

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Monday, October 27, 2025 at 7:00 pm
Meeting at Hillary House NHS and via Zoom
MINUTES

Present:

BOARD OF

DIRECTORS: Alan Lambert, Geoffrey Dawe, John Green, Michelle Primeau, Tim McCutcheon, Jai Nargas,
Angela Trevivian

STAFF: Kathleen Vahey, Julie Preston.

MEMBERS: Layla Pasdernick, John Smale, John Bare, Marjorie Bare, Donna Lewis, Sandy Bundy, Kathryn
O'Dwyer, Jacqueline E Stuart, John McIntyre, Wendy Browne, Mary Beth Hess, Richard Hess,
Donald Hutchinson, Bob McRoberts, Renee LeBlanc, Laureen Campbell, Faye Neal

SUPPORTERS: Caitlin Andrews, Shane Rafferty, Sonja Rebus,

TOWN REPRESENTATIVES: Mayor Tom Mrakas, Katherine Marsden.

1. CALLED TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m.

At 7:00 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 Donna Lewis, seconded by Mary Beth Hess.

CARRIED.

4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS AGM MINUTES

MOTION

THAT the AGM Minutes from October 7, 2024 be approved. Moved by Layla Pasdernick, seconded by Jacqueline Stuart.

CARRIED.

5. APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEMBERS MEETING MINUTES

MOTION

THAT the Special Members Meeting Minutes from June 9, 2025 be approved. Moved by Kathryn O'Dwyer, seconded by Marjorie Bare.

CARRIED.

6. GREETINGS FROM TOWN OF AURORA – Mayor Tom Mrakas

Mayor Tom Mrakas thanked the AHS Board of Directors and Members for their role in preserving the history of the Town of Aurora. He announced that the Town of Aurora is granting the AHS with a \$150,000 capital grant to assist with critical repairs to the foundation of Hillary House.

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

Co-Chair Alan Lambert read regards from MPP Gallagher Murphy. She thanked the AHS for their work preserving Hillary House and providing engaging programming and exhibitions to the community.

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

Co-Chair Alan Lambert started the Co-Chair’s remarks with an acknowledgement of AHS members who passed away in 2024 and 2025. He also announced a \$10,000 bequest from Claire Graine, a past AHS Board member.

Co-Chair Alan reported on the AHS’ highlights in 2024 including; continued and new programs, events, and exhibitions, participation in Charitable Gaming initiatives with Bingo World and Gaming Richmond Hill, successful collaborations with numerous community partners, and continued dedication to the maintenance and restoration of Hillary House. The AHS worked with the Town of Aurora to complete an Enhanced Condition Assessment for Hillary House to identify critical restoration needs and conduct public consultations on the future of Hillary House.

9. TREASURER’S REPORT – Geoffrey Dawe

Co-Chair Geoffrey Dawe presented the Treasurer’s report on behalf of Dan McGeown, Treasurer.

The deficit reported in 2024 was less than originally anticipated and showed positive growth when compared to 2022 and 2023. The AHS Board was diligent in cost-saving measures including not renewing the Programming & Outreach Coordinator position after September 2024 and increasing revenue through Charitable Gaming. In 2024, the AHS’ own source revenues increased resulting in a decrease in reliance on government operating grants.

The AHS submitted a request to the Town of Aurora for capital funding to assist with critical restoration needs. The Town of Aurora has granted \$150,000 in capital funding for the Hillary House foundation.

The projected budget for 2025 shows a surplus of \$11,005, partially due to a bequest and operational diligence.

MOTION

THAT the 2024 Treasurer’s Report be approved. Moved by Geoffrey Dawe, seconded by John Smale.

CARRIED.

10. APPROVAL OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

MOTION

THAT the 2024 Audited Financial Statement be approved. Moved by Geoffrey Dawe, seconded by John Smale.

CARRIED.

11. APPOINTMENT OF THE AUDITOR

MOTION

THAT Bateman, Graham & Fitzpatrick CPA’s be appointed as the 2025 Auditors for AHS. Moved by Geoffrey Dawe, seconded by John Smale.

CARRIED.

