



## GWINNETT HISTORICAL RESTORATION & PRESERVATION BOARD

### Meeting Minutes

**Monday, February 22, 2021 – 10:00am**

### Virtual Meeting

Members present: Aaron Ragans, Marlene Taylor-Crawford, Ann Bender, Justin Walsh and Demetrios Lambros

Member Absent: Marvin Nash Worthy

Others present: Mark Patterson, Sarah Barlow, Diane McCormic, MC, Richard Lux, Beverly Paff, Betty Warbington

#### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Aaron Ragans at 10:04am.

#### 2. Welcome/Opening Remarks

Aaron Ragans requested to move Agenda item 6 (Announcements) up to Agenda item 3.

Motion made to move Agenda item 6 to Agenda item 3.

{Action: approved; Motion: Ragans; Second: Lambros; Vote: (4-0) Ragans-Yes; Walsh-Yes; Lambros- Yes; Bender-Yes}

#### 3. Announcements (Board Members)

Aaron Ragans thank the Board, stated he was moving out of the County and resigning effective end of February 2021. He requested to go through his action items and direction he envisioned the Board might go. He requested Board members introduce themselves and he would share parting thoughts.

Demetrios Lambros stated he was the Chairwoman's appointee and was excited to hear about the Board opening. He is involved with the foundation at Georgia Gwinnett College and committed to giving back to the community.

Justin Walsh was appointed by Commissioner Watkins in District 3 and would like to increase awareness and share interest with younger generations.

Ann Bender is from Sugar Hill, has been in Gwinnett for 20 years and looks forward to learning more about Gwinnett's history.

Aaron Ragans has been in Gwinnett for 26 years, involved in local activism, properly sharing history, was excited to work on monument.

Aaron Ragans provided an outline of items he envisioned the Board would work on:

- By-Laws of the Board has inconsistencies
- Board had more authority in the 1980's and 1990's and was discontinued
- Recommended Board members discuss with their Commissioners to see if Board could have power reinstated due to growth in Gwinnett and the historic voice was not heard

Marlene Taylor-Crawford joined meeting. She stated standards and review of road names was not well enforced. The Board of Education (BOE) had standards that were not overseen and cited naming after a current staff member of BOE.

Mark Patterson stated that the BOE had own board to decide names, separate from Gwinnett County Government and BOE and Gwinnett do not answer to each other. He stated there could be a discussion between the two boards (HRPB and BOE Board).

Aaron Ragans stated that if taxpayer funds were used, standards need to be enforced, naming of buildings has lasting historical element.

Demetrios Lambros congratulated Aaron Ragans and appreciated the foundation and the recommendations on Bylaws.

Justin Walsh asked how rezoning had worked. Aaron Ragans responded stating:

- HRPB had a broader purpose and advised the Board of Commissioners (BOC) on restoration and preservation issues
- HRPB had input into zoning and it was taken away in the 80's and 90's
- BOC could reinstate that power

Demetrios Lambros asked if this was for incorporated or unincorporated areas.

Mark Patterson responded with:

- Planning and Development department in early years was smaller scale and process is faster
- HRPB may have lost direct input, Planning and Development department has staff with historical backgrounds and zoning goes through public vetting by law
- There was citizen input and the HRPB should research and gather information on how and why changes happened in the 80's and 90's
- Any citizen can speak and make recommendations at zoning public meetings

Aaron Ragans stated that HRPB was involved in politics previously, now they may want to discuss more involvement now.

Marlene Taylor-Crawford recognized and welcomed new members. She stated she was President of United Ebony Society started in 1984 by Robbie Susan Moore. She was on Hooper Renwick Preservation Committee, an educator in Gwinnett County and appointed by Commissioner Fosque for District 1.

#### 4. Approval of Minutes-November 2020 and July 2020

Aaron Ragans explained July 2020 minutes were from special meeting called to discuss monument in downtown Lawrenceville.

Motion made for approval of July 2020 minutes.

{Action: approved; Motion: Ragans; Second: Taylor-Crawford; Vote: (5-0) Ragans-Yes; Walsh-Yes; Lambros- Yes; Bender-Yes; Taylor-Crawford-Yes}

Motion made for approval of November 2020 minutes.

