

Siasconset Civic Association
Annual Meeting Minutes
August 8, 2017

The meeting was called to order by President Martha Polachi at 6:10 pm. She invited all in attendance to stay for the community BBQ to follow.

Polachi next read the annual Necrology and asked for a moment of silence for all those known to have left the community in the past year:

Charles Lord
Faith Vollans Kohner
Barbara Cain
Sandy Cranston
Roger Marcel Godeau
Roger Block
Elizabeth Montrose Lacouture
Lorraine Martin Lindvall
Ruth McLaine
Ed McLaine
Suzanne Bond DeHeart
John Arnold Teasdale
Donna Wick
Sally Carter
Susan Starbuck
Corinne Roosevelt
Robert Shaw
Kathleen Ridder
Walter "Derby" Wilson
Sylvia Howard
Charles Orbison
MacDonald Mathey
W. Malcolm Perry
Nichols Vorys
Martha Davis Kelly

[Discovered after the meeting: John Edward Craighead]

CO North gave the Treasurer's report for Gene Hilzenrath who was off-island. Noting the 2016 uptick in dues revenue, North reported that this level of membership has not yet been realized for 2017, nor has the pattern of increased donations seen in 2015. Despite these lags in 2017, the financial health of the organization is strong overall with a healthy cash balance and an active program.

Lynn Filipski reported on the very positive return of Bike Safety Day. The program, which was stopped due to lackluster attendance several years ago, was offered on July 26 to an enthusiastic 26 children. This year, Officer Cassie Thompson, together with colleagues from the K-9 unit (including dog Moby) and bicycle patrol officers, created an obstacle course on the temporarily closed segment of New St. between the Casino and the Chanticleer. Participants rode their bikes through the course as often as they wished, received safety checks of their helmets and bikes, and were given informational goody bags from the Sheriff's department, coupons for free ice cream cones at the 'Sconset Market and free Bike Lights (if they did not have one) paid for by the Civic Association. The kids received a sound reminder and education of safe biking practices that will hopefully translate into fewer accidents and calmer traffic in the village. The Civic Association hopes to be able to offer the program even earlier in the season next year.

Martha Polachi added that the Bicycle Safety Program is an example of one program paid for by dues revenue. An additional program is the Siasconset Civic Association Scholarship Award for a Sconset resident seeking higher education. Both 2017 and 2016 recipients, Emma Hunter and Elizabeth Eldridge, spoke of their experiences at the July meeting.

Another program is the recently developed website of the Civic Association, which Gail Walker worked tirelessly over the year to create, update and refine.

Sheila Daume offered the annual Nominating Report. The Nominating Committee proposed the following new Board members for the class of 2020:

Maggie Nowak Boone
Whitney Schrauth
Gail Walker

The 2017-18 slate of officers proposed was:

Martha J. Polachi, President;
Catherine R. Bowman, Vice President
Eugene Hilzenrath, Treasurer
Mary L. Will, Secretary
David Boyce, Clerk

The membership voted, without reservation, to accept both the slate of new members and the slate of officers.

Martha Polachi formally thanked retiring Board Members Chip Cruice, Sheila Daume, Patty Gibian, Ray Grubbs and Lee Lawrason for their significant cumulative service over the years and they were applauded loudly by the membership.

Noting in her introduction of the guest speaker, Rob McNeil, new Director of the Department of Public Works (DPW), that the Gully Road Footbridge is once again open to the public, Martha Polachi thanked McNeil and Chuck Larsen of the DPW for their timely actions on behalf of community safety. She noted that McNeil has worked closely and in concert with Police Chief Bill Pittman, the July guest speaker, to introduce new traffic calming measures to the village. Throughout the village the misleading and unenforceable variety of speed limit signs have been replaced with 25 mph Thickly Settled signs.

Noting that it seemed entirely appropriate for him to address the community in a place of drama, since there has been lots of drama attending his short tenure on island, McNeil alluded to learning days before the start of Daffodil Weekend that the Footbridge was unsound and therefore a hazard to passersby. It needed (and received) immediate attention. But, after a long wait, he expected that those present most wanted to know when the David Gray Memorial Rotary Project would be completed. He answered that it would be back to its original glory "soon," a relative term he admitted. McNeil feels it is incumbent on him to get as much community input as he can to fully understand what stakeholders want and expect. He noted that discussions have already taken place about one material change, the use of granite blocks to surround the rotary. More durable and attractive than poured concrete (seen in its present degraded state at the outside of the memorial), it appears to be the favored material despite being more costly. McNeil noted that electricity and irrigation are being planned for the rotary and gave a special mention to the Porter and Brown families, among others, who have lovingly tended the plantings at the base of the flagpole for four generations. He concluded, saying that he expects lots to happen on this historic restoration project this Fall.

Martha Polachi closed the meeting with an account Bob Felch had found in Inquirer and Mirror archives. In August 1969, it was reported that at a recent Siasconset Civic Association meeting, the topics for discussion were a DPW construction project at the footbridge, a suggestion that hedges be trimmed shorter for safety reasons at street corners, pollution in the harbor, and the idea of building a playground at the end of Gully Road. Polachi noted that 50 years on, we are discussing the same issues, proving the adage, "The more things change, the more they stay the same."

Polachi adjourned the meeting at 6:30 pm and attendees went onto the East porch for a delicious BBQ and pot luck supper.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lathrop Will
Secretary