

Sugar Hill Historic Preservation Society Meeting
Wednesday, September 18, 2018, 7:00 P.M.
City of Sugar Hill City Hall – History Room
Meeting Minutes

I. Approval of the Agenda

- A. Chris Walker, Sugar Hill Historic Preservation Society (SHHPS chairman), convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. He then called for approval of the meeting agenda. Kathryn Baskin, SHHPS secretary, made a motion to approve the agenda and Ed Lanfear, board member, seconded it. The agenda was approved unanimously.
- B. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves and a sign-in sheet was passed around.
- C. The following individuals were in attendance:

NAME

Kathryn Baskin	Secretary/Board Member
Charlie Butts	Guest
Ryan Butts	Guest Member
Varessa Butts	City Staff
Tiffany Hale Carter	Board Member
Bill Harting	Guest Member
Stephanie Isaacs	Guest Member
Kim Landers	City Staff
Ed Lanfear	Board Member
Margaret Neal	Board Member
Darrell Pruitt	Vice-chairman/Board Member
Sherry Smith	Guest Member
Chris Walker	Chairman/Board Member

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Chris Walker asked for approval of the August 15, 2018, meeting minutes. Ed Lanfear moved for the meeting minutes to be approved and Margaret Neal seconded the motion. The minutes were adopted without objection.

III. Treasurer's Report

Joann Burel, SHHPS Treasurer, was unable to attend the meeting and there was no formal Treasurer's report. However, Ms. Burel submitted a written report on expenditures to date and the remaining balance in the budget. Mr. Walker reported that expenditures to date were \$253.21, leaving a balance of \$9,746.79. He added that a number of expenditures are expected over the next couple of months.

Mr. Walker told the group that he expected to order another marker before the year end. He commented that at a previous meeting, Phyllis Davis had shown the members the location of a cornerstone of the original schoolhouse located at the back boundary of the city cemetery. Mr. Walker said that he had researched the school and found two photos of different buildings that were dated prior to 1920. He commented that the sources for the photos referred to both schools as the Level Creek School. Darrell Pruitt asked if it was the Level Creek School or the Sugar Hill School that was located at the back of the cemetery. There was a brief discussion about the need to verify the name as well as the correct photo. Mr. Walker suggested that the marker include a photo of the school to show the school that was being commemorated.

IV. Cemetery Updates

- A. Sugar Hill Cemetery – Chris Walker gave an update for Brandon Hembree, Sugar Hill City Councilman, on the projects for the Sugar Hill Cemetery. He announced that the planned cemetery plot mapping project with the Church of the Latter Day Saints had been cancelled based on the city's decision for the city staff to conduct the mapping of existing plots.
- B. Ground Penetrating Radar - Mr. Walker told the members that the ground penetrating radar (GPR) project will occur the week of October 22nd and also will include the Kile Benson Cemetery as requested by Susan Gilbert, a descendent. He told the group that the City of Sugar Hill had selected a company based on a bid solicitation process for GPR services in the Sugar Hill Cemetery to identify the unmarked graves including suspected areas of pauper's graves. The costs of the GPR services will be included as part of the existing city budget for the cemetery. Mr. Walker added that the city public works department would be clearing brush and trees in order to facilitate the GPR activities to identify unmarked graves. He added that the city also had contracted with a vendor to provide mowing, weeding, and trimming of the cemetery grounds every two weeks beginning the week of September 17, 2018.

V. Gwinnett Days of Service

- A. Marker Cleaning Direction(s)– Chris Walker reported that city workers will be cleaning the veterans' markers in the Sugar Hill cemetery as part of the Gwinnett Great Days of Service on October 19th from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. He added that Councilman Brandon Hembree would be supervising the cleaning process and that SHHPS volunteers were needed to assist in this task. Several members stated that they would be interested in learning the process. Ed Lanfear requested that Councilman Hembree provide a written, 5 step process, to use as guidance. Mr. Walker commented that Councilman Hembree would be marking selected veterans' graves on October 18th.
- B. Mr. Walker then asked if the city would be providing refreshments, water, and a tent for the volunteers participating in the cemetery cleanup. Varessa Butts, city staff, commented that that the city would provide water but not refreshments or a tent. At that time, Chris Walker called for a motion to approve funds for providing refreshments and a tent for the city volunteers working on the cemetery during the Gwinnett Great Days of Service. Darrell Pruitt, SHHPS vice-chairman, made the motion and Kathryn Baskin seconded it.
- C. Marker Cleaning Funds – Mr. Walker told members that the city had asked SHHPS to provide funding for the supplies needed to clean the veterans' markers. He noted that the supplies would include five gallons of D2 solvent, gloves, several natural bristle brushes and approximately five spray bottles. Mr. Walker told the group that five gallons of D2 Biological Solution cost \$177.00. He said that he would follow up with a detailed cost breakdown of all the supplies. Mr. Walker then called for a motion to approve funding for the cleaning supplies. Darrell Pruitt, made the motion to approve funding and Ed Lanfear seconded the motion.