{Action: approved; Motion: Ragans; Second: Lambros; Vote: (5-0) Ragans-Yes; Walsh-Yes; Lambros- Yes; Bender-Yes; Taylor-Crawford-Yes}

#### 5. Elections of Officers

Aaron Ragans nominated Marlene Taylor-Crawford for Chair, continuity and qualified. Ann Bender second. Aaron Ragans asked if any other members were interested, no comments.

Motion made for Marlene Taylor-Crawford to be new Chair of Board.

{Action: approved; Motion: Ragans; Second: Bender; Vote: (5-0) Ragans-Yes; Walsh-Yes; Lambros- Yes; Bender-Yes; Taylor-Crawford-Yes}

Marlene Taylor-Crawford deferred to Aaron Ragans to finish the meeting.

Sarah Barlow requested the Board approve the agenda.

#### 6. Approval of Agenda

Motion made to approve Agenda

{Action: approved; Motion: Ragans; Second: Bender; Vote: (5-0) Ragans-Yes; Walsh-Yes; Lambros- Yes; Bender-Yes; Taylor-Crawford-Yes}

#### 7. New Business

- Discussion of Bylaws

Aaron Ragans shared a document and stated Bylaws could be amended after giving notice of intention before next meeting. He stated this could be considered the notice for the next meeting.

Mark Patterson stated that they could not amend the Bylaws at the next meeting due to the following:

- HRPB would need to request to amend, submit the changes to the County Law department and publicly present them
- Timeline of 7-30 days for the public review, discussion, motion and voting
- Changes go to BOC to be approved, needed to be added to Agenda, additional 3-5 weeks

Marlene Taylor-Crawford asked if quarterly meetings were sufficient. She asked when BOC votes. Aaron Ragans reiterated Mark Patterson's timeline, maybe April BOC vote. Aaron

Ragans stated maybe May 17 HRPB meeting they could vote or call a special meeting in April to introduce Bylaw amendments for BOC meeting.

Mark Patterson asked Board members to finish election of officers. Aaron Ragans deferred to Marlene Taylor-Crawford.

Marlene Taylor-Crawford stated it was challenging to elect Vice Chair, she did not know the new members. Mark Patterson stated she could table the vote but they needed to elect Secretary. Current Secretary was Sarah Barlow, a Gwinnett County employee. Gwinnett County employee as Secretary was beneficial for posting requirements on website. Marlene Taylor-Crawford asked Sarah Barlow be Secretary, Sarah Barlow said yes.

Motion made for Sarah Barlow to be Secretary of Board.

{Action: approved; Motion: Taylor-Crawford; Second: Walsh; Vote: (5-0) Ragans-Yes; Walsh-Yes; Lambros- Yes; Bender-Yes; Taylor-Crawford-Yes}

Mark Patterson asked if Marlene Taylor-Crawford wanted to table the vote of Vice Chair and she said yes.

Aaron Ragans stated areas where change needed in the Bylaws should be discussed collaboratively and edits sent to Law department.

Mark Patterson recommended the following:

- HRPB writing out Bylaws and adding amendments
- Submit to Law department for correct formatting
- HRPB discuss changes and have member write it out, present to the HRPB, vote and send to Sarah Barlow and Mark Patterson to forward to Law department
- HRPB could achieve this at this current meeting but recommended a discussion today with all members and work through next meeting
- Not usual to craft and vote on amendments on the same day

Aaron Ragans recommended they talk through areas where edits could be made.

Ann Bender asked if they had a copy in their binders and they responded yes.

Aaron Ragans if they wanted to discuss Bylaws further. They said yes.

Aaron Ragans stated the Bylaws were unclear if Chairperson was BOC Chair or HRPB Chair. He stated it was unclear if "Board" meant BOC or HRPB.

Aaron Ragans stated the County historian was appointed by both BOC and Chief Judge of Superior Court. Mark Patterson stated it was originally appointed by BOC but given up and designated in municode by Chief Judge of Superior Court. Mark Patterson stated in municode 50-17, the Chief Judge of Superior Court designated County historian in an advisory position in the 80's. Mark Patterson stated they could not change the Bylaws on this action.

Marlene Taylor-Crawford expressed concerns County historian was inactive for years and requested to move on when the designee cannot fulfill role and there is no communication.

Mark Patterson recommended they consider creating new Bylaw under Section 5 to facilitate a solution if historian or officers became uncommunicative. He recommended looking at other solutions.

