**Stoddard 250 Anniversary Committee**

Notes from meeting Aug 10, 2023

* Ruth Medlock, treasurer, reported that we now have $14,161.28 available for new expenditures. The invoice from Sony Music for our merchandise purchase was further discounted by approximately $1K; we have now paid our invoice of $6161.28
* Merchandise sales continued at the Blueberry Festival, with continued good reviews. The group thought we should set up to sell merchandise at every event; we will start with the Historical Society annual meeting on Friday August 11. Next after that is the Apple Fest on September 30.
* Jason still needs to set up a “Shop and Support” section of the website to take orders, process payment, and get orders to Linda for fulfillment. We are all set for order pickup at the library.
* We are still waiting for information from the town administrator on the feasibility and cost of linking to the town for an umbrella insurance policy to cover all our events.
* Terri reported on her discussions with various bands. We voted to give her the authorization to spend up to $1500 for each of the larger concerts, and $800 for the midweek gazebo concert (which was accidentally omitted from the notes of the last meeting.)
* Terri also has been investigating how to expand the initial May concert with more family-friendly events, such as face painting and balloons, and asked for contacts. She reported that Libby at Mill Village Store is very interested in selling food at the event, and will provide her with a proposed menu.
* Randy Emerson reported that he and Joyce are attending a meeting with the organizers of the Jaffrey 250th celebration in 2023, to learn from their experience and more particularly, see if we can get their bracket poles so we don’t have to buy new ones. How much the brackets cost will determine how many and where we should put them. We will also ask Jaffrey about the process of using Consolidated’s poles. Suggestions were made to install big banners at the Town Hall and the Fire Station.
* Barbara Cleveland talked about her interviews with Stoddard entrepreneurs. The consensus is that a directory, rather than an event, would be more effective. We plan to do hard copy (e.g. a flyer distributed at events) as well as a section of the website. This would include services, like those frequently sought on the Stoddard Residents Facebook page, people who do side jobs, as well as people who sell products. Listings would be of Stoddard residents or very nearby neighbors. (e.g someone who lives on the Nelson side of Granite Lake.) Barbara hopes to get the young entrepreneurs in the leadership position of producing the directory, and asked us to text her nominations for listing.
* We voted to authorize $2500 for Stoddard stories, so we can get started with the interviews. Joyce promised to organize underwriters for this project if it turns out that there is not enough money in the final budget for this project.
* Rachel Leonard was not able to attend, so sent an email on her thoughts for a winter event. One proposal was for a fishing derby, where people could fish on any lake in Stoddard and bring their fish for weigh in at the school. (The committee suggested that we use pictures rather than transporting the actual fish.) Another idea was activities on Highland Lake such as snowshoeing, a “learn how to ice fish” areas, a snowman building contest, making maple taffy and serving hot cocoa. Since the students at JFES are learning about the Abenaki tribe, their tradition of a snow snake game could be incorporated.

We liked all of these ideas, and Randy pointed out that Highland Lake is very low so it won’t be possible to do these activities off Little Big Forest, and that Island Pond would be a better site. Carol described the winter carnivals that her husband and other relatives had created in previous years. Next step is for Carol to meet with Rachel, pass on pass experience, then Rachel should come to a meeting to present a more specific plan. And we should try to find more volunteers to help do it.

* David Lessor has volunteered to organize a House and Garden tour, which we agreed should be an event during the weekend of Old Home Days, possibly Saturday afternoon to keep people around town between the parade and the barbeque (with the band.) Randy and Alan will present it at the Old Home Days post-mortem on July 28.
* David also told Joyce about a terrific renovated space in the center of town, and that he had asked the owner if he would make it available as part of the 250th Celebration. Since the space is small, and he doesn’t want to open it to the general public, we agreed to accept his offer to organize a celebration to thank the Activity Leaders for their work.
* Carol suggested that Denise Bernier be asked to design the Stoddard Passport.
* How to develop a detailed budget was discussed. Don presented a form (attached) that should go to each Activity Leader requesting details on how much they will need for each aspect of their event. Ruth will then put them together into an overall budget, hopefully having fiscal year 2023-2024 done by the next meeting.

One issue brought up was overlap with existing organizations and their budgets. We felt that for already-funded organizations (e.g. the Library) they should pay for what they normally do, and we may augment with additional publicity costs.

Joyce presented an illustrative format of what it might add up to. Terri requested 3 weeks to submit her estimates.