**SPARTA HANCOCK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MINUTES**

**FEBRUARY 27, 2021**

The Sparta Hancock County Historical Society met at Pierce Memorial Methodist Church at 3 pm.

Members present: G. Polaty, M. Joslyn, R. Joslyn, J. Perry, K. West, J. Waddell, W. Matson. There were 4 visitors.

President Rick Joslyn called the meeting to order.

No minutes were available for the past meeting.

**Treasurer’s Report**: General Funds has one expense: $45 for the website quarterly cost. Balance is $756.95. Restoration Fund has no withdrawals. Balance is $3321.70

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Rick Joslyn distributed some draft copies of the by-laws, which was a topic of business from a year ago. Discussion was held. A new position as Historian was added. Vote was taken and by-laws were accepted and passed.

We were due to have elections, but the nominating committee has not submitted a slate of names, and there was not a quorum membership present, so those were postponed.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Griffith Polaty, also the Hancock Preservation Commission chairman, updated us on the plans for that. They have received a grant from DCA for the survey of historic properties inside the city limits. Two African American sites have also been identified (St. Mark’s Church and Hunt’s Hill). They will receive $25,000.00 from the state. The HPC will also be receiving $25,150.00 for Hurricane Erma damage, that will be designated for work on the old City Hall/Police Station building.

A separate grant for Hurricane Michael damage has also been submitted. The 1772 Foundation offers grants for a revolving fund to purchase property that is endangered. He will follow up with researching if we have any properties that are candidates for that.

Any grant money for restoration will be put out for bids.

Four properties in the city has been given court summons for violating the ordinance. HPC member Dennis O’Shields from Linton has resigned and moved back to Augusta. Della Smith was appointed to take his place. One residential property in the city has been nominated for a preservation award. A city land bank has been established with Harold Lawson as chairman. The Land Bank’s purpose was for properties that are delinquent in taxes to be donated to the city for resale.

Will Matson asked what uses were planned for the Old City Hall/Police Station when restored.

Karen West updated her Dream Street project. Sparta has 4 business buildings dating from 1870-1920 that feature ironwork by the firm of George Mesker. There have been quite a few events held and all accomplished with volunteer help and no outside funds.

Our annual cleaning at Mt. Zion will be March 27 at 9:30 am, to assess the building and sweep and clean.

The Graves Barn — the city has agreed to clean the drainage ditch which keeps the ground around the barn very soggy. There are crawfish growing there. It was discussed about doing some kind of plantings — wildflowers or wetlands plants — to help with the erosion.

A second tour brochure which includes sites in the county was discussed. The HHIP grant which we used for the city tour brochure could be applied for. Since it has to tie in with healthy life style, it was suggested to make it a bike riding tour. Rick Joslyn suggested forming a committee to work on this to develop a site plan and map, and apply for the grant.

**The next meeting was set for April 18. Place and time TBA.**

Submitted by Mauriel Joslyn, Treasurer