

**Sugar Hill Historic Preservation Society Meeting
Wednesday, February 19, 2020, 7:00 P.M.
City of Sugar Hill City Hall – History Museum Room
Meeting Minutes**

Approval of the Agenda

Kathryn Baskin, Sugar Hill Historic Preservation Society Chair, convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. She called for a motion to approve the agenda. Darrell Pruitt, Board Member, made a motion to approve the agenda. Margaret Neal, Board Member, seconded the motion. The agenda was approved unanimously.

The following individuals were in attendance:

NAME	
Kathryn Baskin*	Chairman/Board Member
Ryan Butts	Guest Member
Varessa Butts	Guest Member
Marc Cohen	City Councilman/Guest
Marie Cohen	Guest
Seth Cohen	Guest
Susan Y. Gilbert	Guest Member
Brandon Hembree	Board Member/City Liaison
Stephanie Isaacs*	Vice Chairman/Board Member
Margaret Neal*	Board Member
Darrell Pruitt	Board Member

*Indicates committee chair

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Ms. Baskin called for a motion to approve the January 15, 2020, meeting minutes. Brandon Hembree, City Councilman and Board Member, made a motion to approve the minutes and Stephanie Isaacs, SHHPS Vice-Chair, seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Chair Baskin stated that since Joann Burel, SHHPS Treasurer, was unable to attend the meeting that no report was available. Ms. Baskin noted that there had been no expenditures since the last report so the funds available to SHHPS remained at \$10,000.

Special Presentation of Gwinnett Historical Society Preservation Certificate by Susan Gilbert to Seth Cohen of Sugar Hill

Because of his Eagle Scout project, Seth was recognized by the Gwinnett Historical Society for his contribution in preserving the Benson-Kile Cemetery. He went through the brush, cleaning up the area and performed other maintenance, restoration, and preservation tasks in order to earn this recognition. Seth received his Certificate of Preservation from Susan Youngblood Gilbert, President of the Gwinnett Historical Society and Sugar Hill native. Seth's parents, Councilman Cohen and Mrs. Cohen, were also in attendance.

Committee Chair Reports

Museum Committee – Tiffany Carter, Chair of the Museum Committee, was not in attendance and no report was available.

Research Committee –Stephanie Isaacs, Chair of the Research Committee, advised that a meeting will hopefully be set up later for specific topics to be researched and shared.

Scholarship Committee – Holli Stouffer, Chair of the Scholarship Committee was not in attendance and no report was available. Ms. Baskin stated that Ms. Stouffer had requested that Committee Members submit potential topics for this year's essays.

Digital Archives Committee – Margaret Neal, Chair of the Digital Archives Committee, reported that she is working on the following:

1. Metadata from scan day with Kathryn Baskin and Kim Landers. They are specifically working on the consistency of the terminology.
2. Solar Box – Margaret Neal presented a handout showing various types of solar boxes that can be used for the history museum and/or the cemetery. Ms. Neal described how the technology allows the user to hear a story by just pressing appropriate buttons. She believes that the solar box would be good for when visiting the site alone. Pricing shown on the handout for one of the solar boxes was approximately \$3,350.00. Margaret Neal also related that if a box was put outside of the history museum, it could give directions to various sites in Sugar Hill. She also spoke to a lady with the company to get specifics. Councilman Brandon Hembree questioned the lifespan and Ms. Neal replied that possibly the warranty would cover some of the problems.

Chair Kathryn Baskin asked Ms. Neal to check out a grant to cover this and perhaps speak to Tim Schick at some point about putting it in the Sugar Hill Cemetery. Ms. Neal shared that Georgia Humanities has a grant for walking tours (Emory did). Chair Kathryn Baskin said that this was a good option and needed to explore it more.

Darrell Pruitt said that he was meeting with city staff on Monday and later with Wayne Hill and Joanne Burel to work on interviews.

Cemetery Committee – Councilman Hembree reported that the city had developed a Master Plan for the historic cemetery and that it was shown to the Mayor and City Council. This plan includes:

- building a columbarium (near the roundabout area of cemetery);
- finishing the fencing;
- paving paths (instead of gravel); and
- constructing a gazebo in the wooded area as a place of reflection.

Councilman Hembree also announced that Stephanie Isaacs had been selected for the Cemetery Technician with the City of Sugar Hill.

Co-chair Stephanie Isaacs described the work that Ryan Butts did for the unknown graves in the Sugar Hill Historic Cemetery. She described the markers would be in aluminum hammered out with the vital dates of birth and death. She noted that these plates would resist the outside elements and last longer. Ms. Isaacs stated that she will follow up with Ryan Butts on the possibility of doing more for other markers.

Budget Committee – Ms. Baskin advised members that since there wasn't a quorum there could not be a vote on any budget items. However, she announced that she had planned to call for a motion to reaffirm the budget items that were voted on at the end of 2019 which included \$200 for the Sluice Box pump, \$1200 for the pay dirt for the Sluice Box, and the \$1000 for the Scholarship.