VI. Historical Marker for Former City Hall

Mr. Walker reported that the marker for the former city hall, currently named the Suite Spot, had been ordered. He advised the group that the wording had been changed slightly since Kim Landers,

city staff, had verified that a jail was located on the site. He called on Darrell Pruitt to read the revised wording to the members. The revised wording for the marker is noted below:

Dedicated in 1974, the Sugar Hill Municipal Building cost \$65,000. At the ceremony were Mayor E.E. Camp and the city's first mayor, Alton Tucker. It included seven city offices, a jail, and a precinct station for the Gwinnett County Police Department. The building was expanded in 2003 and continued to serve as City Hall until 2012. In 2014, the building was repurposed as a business incubator, the Suite Spot, and includes the first two murals ever commissioned for the city.

VII. Sugar Rush Preparations

- A. Professional Services for Setting up and Breakdown for the Sluice Box – Darrell Pruitt proposed that SHHPS contract for professional services to set-up the sluice box as well as breaking it down at the end of the event. Darrell Pruitt made a motion that SHHPS set aside funds for professional services so that the volunteers would not be responsible for the setting up and breakdown tasks. The motion was seconded by Ed Lanfear. To follow up on the initial motion, Darrell Pruitt made another motion to provide the specific amount of \$200 for professional services needed during Sugar Rush and it was seconded by Tiffany Hale Carter. The board agreed unanimously.
- B. Supplies for the Sluice Box Activities - Chris Walker told the group that he had checked on the remaining inventory of the “pay dirt” bags and there were only about 80 left. He said that the bags were approximately \$100/case. Mr. Walker suggested that three cases be ordered for this year. The group discussed the need to have the boxes at the sluice box on the morning of Sugar Rush before the event started. Kim Landers proposed storing them in the underground parking lot cage at City Hall and Varessa Butts replied that she would check to make sure it wasn’t being used for storage of other items. Ed Lanfear made a motion that SHHPS allot up to \$500 for supplies for Sugar Rush activities. Mr. Pruitt seconded the motion.

Margaret Neal asked if the professional would be responsible for moving the boxes and other materials from storage to the location of the sluice box on the day of Sugar Rush. Chris Walker volunteered to provide a hand truck and Mr. Harting, guest member, offered the use of his golf cart. Varessa Butts said that she would check to see if the city would allow the use of a golf cart.

Ms. Neal also reminded the group that there are number of items that need organizing prior to the event. She inquired about the location of other supplies used last year such as labels, cards, and magnets, etc. Mr. Walker responded that he believed they were stored in the museum case. Varessa Butts mentioned that last year’s materials also were stored in several different locations. Ms. Neal emphasized that we needed to have a plan to ensure all the items were in place by 9:00 a.m. on the morning of Sugar Rush. At this point of the discussion, Varessa Butts suggested that the next SHHPS meeting be a “working” meeting to prepare for Sugar Rush. **Chris Walker proposed that the monthly meeting date be moved back to October 10th.** Everyone agreed to schedule **the October monthly meeting for October 10.**

Ryan Butts, guest member, inquired about altering the location of the sluice box so that it would be easier for Sugar Rush attendees to see. Chris Walker said that he believed there

would be better signage this year and that he had met with Avery Simmons, the city’s event planner, to discuss some of the issues from last year’s event.

- C. Roving Goodwill Ambassador(s) – Darrell Pruitt explained that at the last SHHPS meeting Margaret Neal had introduced the idea of having “roving goodwill ambassadors” at Sugar Rush. He said that members would wear SHHPS t-shirts and talk to attendees about the historical society. Margaret Neal added that the “ambassadors” could pass out SHHPS cards. Mr. Pruitt said that the volunteers could rotate between the sluice box and acting as goodwill ambassadors. Ed Lanfear, Tiffany Hale Carter, and Stephanie Isaacs expressed interest in acting as ambassadors. Darrell Pruitt suggested that all the SHHPS volunteers at Sugar Rush could rotate between helping with the sluice box and acting as goodwill ambassadors.

