

History Project Meeting – Minutes of Meeting

Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2009, 5:30 p.m.
at Chelmsford Public Library

In attendance:

Becky Herrmann, Library (Director)
Brian Herzog, Library (Head of Reference)
Kathy Cryan-Hicks, Library (Assistant Director, Programs and Community Relations)
Villu Tari, Chelmsford Telemedia
Jill Hayes, Library (volunteer)
Rev Frank Costello, First Baptist Church
Marcia Brown, West Chelmsford Methodist Church
Linnea Fader, Chelmsford Senior Center
Judy Fichtenbaum, Barrett-Byam House & the Chelmsford Historical Society (Curator)
Becky Warren, Chelmsford Historical Commission and Chelmsford Land Conservation Trust
Helen Moriarty, Chelmsford Art Society
Regina Jackson, Chelmsford Veterans Office

Becky Herrmann welcomed the group and gave a summary of the project. Individuals introduced themselves. Becky said that at least 10 other people who were contacted for the survey said they were interested in coming to the meeting but couldn't make it.

Brian shared results from the history project surveys that have been submitted so far.

Villu said that Westford has already done a town-wide survey. His wife was involved in this project; Villu feels Westford would be a good resource. The survey by a professional archivist cost about \$5000 eight years ago. Now that the town has finished this process they can apply for grants to do the digitization.

Sharing of Contacts

Becky asked that everyone at the meeting try to think of other organizations and individuals who we should be sure to include in this project. A sheet was passed at the end of the meeting for people to write in names.

Brainstorming session

- Have speakers come in to talk about the survey process, site visits and the results
- The Northeast Document Conservation Center was noted as possible source for speakers
- Other towns that have done this project would be another source for speakers
- January or February of 2009 (after the holidays) would be the best time to get speaker
- A speaker who could tell us what's important to save and consider as historical
- Suggestion that the library contact groups in writing well before the site visits with a list of guidelines
- Invite someone in to talk about the process their town went through "use our neighbor's advice"
- Create a finding aid (That's what Westford has now from their survey)
- Minutes from meetings are an important historical document, as are some photographs and artifacts
- Invite the media in to a meeting at some point to let the public know about the project
- Find others in town to help
- Show the public and participants the results of other towns that have done this project already
- Brian and Becky go on Dennis Ready's TV show

Action Items

Brian will send out quarterly updates of the entire project via email and USPS to those who don't use email. The updates will be included on the library's website (there's already a webpage on the project), the blog and the electronic newsletter.

The library will find a speaker from Northeast Document Conservation Center who could talk about what records are important and teach participants how they can identify historical documents, etc.