

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**HERITAGE COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, February 14, 2024**

**4:30 PM**

**Council Chamber,  
City Hall**

**Members Present:**

Cauley Powell, Chair  
Marilyn Huston  
Julie Emineth  
Rose Carey, Alternate  
Louise Zerba, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

Evan Clements, Planner

**Members Not Present:**

Molly Ellis, Vice Chair  
Susan DeGidio, Alternate

**Jay V. Kahn, Mayor**

**1) Call to Order – Roll Call**

Chair Cauley Powell called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM and roll call ensued.

**2) Approval of January 10, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Marilyn Hutson moved to approve the January 10, 2024 meeting minutes which was promptly seconded by Julie Emineth. The motion carried unanimously.

**3) 2022 CLG – Recovering Black History in Keene Project**

Mayor J. Kahn joined the meeting at 4:33 PM.

Mr. Clements sent out an email providing the members with their individual list of names for research. The members discussed their goals for the project and what they would be researching. The consultant had exhausted all research available online so the members would be looking at original materials that had not yet been digitized. They would upload any information, including the source, to either a Google Doc or written on a form that Chair Powell would then upload to the Google Doc. The members would try to find as much information from one source as possible before turning it in to ensure a seamless exchange of data.

Mayor Kahn had been following the project and was glad to hear it had been on the Commission's map. He would like to recognize the Heritage Commission and link their efforts to Juneteenth to bring awareness and engage the community of Keene around Black History. The Commission worked with Rebecca Landry (Keene's Communications and Marketing Director) who put out a short video to the City's social media page to introduce the community to the project. They hoped to continue working with the City to engage the public as they discovered more information.

Chair Powell discussed the method of research and thought it best to access the records in small groups so that Bill Dow (Deputy City Clerk) could pull from one set of records at a time. These records would include deed information, selectman records and town reports, among others. The groups would have to consist of no more than three members, as to not create a quorum. The members may contact Mr. Dow directly and inform Mr. Clements so he could collect volunteer hours.

Ms. Hutson stated that she contacted the Keene Recreation Center to provide her information on individuals buried at the Potter's Field Cemetery, as some of the graves of the slaves were unmarked. She also stated that reaching out to the community for information such as old photos and Bibles might be helpful in their research. Chair Powell stated that oral histories would also be contributive and members should collect stories from the community whenever possible.

Mr. Clements stated that their consultant, Kabria, would be at the Historical Society on April 12<sup>th</sup> to present information that her and her students had discovered. Chair Powell suggested they connect with Kabria and Jenna Carroll (at the Historical Society) for a timeline of when they would like the first round of information gathered from the member's research in order to contribute to the presentation.

4) **2021 CLG – Italian Neighborhood Heritage Project**

Will was still working on the data-loading and story-telling aspects of the website. Mr. Clements would order the hard drive for the media to go to the Historical Society.

5) **Joint Heritage & Historic District Commission Meeting – March 13, 2024**

The HC will host a meeting on March 13, 2024 at 4:30 PM where members of the Historic District Commission would join to discuss the missions of each Commission and the history of the projects they had worked on. Mr. Clements and Chair Powell would meet with Chair Sophia Cunha-Vasconcelos of the HDC to come up with the agenda for the meeting. The members discussed the mission of the HDC and how they might come together to assist on the work they had been doing. Chair Powell stated that they had previously discussed outreach to the public, such as mailers, to differentiate the two Commissions. The Master Plan Consultant, David,

would also sit in on the meeting. Mr. Clements would reach out to him for any ideas on what the HC might prepare in advance of the meeting.

6) **Staff Updates**

None presented.

7) **New Business**

Ms. Carey stated that they could begin thinking about submissions for the next CLG cycle, perhaps aligning with the HDC. Members discussed looking at at-risk structures in the community, taking inventory of houses in the School Street neighborhood, as well as creating an interactive map of before and after photos of the old houses in the Historic District as potential future projects. The members would continue to think about future CLG Projects to discuss further at the April meeting.

Chair Powell asked Mayor Kahn if they had a City Council appointee as their past appointee had left. The Mayor replied that he did not at the time but the Commission could write a letter to himself and the City Clerk to put it on the Council's agenda for consideration.

Mayor Kahn noted that there many vacancies on both Heritage Commission and the Historic District Commission and that the openings were hard to fill. Chair Powell asked if it was about the time of the meetings or a lack of interest because they are less glamorous than other committees. Mayor Kahn stated that he wasn't sure but from his perspective, both the Historic District and Heritage Commission have a lot of overlap and the missions of both committees blend together.

General discussion on the similarities and differences of the two committees occurred. Members noted a lack of interest in serving a regulatory function. Mayor Kahn stated that there was an argument to be made for having one or two committees, but he believed there is a lack of interest in new membership for both.

8) **Next Meeting – March 13, 2024**

The next meeting will be a joint meeting held with members from the HDC at 4:30 PM on March 13, 2024.

9) **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Powell adjourned the meeting at 5:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Melissa Danneker, Minute Taker

HC Meeting Minutes  
February 14, 2024

ADOPTED

Reviewed and edited by,  
Evan J. Clements, AICP - Planner