Marlene Taylor-Crawford agreed but stated the County historian not required to participate and appointment felt separate from the Board members.

Demetrios Lambros stated there was no term limit and recommended adding one.

Aaron Ragans recommended honoring current County historian and designating him as County Historian Emeritus and appoint new County historian.

Mark Patterson agreed with this recommendation and Board members should discuss with their Commissioners.

Aaron Ragans discussed frequency of meetings:

- Recommended bi-monthly meetings instead of Special meetings when needed
- Special meetings can only be set by Chair or Vice Chair so consider allowing majority of Board to be able to call special meeting
- Commissioner Ku recommended joint meetings with the Recreation Authority Board to discuss the master plan as Parks overlap with HRPB, include budgetary discussion and join meeting with BOE

He asked to skip the Agenda item on Black History month until Marlene Taylor-Crawford rejoined the meeting.

## 8. Project Updates

Mark Patterson gave updates on the following projects:

- Elisha Winn Grounds updates included the ADA ramp, trails with all ADA accessibility for all citizens to explore history, a new comfort station, parking lot for enhanced programming, walking and enjoyment of the site. Completion date early April.
- Freeman's Mill-repairs being made to walkway due to an irrigation/waterline break.
- Promised Land Project-few updates, currently in research phase on enslaved people and overall genealogy. No physical change to House, more documentation needed to move forward, replace damaged areas and restore and provide the experience of the building from the Maguire and Livsey eras. No updates on land acquisition, evaluating spatial area, cost increases, funding availability as more is needed to complete. Looking to next SPLOST.
- Preservation Lawn-erosion control, construction of small stage, Preservation Award marker and plaques. HRPB will manage future awardees, no award ceremony or designees last year, Board will need to work through new parameters for awards.
- Yellow River Post Office and the Hudson Nash House undergoing rehabilitation; boardwalk trail work in process and house restoration has progressed. House had family connections to previous Chairwoman Nash and the owners of the house provided seed money to restore house. Project includes trail, house restoration, improved signage with factual timeline and people.

## 9. Program Updates

Sarah Barlow gave updates on the following programs:

- Collections processed 17 artifacts including 3 from Archie McDaniel family of the McDaniel Farm Park farmhouse.
- 2 new exhibits in Gwinnett History Museum including Louis Radloff dollhouse and progression of education tools.

- Freeman’s Mill interpretive exhibits-open 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month and available to HRPB at their discretion.
- Interpretive signage and research at YRPO and Promised Land work. Discussed work with Ruth Abram, renowned historian with family ties to Promised Land project.
- Virtual programming-8 virtual programs in 2020 to 676 students. Adult program to Health and Human Services titled “Meet a Scientist” with historical science figures. Partnered with BOE to include program videos in Digital Daily Dozen.

Marlene Taylor-Crawford asked what other programs were offered for Black History Month.

- John Lewis Event hosted by Gwinnett County Community Outreach
- Food distribution event by Gwinnett County Community Services partnering with United Ebony Society at Moore Middle School
- African American Bus Tour previously done in partnership with Gwinnett County and United Ebony Society.
- Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup> event with food distribution and car safety, public could sign up through Volunteer Gwinnett
- Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> virtual Black History event through Gwinnett County Facebook at 6pm
- Gwinnett County libraries were highlighting 202 years of Black history

#### 10. Comments from the Audience

Beverly Paff and Betty Warbington from the Gwinnett Historical Society (GHS) provided the following updates:

- Office had been shut down earlier in the year, but now taking reservations through email or Facebook
- GHS was separate from Gwinnett County government and they manage events at Elisha Winn property, would be walking site and impact the improvements would have on Winn Fair
- Received inquiry on Knox property in Duluth as the city is rezoning, GHS is assisting in evaluating historical value and dating
- Diane McCormic was Chair of Preservation and involved in Rowan project to determine historical sites
- GHS was all unpaid volunteers and many vaccinated
- Lost of citizen interest in Elisha Winn site improvements, GHS would discuss programming needs with Mark Patterson or Tina Fleming so site could reopen fully

Aaron Ragans thanks everyone and stated he enjoyed HRPB and working with Gwinnett County but was excited for the future.

#### 11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:53am.

{Action: approved; Motion: Ragans; Second: Lambros; Vote: (4-0) Ragans-Yes; Taylor-Crawford-Yes; Lambros- Yes; Bender-Yes}