

Danby Community Council

Date: 6/4/2015

Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting Danby Town Hall, 7:00pm

Board members present: Alison Christie (Pres.), Gould Colman (VP), Julie Clougherty (Tres.), Bill Evans (Secr.)

Absent: H. Katharine Hunter

Others present: Asher Hockett (former DCC member); Shelley Lester

Announcements: Alison announced we had a quorum and asked whether there were other items that anyone wanted to add to the agenda.

Gould noted the population of Danby has increased and that we really need a survey of Danby's Youth so that the DCC can serve them better. Asher noted that Tompkins County Human Services may have information. Discussion ensued. Gould went on to note the history of the Danby School on Gunderman Rd. and we need to re-examine opening it. Alison deferred this discussion to later in the meeting.

Asher and Bill brought up the idea of having DCC become involved in the Audubon Bird Count on January 1st. The count has been going for nearly 100 years and Danby is centered in one section. Asher has been a long time coordinator for the Danby section and Bill has participated. The idea would be to have a preparatory organizational program in the weeks before at Town Hall, coordinate it with the youth program, and as many members of the community as possible. Discussion ensued. Everyone was for it. The plan would be to get an initial announcement in the October Danby News, with more details in the November and December issues.

Bill shared an interesting object to counter Gould's mystery object from a prior meeting. Unlike Gould, Bill gave some key information that led to Alison guessing that it was associated with railroad tracks. This returned discussion to Gould's mystery piece and Bill guessed correctly that it had to do with horses, but that's as far as we got.

Privilege of the Floor: None

Approval of Prior Minutes: May 5, 2015 approved as amended.

Board Elections:

Alison noted again that there are two open seats. Discussion ensued. Several potential candidates have been discussed but they have not been able to participate at this time.

DISCUSSION

Youth Programming

Shelley Lester was present and discussed a meeting she had with Alison and Katharine recently to look at options for the youth program for the summer. The youth program traditionally is involved with preparations for and activities at the Danby Fun Day, so this was the most pressing matter.

Discussion followed for more than an hour on how to proceed. Talk centered on whether to hire temporary or permanent staff through CCE or whether to contract independent help for the summer. In short, the decision was made to try and get half-

time staffing through CCE asap to get things rolling by Fun Day if possible. If the CCE staff didn't materialize by then, then DCC members would organize something – Alison had lots of ideas, and Bill would already be there hosting several natural history booths. The possibility of bypassing CCE and contracting independent program staff was deemed to be too much work with too short notice. Shelley noted that the most enduring and successful programs she has seen in Tompkins County are those with permanent youth services staff: Groton & Lansing have full time staff, Dryden has two full time staff, and Trumansburg is going to one full timer from two half timers (easy transition because they already have funding in place). All these programs have more youth participation than Danby except T-burg, which is in transition. Gould asked about the cost of going to a full timer and Shelley replied it would be double.

All agreed we just need to get through the summer and focus on the future of the program.

Event follow-up

Bat program by Sherwood Snyder -- great talk and lots of fun. About 40 people attended, no donations. We learned that we need to secure the projector the day before.

Events scheduled

Upcoming Danby Moth Night (Moth Mania) on July 3rd at Upper Buttermilk Falls State Park.

Upcoming Dragonfly talk and walk on July 19 by Meena Haribal at Town Hall

Event Planning

Bird and moth display table at Danby Fun Day.

Fun Day planning (also discussed previously).

Still working with Bob on the timing of the oboe concert.

Treasurer's report

Due to the late hour, the Treasurer's report was postponed until the next meeting.

Additional discussion

Alison steered the final discussion back to Gould's idea of getting the Danby School back in service as a community asset. Gould gave us a bit of the history of the school from its inception due to a local minister to its decommissioning due to lack of students. He noted an earlier effort circa 15 years ago when Danby Superintendent (Judy P?) was charged with finding a productive use for it. The idea came up for an agricultural high school, and a group went to Boston to see a model. Nothing came of that. There were some complications for getting the Danby School back in active service to the school district due the fact that it had been used in the meantime for a private business. A few

BOCES classes were eventually held. Recently the building has been used for administrative offices for the school district. The Danby School playground was donated (by DCC?) fairly recently.

Gould thinks that, given population increases and a better financial situation, that the time is right to start working on getting the school in service again. This could be an important step for reinvigorating Danby.

Next meeting

Next DCC meeting – July 2, 7pm.

Meeting adjourned about 9:30pm

Respectfully submitted by Bill Evans