

Pierce House Property Committee

Minutes for October 6, 2020

Attendees: Terry Green (Chair), Dan Pereira (Assistant Town Manager), Gina Halstead (Fincom Rep), Jennifer Glass (Select Chair) Pam Weismann, Margi Byrnes, Anne Crosby, Victoria Oates (Pierce House Director)

Welcome - Meeting called to order at 4:00pm by Terry Green, Chair

Discussion

September minutes were reviewed and approved as written.

Budget Review

Dan let the Board know that going forward he would plan to send a copy of the budget for the meeting to each committee member on the Monday prior to the scheduled board meeting. Dan said that Colleen had been ill the past week so he had not had a chance to review the budget with her prior to the meeting. A question arose regarding the origination of a donation made during the month. Dan said he would get it clarified and get back to the board next month. \$13,000 was collected during the month due to Victoria's outstanding work in selling micro weddings during this pandemic period. Additionally, \$10,000 was received from the Town's General Fund. With expenses for utilities, maintenance repairs and landscaping, there was a net loss of \$16,000 for the month leaving a balance of \$139,000.

Capital Expense Request Review

Victoria reported she had requested Capital Expense monies from Capcom this year to fund;

- An ADA study to make the first floor bathroom handicap compliant
- Replacement of 4 well-worn large Persian carpets in four of the popular rooms for entertaining guests

Victoria is still working on the costs of these projects and will give these numbers to Capcom by the requested deadline.

Victoria further stated that although she had included the carpets in the Pierce House Capcom request, she is spreading the word within the town that she is seeking carpets. She hopes she might receive a donated carpet that would work in the House.

Pierce House Director Report

Victoria reported that she has been able to fill all but 2 Saturdays between May and November in 2021 with weddings. She said in addition to Fridays and Sundays, Thursdays have also been popular for weddings. Victoria said it looked like there could be some weekends where there may be requests for Thursday - Sunday. A committee member asked if there was a limit on how many events the Pierce House could have in any one weekend. Committee members will research and report back at next meeting. Victoria said the first booked event for 2021 is in March and she is expecting more for that month. She said Wedding Wire continues to provide the majority of all Pierce House leads. In September alone it provided 58 inquiries, the most Victoria had ever received. The Committee approved her request to renew the Wedding Wire subscription for the year since it was in the approved budget and is all that is presently being used for paid advertising.

Landscaping

Last year Capcom agreed to fulfill the Pierce House request to repave the driveway and upgrade the culvert. To ensure the edge of the new driveway doesn't get damaged by cars parking along the sides of the driveway, Victoria is seeking landscaping ways to discourage parking there. Boulders lining the driveway had been suggested but committee voiced concerns about whether that would be correct look for such a stately, historical property. Victoria and Committee will do further research and discuss at next meeting. Final ideas will be brought to Historical Committee for review.

Grubs have continued to infest the front lawn of the Pierce House. To try to prevent the loss of the lawn as a whole and injure the look of the property that brides love, the committee voted to allocate \$2500 of the approved landscaping budget for grub control. Lynch Landscaping will address the problem.

Garden Maintenance

Garden maintenance has been an issue for the last two years in spite of the efforts of the contracted garden service. Victoria has been talking with additional garden maintenance groups while also receiving help with the ever growing weeding issues from Town volunteers. She will provide more information next month regarding capabilities and cost of other services.

House Maintenance

Victoria reported cleaning of all Pierce House fireplaces would cost \$525. Since this was included in the approved budget, Committee voted to approve this expenditure.

First Day

The traditional First Day gathering at the Pierce House was discussed. Due to the serious increase of Covid cases and the concern that cooler weather will exacerbate the growth of cases, the committee decided, for the safety of the townspeople, there should not be a First Day event on January 1, 2021 at the Pierce House.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05pm