Old Business

Ms. Baskin told members that she attended the Sugar Hill Community Groups Roundtable conducted by Mercy Montgomery with the City of Sugar Hill. The quarterly roundtable includes updates on various activities of the Sugar Hill community groups. Ms. Baskin noted that much of the discussion was related to the New Resident Welcome Event. The following was noted:

- 1st meeting will be in July, 2020
- New residents in the 30518 zip code that are not Sugar Hill residents will be extracted from the data. The rough estimate is around 300 residents per quarter.
- Welcome bags will be given to new residents and the individual groups are asked to contribute swag if practical.

Ms. Baskin noted that the city usually discourages paper. She told members that she had asked if it would be permissible to provide a card with a factoid on the history of Sugar Hill or a brochure on the society. Ms. Baskin said that Ms. Montgomery had agreed to that type of collateral for the Welcome Bags.

Ms. Baskin advised members that the city is organizing several activities related to information on, education about, and participation in the census. She advised the group that there will be a call out for volunteers. Ms. Baskin said that some of the outreach activities would include a community gathering, canvassing, help for those completing the census online, and possibly door to door canvassing.

Council Marc Cohen told members that the project is referred to as "Complete Count." He added that this is the first time the census is being done online. He advised that the city is doing everything to be sure that they count everyone in Sugar Hill. Councilman Cohen stated that the city will be working with schools, houses of worship, influencers, HOAs, media savvy people in their effort to get participation. He said that information will be on the City of Sugar Hill webpage and on the Facebook page to encourage people to volunteer.

New Business

Councilman Brandon Hembree advised that the SHHPS resolution needed some updating and that the City Council had agreed to everything that he proposed. This included:

- Four year terms for Board members
- Two year terms for Board officers
- Expansion of the Board to 13 members
- Creation of an Executive Committee
- No limit on non-resident Board members
- Mayor and City Council can decide on more additions on a skill set basis.

Councilman Hembree noted that there will be an attendance requirement hopefully to avoid the lack of a quorum at meetings.

Councilman Hembree announced that a path forward for SHHPS is to pursue the possibility of becoming a 501(c)3. He noted that obtaining this status would allow for various streams of revenue for SHHPS and fundraising for the cemetery. He noted that several members have had recent experience on establishing a non-profit and that SHHPS can benefit from the experience of others. Councilman Hembree added that one idea for the historic cemetery and the other cemeteries in the area could be recognizing donors as patrons at different levels of sponsorships.

Chair Kathryn Baskin introduced the idea of having a speaker at some of the SHHPS meetings, to help cultivate interest in the community. She said that the first speaker is tentatively planned for the April 2020 meeting on April 15, 2020, at 7pm. She asked members to submit suggestions for speakers. Varessa Butts commented that Elliot Brack would be a good speaker. Ms. Baskin proposed that to conserve time on the meeting, when a speaker is scheduled, that the committee reports would be submitted in advance, and included in the meeting minutes, to give more time to the speaker.

Ms. Baskin thanked SHHPS Secretary Kim Landers for ensuring that the names of the board members on the website were updated and also that the posting of the SHHPS minutes were up to date.

Events and Announcements

February 25th – Black History Month Celebration, Sugar Hill Church

Ms. Baskin teleconferenced Tiffany Carter in by speakerphone to tell members about the Black History month celebration that would be at the Sugar Hill Church on Tuesday, 2/25/2020, at 7pm.

Some highlights that will be presented:

- Short hour long program
- Artwork by school children (painting and black art)
- Living wax museum of important personalities
- Musical performances, mostly done by students

Ms. Baskin announced the following upcoming events:

February 29th – Sugar Hill Cleanup Day

February 29 – 10AM – Gwinnett Parks bus tour to visit African American churches and schools

February 20th – Gwinnett Environment Heritage Center event on Ezzard Charles, Heavyweight Champion born in Lawrenceville, Georgia

Varessa Butts announced that on February 29 there would be a household hazard waste event at the Fairgrounds in Lawrenceville.

Ms. Baskin noted that she had a family history connection with Ezzard Charles and planned to attend the event.

Discussion/Questions

Board Member Darrell Pruitt asked about the timing of the marker dedication. Councilman Brandon Hembree advised that he had emailed Tim Schick about this. He told the group that probably it will take place in the spring.

Darrell Pruitt told members that the Juneteenth Celebration is on June 19, 2020 (that is a Friday). He advised the group that Tiffany Carter had asked about the possibility of organizing some activities in observance of this historical event. Councilman Hembree recommended that Mr. Pruitt should contact Mercy Montgomery to coordinate with anything that the city might have planned. Darrell Pruitt concurred and said would work on this.

There being no further discussion, Kathryn Baskin adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.