

**Gilboa Historical Society  
Board of Directors Special Meeting  
February 4, 2024**

President Gerry Stoner called the meeting to order at 12:18 p.m. Present were Directors Lee Hudson, Linda Karlsen, Christl Riedman, Val Riedman, Michael Shiffer, Gerry Stoner, Linda Stratigos\*, Ellen Thorn, and Kristen Wyckoff \*(via phone); absent were Janette Reynolds, Paul Russell; Museum Director Nelta Miller.

At a January 10, 2024, Special Meeting, the board voted unanimously to purchase the property the Town of Gilboa is offering to sell to the Gilboa Historical Society on which the Society's museum, pavilion, sheds, septic, electric service and other easements (for cable, phone, internet, cell and other services) are located. Plans for access, parking, and water are not settled, but the Town expects to provide for these needs. A Construction Committee will continue to work to recommend the extent of an addition, based on how the Society expects to be able to manage the cost and other burdens of an expanded facility.

The purpose of this Special Meeting is to consider the recommendations drafted by a Strategic Plans Committee as GHS looks to the future. Now that we have voted to buy the Town property around the Gilboa Museum, it is time to review our long-range goals for both the Society and the museum — and to consider how best to reach them. How will we approach the new opportunities and challenges?

As we add space, we will increase our visibility and value to visitors and be able to expand, display and store more of our collection. Our first challenge is to determine who we want to serve, and how. The second is funding the increased facilities and programs. The third is staffing the enlarged operation.

The committee report suggests we are serving lifetime and new residents; students, scientists and historians; and visitors with special interests in fossils, ghosts, and cultural items — all of which would continue if we expand. Although the board voted (at its November 29, 2023, board meeting) to reduce the hours the museum is open to the public — to 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends from Memorial Day to Columbus Day, the committee suggests that expanding Tours on Call may be a good idea, although not a priority. Other long-term goals include organizing our database and collection; and establishing acquisition protocols.

To broaden our visibility, the board suggested the following:

- Society directors be introduced to the community via short biographies posted on the Society website. Each board member is tasked with writing a couple of sentences for GilboaMuseum.org by February 20.

- The board hopes to get lists of local B&Bs for providing brochures about visiting the museum. (Kristen expects to be able to get such a list from Elisabeth at the Cidery.)
- Town Clerk Linda Wyckoff may have a list of Gilboa taxpayers who have had property transferred in Schoharie County, so the Society can prepare a mailing to new owners to introduce them to the Society.
- Linda S will make a list of local societies and other groups and sites with which GHS might want to supply and trade handouts for visitors.
- Kristen informed new staff at Gilboa-Conesville Central School about visiting the museum, but we want to offer a more specific invitation?
- Cynthia Mattsson takes photos; and she is active with Kristen. She should be approached to prepare articles for *The Mountain Eagle*, *Times Journal*, and the GHS Facebook page.
- Linda K or Michael will include a notice (and possibly a photo) on Facebook whenever there is a school visit to the Museum.
- Kristen will speak to the new school superintendent about offering some students jobs as tour guides. She will also ask Bob Titus to recommend an intern.
- Linda S will talk to Patrick Barnes about becoming a part-time consultant to the board, to write grants and to make other recommendations. (Linda S will ask for his resume and invite him to a future board meeting.)
- We do not yet have a schedule for the airing of the video made for Canadian television. When we do, we should post it broadly locally and through media outlets.

Renovating the Town Record Room space turned over to GHS and building an addition would give us archival and office space and possibly better meeting and gallery facilities. At this point, we're considering adding some meeting space, some kitchen and bathroom facilities, no elevator, with construction scheduled for spring 2025. To help clarify the value of an addition, and maintaining it, we should identify maintenance and other expenses (1) before, and (2) after new construction.

Our operating expenses will increase with additional property insurance, snow removal and lawn maintenance. The extent of an addition will affect our utilities, insurance, and general maintenance. We will need to closely measure our current and projected financial needs.

Planning for an endowment fund with revenue to cover operating costs will be a major undertaking. In addition to writing grants, other possible income streams include: Memberships; Gift Shop sales; Plaques and memorial plantings; Donations from visitors, neighbors, businesses and corporations; and municipalities and other public-benefit corporations.

**Adjournment:** Adjourned at 2:10 p.m. (motion by Michael; second by Christl).

Respectfully submitted, Ellen Thorn, Board Secretary