board Member, seconded the motion. The motion was passed without objection.

Following the motion, board members and guest members discussed various aspects of marketing and eligibility for the scholarship. Ms. Stouffer reminded members of the process used for the 2019 award and advised that she and members had identified ways to improve the process for future marketing to increase interest in applying for the scholarship. Ms. Stouffer announced that the committee would be moving forward with the implementing the process early in 2020.

Digital Archives Committee –Chairman Walker called on Margaret Neal, Chairman of the Digital Archives Committee, to report. Ms. Neal advised that the next step would be for a sub-group to meet in January 2020. She also suggested that future community scanning days should be conducted by setting up appointments. Ms. Isaacs recommended that the appointments be coordinated on the same day and Mr. Walker and Ms. Neal agreed that it would be a good idea to coordinate the appointments on specific dates when possible.

Cemetery Committee – Next, Chairman Walker called on Brandon Hembree to give an update on the activities of the Cemetery Committee. Councilman Hembree stated that the *Wreaths Across America* event went very well. He noted that over 100 wreaths were sponsored and that on that day there were 30 to 40 people who came out to lay the wreaths. He added that the Suwannee Creek Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) had already begun the process to organize the event for next year and are creating a fundraising portal that should go live soon.

In addition, Councilman Hembree told members that there was a mound of pea gravel in the cemetery that needs to be spread among certain grave sites and that Tim Schick had asked for him to coordinate a volunteer day. He told members he would announce a date and time soon. Several members commented that they would be willing to participate. Councilman Hembree added that he thought some family members had spread the pea gravel on their family grave sites already.

Following this discussion, Stephanie Isaacs told members that the information written on the aluminum markers that were placed at the unmarked graves in the Sugar Hill Historic Cemetery was starting to fade. She advised members that she is testing various Sharpee markers on different mediums to provide a means of making the information more weather resistant and durable for the long-term. Ryan Butts, Guest Member, advised that he had some metal stamps that could be used with aluminum sheeting and an ink application. After a discussion of this method, members agreed to try this method for preserving the information.

Budget Committee –Chairman Walker called on Kathryn Baskin, Chairman of the Budget Committee, to give a report for the budget committee. She announced that based on the Treasurer's report that she agreed with the remaining amount of funds that Joann Burel had reported.

Old Business

Chairman Walker asked if members had any old business to discuss. Since there was none, he moved to the next item on the agenda.

New Business

Chairman Walker asked if there was any new business. Ms. Baskin announced that the speaker for the January meeting of the Gwinnett Historical Society (GHS) will be Lisa Russell, author of *Lost*

Towns of North Georgia. She encouraged SHHPS members to attend the meeting and to join the GHS. ***(Note: The date of the GHS meeting is Monday, January 27th at the Gwinnett Historical Courthouse beginning with refreshments at 6:30 p.m. and the program beginning at 7:00 p.m.)***

Mr. Walker announced that SHHPS had received the 2019 Gwinnett County Historical Society's Hughes Preservation Award. He added that Seth Cohen also received a certificate for his work in restoring the Benson-Kile Cemetery.

Next, Mr. Walker asked if there was any more New Business. There being none, he announced that he would be stepping down as SHHPS Chair because of a number of changes in his career and personal life. He noted that he will remain on the SHHPS board and stay involved as much as possible. Members commended Mr. Walker and applauded him for his dedication and commitment in preserving the history of Sugar Hill and devoting energy and time to building interest of history in the community.

Following the announcement, Darrell Pruitt, Vice-Chairman, read a commendation to Mr. Walker and announced that the SHHPS members wanted to award Mr. Walker with the Golden Wagon Award in perpetuity. Mr. Pruitt continued with his reading and stated that the members of the Board were appreciative of his passion and devotion to the Society.

Discussion/Questions

Chairman Walker asked if there were any further questions or discussion. Members commented on Mr. Walker's leadership and his willingness to include all those who wanted to volunteer. Ms. Baskin suggested that SHHPS members organize a "pot luck" dinner to honor Mr. Walker and celebrate his service to the community. Holli Stouffer offered to send out an event invitation and Varessa Butts offered to host the gathering.

There being no further discussion. Chairman Walker adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

