



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday, October 7, 2024 at 7:00 pm
Meeting at Hillary House and via Zoom

MINUTES

Present:

BOARD OF

DIRECTORS: Geoffrey Dawe, Alan Lambert, Daniel McGeown, Michelle Primeau.

STAFF: Kathleen Vahey – Curator/Manager, Julie Preston – Administrative Assistant.

MEMBERS: Erika Baird, John Bare, Marjorie Bare, Sandy Bundy, Laureen Campbell, Geoffrey Dawe, Joan Gardner, Mary Beth Hess, Richard Hess, Donald Hutchinson, Tim Jones, Alan Lambert, Yves Larouche, Renee LeBlanc, Dan McGeown, John McIntyre, Faye Neal, Kathryn O'Dwyer, Layla Pasdernick, Brian Porter, Michelle Primeau, John Smale, Jacqueline Stuart, Angela Trevivian, Martin Watson, Molly Wills.

SUPPORTERS: Kate Brewitt, Christina Cannavicci, Grace Wong.

TOWN

REPRESENTATIVES: Mayor Tom Mrakas.

1. CALLED TO ORDER: 7:01 p.m.

At 7:01 p.m., the Co-Chair declared a quorum and called the meeting to order.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – Kathleen Vahey

A formal land acknowledgement in honour of and recognizing Indigenous Peoples was read.

WELCOME FROM THE CO-PRESIDENT – Geoffrey Dawe

The Co-Chair welcomed attendees including Mayor Tom Mrakas. He reviewed protocols for the virtual meeting and informed the audience that it will be recorded for documentation. There will be a reverse voting system in place due to the virtual platform.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION

THAT the agenda be approved as presented. Moved by Kathryn O'Dwyer, seconded by Jacqueline Stuart.
CARRIED.

4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS AGM MINUTES

MOTION

THAT the AGM Minutes from September 18, 2023 be approved. Moved by Yves Larouche, seconded by Angela Trevivian.
CARRIED.

5. APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEMBERS MEETING MINUTES

MOTION

THAT the Special Members Meeting Minutes from February 28, 2024 be approved. Moved by Erika Baird, seconded by John McIntyre.
CARRIED.

6. GREETINGS FROM TOWN OF AURORA – Mayor Tom Mrakas

Mayor Tom Mrakas was honoured to join tonight's AGM. He acknowledged that Aurora's important, unique, and historical spaces, including Hillary House National Historic Site, enhance the Town of Aurora

and they provide a sense of place and identity within the community. He recognized the important long-standing partnership between the Town of Aurora and the AHS and reiterated the Town's support of heritage preservation and enhancement. He thanked past and present AHS Board, members, and volunteers for their past and ongoing contributions to the Town of Aurora by preserving Aurora's history and Hillary House.

7. GREETINGS FROM the PROVINCE OF ONTARIO – MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy

Co-Chair Geoffrey Dawe read out greetings from MPP Gallagher Murphy. MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy, on behalf of the Ontario Government, thanked the AHS for its continued dedication to the preservation of Hillary House National Historic Site, historical education, outreach initiatives, and special events. She thanked the AHS for their work and reaffirmed the Province of Ontario's support for heritage.

8. CO-CHAIR'S REMARKS – Geoffrey Dawe & Alan Lambert

Geoffrey Dawe spoke to the AHS' event and program offerings in 2023 including participation at many Town-wide outreach events and successful partnerships and collaborations with community organizations. He also spoke of the challenges the AHS faced with fundraising events including having to cancel the Golf Tournament and difficulties selling tickets to the Scotch Tasting event with the Aurora Whisky Society. He thanked AHS staff and volunteers for their efforts to keep Hillary House operating smoothly and looking nice. Alan Lambert continued the report by outlining challenges the AHS has faced with decreasing volunteer numbers and engagement which has affected the AHS' event and fundraising capacity. He also spoke to the Enhanced Condition Assessment Report which was completed in the Fall of 2023.

9. TREASURER'S REPORT – Geoffrey Dawe

Geoffrey reviewed the financial status of the AHS. He reiterated that the 2023 revenue is significantly lower than in 2022 due to challenges with fundraising as well as a drop in available grant funding. While 2023 expenses were lower due to decreased fundraising and restoration spending, the AHS reports a loss of \$58,979 in 2023. He also outlined the breakdown of the AHS' 2023 revenue, with Grants representing 79.2%, Special Events & Fundraising 11.5%, Other 5.5%, Donations 3%, and Memberships .8%.

MOTION

THAT the 2023 Treasurer's Report be approved. Moved by Geoffrey Dawe, seconded by John Bare.

CARRIED.

10. APPROVAL OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

MOTION

THAT the 2023 Audited Financial Statement be approved. Moved by Geoffrey Dawe, seconded by John Bare.

CARRIED.

11. APPOINTMENT OF THE AUDITOR

MOTION

THAT Bateman, Graham & Fitzpatrick CPA's be appointed as the 2024 Auditors for AHS. Moved by Geoffrey Dawe, seconded by John Bare.

CARRIED.

