

PENFIELD REEF LIGHTHOUSE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, November 3, 2011

Sullivan Independence Hall

725 Old Post Road

Fairfield, CT 06824

FINAL MINUTES

Members Present: Sandye Mann, Jennifer Carpenter, Pat Conley, Steve Elworthy,
Deanna Hoffman, Sherri Steeneck, Mary Jo Cornell, Paige Herman,
Dr. Evan Tilley, Mike Jehle, Linda Cote Crowley

Members Absent: Vice Chair Dave Peck, David Agonis, Bill Sapone,

Others Present: Assistant Town Attorney Eileen Kennelly, Artist Craig Smith

I. Call to Order

Chair S. Mann called the Meeting to Order at 4:06 PM in the Second Floor Conference Room, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Approval of the Minutes

J. Carpenter made a Motion to Approve the October 27, 2011 PRLPC Minutes.
P. Herman Seconded. All in Favor.

III. Old Business

Treasurer P. Conley reported that all the thank-you notes to contributors have been sent and the amount received infunds remain the same.

IV. New Business

The lighthouse inspection boat trip hosted by the GSA Representative Sarah Massarello allowed Fairfield attendees Chair S. Mann, S. Steeneck, E. McCourt, J. Girardi, and L. Crowley to view and visually update the condition of the structure since the last inspection four years ago. Chair S. Mann reported that the cost analysis is about the same as that provided by Public Works Director R. White and E. Boman. Interested bidding parties also reviewing the lighthouse were a woman from Stonybrook, Long Island; Mike Hanaberry, the former Navy Seal from Manhattan; a father and step-son from Wisconsin; State DEP's David Blatt and Michelle; and US Coast Guard Officer Bifford based in New Haven.

The consensus was that the bidders planned to reside in the lighthouse after renovation.

Discussion was held among the Committee Members, who have dedicated their efforts in the present Charge to acquiring and maintaining the lighthouse. S. Steeneck read the Charge and advised that we stay the course. However, due to our current financial position, the Committee recommended not pursuing acquisition of the Penfield Lighthouse at this time, and will instead pursue a course of engagement with the winning bidder to work with them in order to preserve the Penfield Lighthouse. To date, merely a short window to raise funds became available from the time the Town was notified in late Spring 2011 that the Penfield Light was returned to GSA for auction. The Committee was formed seven years ago, and no fundraising efforts were made until it was ensured that the Town, the second of two bidders, would own the light.

S. Steeneck talked with the GSA who gave her information of their operational procedure. For the Record, L. Crowley made a Motion that the Committee write the Federal Department of the Interior Parks Department and the GSA Real Estate Department requesting clarification as to why the Town of Fairfield was not contacted between the time the Penfield Light was returned to the GSA and before the time the light was transferred for the online auction. E. Tilley Seconded. 3 In Favor, 7 Against, 1 Abstention. Motion defeated.

Fairfield Museum Director Michael Jehle commented that the Museum's Board had expressed their willingness to work with the Town to oversee future preservation of the lighthouse under their current management agreement. However, no funding would be available through the museum for these efforts in the foreseeable future.

M. Jehle made a Motion for Assistant Town Attorney Eileen Kennelly to draft a letter to be sent to the winning bidder affirming our support in partnership in order to ensure the preservation and maintenance of the Penfield Light for future generations according to federal and state guidelines. P. Herman Seconded. Unanimous.

V. Public Comment

None

VI. Adjournment

Chair S. Mann made a Motion to Adjourn. P. Herman Seconded. Unanimous. The Meeting Adjourned at 5:42PM. The next Meeting will be held in the First Floor Conference Room, Sullivan Independence Hall, on Thursday, November 10, 2011 at 4:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Cote Crowley
Secretary