Chris Walker confirmed that the sluice box and roving goodwill ambassadors were the only two SHHPS activities during Sugar Rush.

- D. Shift Schedule – Chris Walker then circulated a sign-up sheet for members to designate the times they would be available to help at Sugar Rush. He noted that more volunteers will be needed than just the members. Varessa Butts said that she would discuss volunteering with the Youth Council and Youth Ambassadors. The following is the shift schedule with the times that members in attendance at the September meeting designated they would be able to help at Sugar Rush:

10:00 am	Ed	Kim	Kathryn	Darrell/Vicki	Stephanie	Margaret	Stephanie	
11:00 am	Ed	Kim	Kathryn	Darrell/Vicki	Stephanie	Margaret	Stephanie	
12:00 noon	Ed	Kim	Kathryn	Darrell/Vicki	Stephanie	Margaret	Stephanie	
1:00 pm				Darrell/Vicki		Margaret		Sherry
2:00 pm				Darrell/Vicki		Margaret		
3:00 pm				Darrell/Vicki				
4:00 pm				Darrell/Vicki				

Note: Tiffany Hale Carter and Varessa Butts will be floating volunteers.

VIII. First Historical Video Interview

Chris Walker told the members that he and Brandon Hembree had the opportunity to conduct the first historical interview with Andy Suddereth. He told everyone that Mr. Suddereth was a former moonshiner in Sugar Hill and that Sugar Hill had a rich history in moonshining. The interview was videotaped at the R.M. Rose Distillery in Dillard, Georgia. Mr. Walker added that the video was being edited and should be available on line soon.

IX. Century Tree Program

Chris Walker announced that he had met with a retired arborist with the University of Georgia Gwinnett County Extension Service named Dale Higdon to evaluate the southern red oak in Sugar Hill for the Champion Tree Program in Georgia. He said that while the tree may not be the oldest, it most likely will rank in the top five. Mr. Walker added that Mr. Higdon was writing a report that should provide the information required to complete the forms for the Champion Tree Program. In addition, he commented that it is important that the city public works staff continue to provide maintenance to prevent the kudzu from killing the tree. Ed Lanfear, who arranged for Mr. Higdon

to evaluate the tree, advised the group that that the tree is approximately 17 feet in diameter and more than 1.5 centuries old.

X. History Award Scholarship(s)

Holli Stouffer was unable to attend the meeting but Chris Walker reported that she is still working on a description of potential projects for scholarships.

XI. Veterans' Day Celebration

Chris Walker told the group that he had talked with Rachel Schmalz, Regent of the Suwanee Creek Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), regarding SHHPS support for the Veterans' Day celebration. He reported that the DAR and the American Legion would like to provide a cook out for the veterans in the community. Ms. Schmalz requested that SHHPS provide funding for the rental of the Sugar Hill Community Center for the event. Varessa Butts told the members that the rental cost is \$300 with a \$200 refundable deposit. Mr. Walker called for a motion to provide funding for the rental of the Community Center for this event. Ed Lanfear made a motion and Darrell Pruitt seconded it.

XII. Further Questions

Chris Walker showed the group some items he had found recently while exploring some of the abandoned gold mine sites in the Sugar Hill area. One item was a 1913 stainless steel soil auger that most likely was used for core sampling. He also showed the group some pieces of broken pottery he found in a trash pile and that he believes are from a whiskey jug. Mr. Walker added that Mr. Suddereth had confirmed that, in fact, the pieces were from a whiskey jug. He said that maybe a day could be designated after Sugar Rush when the members could go to the site and explore for other artifacts.

Kathryn Baskin brought up the October 6th Oakland cemetery tour that Brandon Hembree was organizing. She told the members that she was no longer able to go on that date but others confirmed that they still would like to take the tour on that date.

Ed Lanfear inquired about the SHHPS t-shirts and when he might get one. Chris Walker said that the t-shirts will be available at the next meeting on October 10th.

Ms. Baskin announced that she, Margaret Neal, and Ryckie Fernandez attended the Duluth Historical Society's presentation on the Duluth cemetery research that the group conducted. She also shared several examples of marketing and communication materials that other organizations and groups use to build awareness. She shared these items with the members as possible projects for SHHPS to develop in the future.

In closing, Darrell Pruitt announced that he wanted to recognize that Councilman Hembree had met his commitment of conducting the first interview prior to the September meeting, Chris Walker invited everyone who wanted to watch the unedited video to stay after the meeting was adjourned.

There being no further questions or business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m.

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