12. CURATOR'S REPORT – Kathleen Vahey

Kathleen Vahey reported throughout 2023 the AHS continued to care for Hillary House and its collection, while offering exhibitions, programming, educational, and outreach opportunities to engage the community.

In 2023, the AHS' permanent staff complement remained consistent with a full-time Curator/Manager and part-time Administrative Assistant. The Programming & Outreach Coordinator position was extended by one year; two summer staff were hired for 14-week contracts partially funded by the Canada Summer Jobs program; an intern was brought on with assistance from the Young Canada Works grant program and the Town of Aurora, and a co-op student was hosted from G.W. Williams Secondary School.

The care and maintenance of Hillary House continued to be a top priority in 2023, which included completing an Enhanced Condition Assessment for Hillary House with the assistance of the Town of Aurora, replacing batteries and bulbs in the emergency lighting, upgrading fire extinguishers, replacing CO2 detectors, and partnering with Parks Canada to replace the fence along Yonge Street. The AHS thanks Parks Canada for all their assistance with that project.

In 2023, collections management projects continued and included inventorying, cataloguing, and photographing over 900 objects. An inventory of the Godfrey Collection was started with 8,610 items catalogued. Two exhibitions were featured, "Victorian Interior Design: Elegant or Outdated" which was the culminating project for the Youth Mentorship program and "Beyond Blue & White: Wedgwood Designed for Canada", a travelling exhibition from King Heritage and Cultural Centre.

Community engagement continued through 62 new and returning hybrid and in-person programs and outreach opportunities including the speaker series, heritage craft workshops, holiday-themed events, high teas, walking tours, camps, Home Show, Street Festival, and more. This resulted in an increased number of people coming into Hillary House and people engaged through outreach events.

Kathleen noted a continuing trend of reduced volunteer engagement that resulted in a 36% decrease in volunteer contributions to 2,036 hours in 2023.

13. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE REPORT – Alan Lambert

Alan Lambert reported on the grounds maintenance activity in 2023 which focused on safety, cleanliness, and attractiveness of the property. Activities included a spring and fall clean-up, garden preparation and care, lawn, tennis court, and driveway maintenance. A multi-year landscaping plan put forward by Donna Lewis of Garden Aurora was approved and commenced with removing the shrubs and plants along the Yonge Street fence and maple tree to the south of Hillary House in order to reclaim the garden beds, removal of overgrown and invasive plants from around the property, and maintenance of existing garden beds around the House and Mary's Garden. Alan thanked the AHS volunteers for their continued support.

14. MOTION TO RECEIVE REPORTS

MOTION

THAT all reports as presented be received with thanks. Moved by Marjorie Bare, seconded by Kathryn O'Dwyer .

CARRIED.

15. MOTION TO AMEND AHS CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Geoffrey Dawe outlined the proposed amendments to the AHS Constitution and By-laws as well as the AHS Articles of Incorporation which are required to be in compliance with the Ontario Non-profit Corporations Act, 2010.

MOTION

THAT the proposed amendments to the AHS Constitution and By-laws be approved. Moved by Jacqueline Stuart, seconded by Erika Baird. **CARRIED.**

16. MOTION TO AMEND AHS ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

MOTION

THAT the proposed amendments to the AHS Articles of Incorporation be approved. Moved by Yves Larouche, seconded by Marjorie Bare.

17. 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS – Geoffrey Dawe

Geoffrey Dawe reported on the 2023 Board of Directors and thanked them for their continued dedication to the AHS.

18. NOMINATION/ELECTION OF DIRECTORS – Geoffrey Dawe

Geoffrey Dawe outlined the nominations. Directors Daniel McGeown and Michelle Primeau, whose terms is up per the AHS Bylaws, wishes to stand for re-election.

MOTION

THAT Daniel McGeown and Michelle Primeau be re-elected to the Board of Directors. Moved by Geoffrey Dawe, seconded by Angela Trevivian. **CARRIED.**

19. Looking Forward in 2024-5

Geoffrey Dawe outlined the upcoming projects of the AHS including hosting collaborative exhibitions, programs and events, fundraisers, Charitable Gaming activities, Godfrey Collection, landscaping and maintenance plans.

20. COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Alan Lambert expressed a need for more Board Members and encouraged attendees to consider joining the Board or volunteering.

Molly asked if educational programs were offered at Hillary House and if the AHS hosts an annual Remembrance Day exhibition. Kathleen answered that the AHS does offer educational programs that hit on multiple aspects of the Ontario curriculum but the bookings have been relatively low since COVID and staff resources are limited and the AHS does not produce a special exhibit for Remembrance Day, but does participate in other activities around Town. Molly also noted that she has been working to contact post-secondary institutions to encourage their participation at Hillary House.

Kathleen shared a trailer for the short film “The Rug” that was shot at Hillary House in May 2024.

21. ADJOURNMENT – 8:01 p.m.

MOTION

THAT the Annual General Meeting be adjourned at 8:01 p.m. Moved by Daniel McGeown, seconded by Michelle Primeau. **CARRIED.**