12. CURATOR’S REPORT – Kathleen Vahey

Kathleen Vahey reported throughout 2024 the AHS continued to care for Hillary House and its collection, while offering exhibitions, programming, educational, and outreach opportunities to engage the community and fulfil mission.

In 2024, 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 to September 2024; two summer staff were hired for 9-week contracts funded by the Canada Summer Jobs program; the Godfrey Collection intern assistance from the Young Canada Works grant program and the Town of Aurora finished her placement in Spring 2024 and a second intern completed a placement through Centennial College; 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 2024, which included repairing the fence along Yonge Street after a motor vehicle accident damaged part of it; pest remediation; tennis court maintenance; and continuation of phase one of the Landscaping Plan.

In 2024, three exhibitions were featured, "Aurora Through the Archives: Growing Up Aurora" and "Through the Hillary Lens" which was a collaborative exhibition with the Aurora Museum & Archives and featured as part of the Contact Photography Festival. In the Fall, the AHS partnered with Aurora's Odd Fellows Lodge to present the exhibition "Friendship, Love, and Truth: Meeting the Odd Fellows" celebrating the 150th anniversary of our local lodge.

Collections management projects continued and included inventorying, cataloguing, and photographing over 1,025 objects and archival items. An inventory of the Godfrey Collection was completed with 12,320 items catalogued in 2024, making a total of 21,268 items in the Godfrey Collection as a whole.

Community engagement continued through 51 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, youth mentorship program, 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 an increase in rentals in 2024, including filming of a short horror film and documentary.

The AHS continued offering volunteer engagement opportunities that resulted in 65 volunteers recording 1,751 hours in 2024.

13. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE REPORT – Alan Lambert

Alan Lambert reported on the grounds maintenance activity in 2024 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.

The multi-year landscaping plan put forward by Donna Lewis of Garden Aurora was approved in 2023 and phase one commenced in 2024 with removal of overgrown and invasive plants from around the property, maintenance of existing garden beds around Hillary House and Mary's Garden, mulching areas along the Yonge Street fence and maple tree to the south of Hillary House in order to reclaim the garden beds. 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 Richard Hess, seconded by Layla Pasdernick.

CARRIED.

15. 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS – Geoffrey Dawe

Co-Chair Geoffrey Dawe reported on the 2024 Board of Directors and thanked them for their continued dedication to the AHS.

16. NOMINATION/ELECTION OF DIRECTORS – Geoffrey Dawe

The AHS Board of Directors worked diligently to recruit new directors to ensure a full Board complement and move the organization in a positive direction.

Co-Chair Alan Lambert outlined the nominations. Director Geoffrey Dawe, whose term is up per the AHS Bylaws, wishes to stand for re-election.

MOTION

THAT Geoffrey Dawe be re-elected to the Board of Directors. Moved by Jacqueline Stuart, seconded by John Bare. **CARRIED.**

MOTION

THAT Angela Trevivian, Jai Nargas, Timothy McCutcheon, and Wendy Browne be elected to the Board of Directors. Moved by Marjorie Bare, seconded by John McIntyre. **CARRIED.**

17. Looking Forward in 2025-6

Co-Chair Alan Lambert outlined the upcoming projects of the AHS including; hosting collaborative exhibitions, programs and events, continuation of landscaping and maintenance plans, expansion of Charitable Gaming fundraising, finalization of the Godfrey Collection disposition, future restoration of Hillary House, and development of a new Strategic Plan.

Kathleen provided an update on the Godfrey Collection project. It was determined that the collection falls outside of the collecting scope/mandate of the Aurora Historical Society and the deaccessioning process began, following the procedure outlined in the AHS Collections Policy. The archives, photograph, and artifact parts of the Godfrey Collection were transferred to the Archives of Ontario in mid-2025.

18. COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Member John Bare asked about funding opportunities regarding the medical connection to Hillary House. Co-Chair Alan noted fundraising will be addressed in the new Strategic Plan.

Director John Green discussed plans for the 2026 Heritage Week celebrations with the AHS and several members involved.

19. ADJOURNMENT – 7:52 p.m.

MOTION

THAT the Annual General Meeting be adjourned at 7:52 p.m. Moved by Jai Nargas, seconded by Michelle Primeau. **CARRIED.**