

## Northfield 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee

Thursday March 4, 2021 via ZOOM

### Minutes

**Present:** Stacy Bond, Pat Shearer, Joan Stoia, Steve Stoia, Martha Morse, Susan Ross, Alex Meisner, Bill McGee, Lindsay McCarthy, Rhoda Yucavitch, Mary King. Guest: Rich Holschuh. Volunteers, Julia Wiggin, Joanne Pickar.

**Call to order:** by Bond at 4:40.

**Intros:** all present gave brief introductions as did Rich Holschuh of the Elnu Abenaki Tribe, and new committee members Lindsay McCarthy (treasurer) and Rhoda Yucavitch.

**Minutes** of the 2-4-2021 meeting were passed unanimously, motion by Shearer, second by Meisner.

**Rich Holschuh: Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), Elnu Abenaki Tribe/ Atowi Project:**

Holschuh is liaison and spokesperson for the Elnu Abenaki, whose traditional homeland includes Northfield. He is also the Director of the Atowi Project. He offered to help us look at the deeper history of Northfield and the land, and all those still here. Atowi means "together in space and time", and since we are all here now, what are we going to do about it? The 350th commemoration offers an opportunity. When asked, Holschuh said that the ways to address native people are the words *indigenous* (people of a place), *native people*, and the best practice is to call them by their *tribal name* if you know it, for this region *Abenaki*. The indigenous of Squakeag/ Northfield were the *Sokoki*. Holschuh, when asked what this area was like pre-contact by the English, described agriculture on the fields at the river with many villages on the edges up and down the river on both sides. Where land met the river were settlements, the upper lands were for gathering and hunting, and trails into the hills led to other Sokoki villages now named Athol, and Hinsdale, and Brattleboro. The river was the main highway, when flowing and when iced over. Holschuh has many stories that can lead to understanding Northfield's early history in a more complete way, though this history was also violent and bloody when the Englishmen's bargaining for land could not keep up with their needs and desires. McGee suggested a 350th reenactment of the story Holschuh told of the first contact between Englishmen and a Sokoki woman who gave them lunch, at the plot of land east of the first fort where this initial interaction likely happened. Wiggin recalled Elnu Abenaki Chief Longtoe (Roger Sheehan) and his wife presenting stories to children at Linden Hill School, and will champion such a program being offered to students and other children. Holschuh can tailor stories to all age groups and said that Chief Longtoe's brother Anthony is also a great presenter. The 350<sup>th</sup> committee appreciates Holschuh's information and looks forward to his help.

**Land acknowledgment:** Meisner said that a formal statement recognizing that we inhabit the traditional homelands of the Abenaki people would be most appropriate at town meeting, but it will best be put off for discussion by the committee at a later date when he has had time to approach town government about any possible "squishy gray areas".

**Original Voices Project:** Stoia said that she and Mary Mayshark-Stavelly (NHC) have done research on the proposal which will place information near each of the Tercentenary Signs in Northfield that presents another side to the early history of our town. More later.



### **Goals for the committee:**

- King: Northfielders will know and understand each other better after the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary year; we will appreciate the full history of our land and our environment and the people who have lived here; children will value the environment and use the trails, hills and bodies of water respectfully; Northfield's times of discontent will be illuminated by discussion and understanding; accomplishments of Northfielders will be recognized and honored.
- Ross: we will take a look at older things in Northfield and know the history and the stories behind them: Council Rock, pudding stone, location of the forts, the intersection of Main and Maple and what occurred there at the time of first contact between Sokoki and English, and many others. We will tell some stories at the place where they happened, offering outdoor activities during the 350<sup>th</sup> year as often as possible.
- Shearer: Mission Statement --- Honor the Past, Enjoy the Present, Look to the Future
- Bond: we will educate people on the rich history of our town

**Open Meeting Law review:** King: regarding communication with other public body members over email, a member of a committee may email other members of that committee on matters within committee jurisdiction as long as that email does not reach a quorum of the committee. A quorum for this 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee is one more than half the current member total. Lawfully emailing a quorum of the committee may occur only to discuss scheduling a meeting, to distribute an agenda, or to distribute documents to be discussed at a meeting, provided that no opinion of a member of the committee is expressed in the email. Shearer suggested that committee member phone numbers should be made available for ease of communication between two committee members.

**New members, volunteers:** Pam Veith has expressed interest and could be a great asset; Joe Stacy is interested in helping also.

**New Treasurer:** is Lindsay McCarthy, who will help the 350<sup>th</sup> define credit card use by working with the town, and work with us on defining a budget to ask for at next town meeting.

**Committees/Organizations/Groups Town List:** Morse and Shearer have prepared a list and still welcome additions as members think of them.

**Hatfield's Financial and Fundraising model:** the Stoias reviewed the system that Hatfield had for their 2020 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary commemoration. With many businesses and a larger population than Northfield's and closer proximity to more affluent Pioneer Valley towns, Hatfield got a \$25,000 town grant of seed money and raised \$125,000 in other fundraising. They had an 11-member board and a very astute Board chair, and each subcommittee had its own budget and members with expertise in their area. Using a template, the subcommittees each worked to define the budget they might require. This presented the Fundraising Subcommittee with a goal amount of what should be raised. The Stoias recommend that for fundraising we need an honorary chairperson with connections, and fundraising committee members who will seek money from corporations, companies and community institutions, individuals and families, as well as from past residents. Fund seeking is successful when it is organized and disciplined, with ground rules and communication among members. Hatfield also had a social media coordinator and consequently paid nothing in advertising fees.

### **Subcommittees:**

- Entertainment: Meisner: car show, fireworks, concerts etc., Wiggin to help
- Parade: (new) Meisner & McGee?: large project deserves its own subcommittee, volunteers

- Marketing: (formerly Advertising): Harris?: Recorder, Facebook, Nextdoor, Instagram, logo
- Fundraising: Morse, Stoias: includes merchandise sales
- Historical programs: Ross: Reconciliation, Moody, Calvin, Schell etc.; King, Wiggin, Pickar to help
- Education: (new) Shearer: Stop the Pipeline, school programs; S. Stoia, Wiggin to help?

Website: Jose Madiado (Joe) will do it for free

Logo: **Reconnecting Northfield** the theme, Shearer and Harris will advertise this contest, a size for entries must be defined, to be promoted on Nextdoor, Facebook and the Recorder. ACTION: Bond will let Shearer know the size.

Budget next steps: 350<sup>th</sup> has \$5000 from 2020 town budget, ask for and defend another \$5000 at this spring's annual meeting, be ready for a larger ask by spring 2022.

Next meeting: Thursday April 1, 4:30, at the Wickey Pavilion with masks or via ZOOM.

Adjourned: 6:27 pm, unanimously, motion by Meisner, second by Ross.

Respectfully,

*Mary K. King*

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