

Historic Resources Commission Minutes
October 4, 2021

The meeting was called to order by vice chairman Mary Hebert at 6:00. Those present included:

Mary Hebert
Kay Forster
Wendy Fleming
Katie Mallory
Sherry Nelson

Kay Forster moved to approve the minutes as presented. Katie Mallory seconded the motion, and it was passed.

Mary Hebert updated the commission on the Certified Local Government (CLG) status. She noted that the state CLG representative, Alan Higgins, had returned the draft ordinance for Cheboygan's Historic District with comments and suggestions needed to bring it into compliance with state law. Mary Hebert and Sherry Nelson will make the revisions necessary and return it to Higgins for a final review prior to sending it to City Manager Dan Sabolsky. Hebert further suggested that the commission invite Higgins, with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), to brief commissioners and Manager Sabolsky on the CLG before submitting the new ordinance to City Council.

Hebert also suggested that we prepare three models to show how gaining CLG status will affect resources in Cheboygan. One would be a residence, such as 334 Sammons, the Mallory/George Frost house; a commercial property, such as the Kingston Theater; a non-profit resource, the History Center of Cheboygan County. Katie Mallory recommended that the commission hold a program at the Cheboygan Public Library to invite homeowners individually to the presentation. Business owners, likewise, could be included to learn the benefits of historic preservation, and becoming a CLG community.

Mary Hebert suggested commissioners visit several other websites of existing CLG cities to see what benefits they have gained, in particular Ann Arbor, which features a valuable Q & A section about preservation.

A possible Mission Statement was discussed. The following was submitted for consideration:

Cheboygan's historic sites are physical reminders of the architectural, historical, or cultural, history we share. The mission of the Historic District Commission is to recognize, educate, and bring public attention to the historic treasures in the city and to assist property owners in the recognition and official designation of their historic properties. Further, the commission is charged with assisting property owners in locating the technical expertise and funding sources for preservation of these resources to ensure their continued use in the community.

The mission statement was revised to:

The mission of the Historic District Commission is to recognize, educate, and bring public attention to the historic treasures in the city and to assist property owners in the recognition and official designation of their historic properties.

The commission's goal:

As Cheboygan's historic sites are physical reminders of the architectural, historical, or cultural history that we share, the commission is charged with assisting property owners in locating the technical expertise and funding sources for preservation of these resources to ensure their continued use in the community.

Commissioners voted to adopt the mission statement and goal following it. Further, commissioners suggested that it be added to the city website in the Historic Preservation section.

Commissioner update. Two more applications have been submitted to become commissioners by city residents. They are Mahli Thomas and Keith Knecht. Their status is unknown. Presently, non-city residents may continue to serve until a new ordinance is passed, according to Alan Higgins with the State historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Mary Hebert asked Kay Forster, History Center Executive Director, where a person would work if they write a grant for the History Center. Forster said that the History Center does not have funds to support a grant writer. Hebert responded that the possible CLG status would enable funding for that position. Forster said that in 1971 Ellis Olson purchased the building for \$1 with the understanding that it would remain a museum. She said that running the museum with volunteers only is not sustainable. Paid, trained staff is necessary to develop and present programming and maintain a schedule of open hours.

Kay Forster announced that the book by her husband Leo, "A Memorable Trip Down the Cheboygan River," is in limited quantity of 750 copies. It will be available at the History Center soon.

Katie Mallory announced the the Opera House had recently received a generous endowment. The anonymous gift is \$1million and will be received in payments of \$100,000 a year for the next ten years.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50.