



Pierce House Property Committee Meeting Minutes June 13, 2023

Pierce House Committee Attendees:

Peter Braun, Margi Byrnes, Ann Crosby, Terry Green (Chair), Barbara Peskin.

Other Attendees:

Maureen Belt, (Minute Taker), Kim Bodnar, (Select Board), Dan Pereira (Assistant Town Administrator), Collette Sizer, (applicant for the committee) and Jennifer Westlund (Pierce House Director)

I. WELCOME: Terry Green called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

II. Minutes: The Committee unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2023 meeting. Peter moved that the following sentence be included in all Minutes related to actual financial results “**The Committee reviewed the Pierce House Financial Information chart attached to these minutes.**” Terry Green seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

Collette said the February Minutes were not posted on the town website. Terry said she would look into this. The February Minutes are now posted online.

III. Public Comments: Jim White, 38 Bedford Road, Lincoln said that in the past few years, the peace and quiet of his neighboring but not abutting property is often disturbed by live and DJ music performed at events held at the Pierce House and DeCordova Museum. He invited committee members to experience the sound levels for themselves during the next event. He cited a past acoustician report that deemed the decibel levels are within range, but said the report is flawed because it recorded sound levels from the property line and not the receptive area. He said the noise even penetrates closed windows.

Peter thanked Mr. White for speaking and added he was not alone. The musical entertainment affects his own nearby property as well as those of other neighbors. He said the acoustician report was compliant with state law so he learned to live with it. There was a brief discussion about sound funneling uphill. Jen and Peter discussed measures in place designed to control the noise levels which include limiting the size of live bands, changing the performance end time, sound curtains, and monetary fines, such as withholding deposits, and permanent expulsion for violators. Barbara reiterated that Pierce House aims to be a good neighbor. The committee thanked Mr. White and said it will take the issue under advisement.

IV: Finances: The Finance portion of the agenda was taken out of order to accommodate Dan's necessary early departure from the meeting.

A. Kitchen Update - Dan explained that the previously approved allowance is insufficient for new commercial-grade kitchen appliances and the plumbing contract. The appliances proposed at the last meeting were not compliant with Board of Health specifications. Appliances that cost significantly more, according to research conducted by Facilities Director Brandon Kelly, who was not present. Dan added the plumbing contractor, Kirkland and Shaw, would need an additional \$1,000 to cover prevailing wage mandates. The existing gas range that is being replaced would need to be auctioned off by law, and that sale may yield some savings.

Colette suggested purchasing an induction stovetop, saying chefs prefer those to electric. The idea was not entertained further as committee members were concerned about the specific cookware induction stovetops required, and most caterers prepare food offsite and use the Pierce House kitchen to warm it.

Ann Crosby motioned that the committee authorize up to \$45,000 to complete the kitchen upgrade. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Pierce House Capital Accounts - Dan presented four dedicated capital and operating accounts from past years, some with substantial balances that could possibly be used for current projects inline with the accounts' detailed intent. Members suggested some of the \$23,562.35 remaining in the FY19 Carpentry and Decking account may be used to repair staircases and add ADA-compliant

safety railings to decks. The \$2,359.08 remaining in the FY 18 bathroom account may be used to add additional lighting in the men's room.

Dan requested the committee's permission to close the Culvert and Driveway accounts, but to leave the other two open for anticipated use. Terry Green made the motion to close the Culvert and Driveway accounts, which passed unanimously.

A brief discussion followed about the subcommittee charged with setting a fee schedule. Dan asked permission to tell local nonprofits who regularly schedule events at Pierce House that this may be the last year it will be available at no charge, especially as the groups are unaccustomed to budgeting in the fee. The committee approved the request.

Ann said the nonprofit Garden Club just paid \$300 to use Pierce House for a meeting.

Kim suggested setting a "roll-out date" of when fees will take effect so potential users will know when to expect to pay something. The topic was tabled to a future meeting.

B. Pierce House Finances Actual Results - The Committee reviewed the Pierce House Financial Information chart attached to these minutes.

C. Requisition Approval - Peter expects Pierce House to easily come within budget, however it is impossible to know what's in the pipeline. He requested the line item of \$7,584.50 for bathymetry be removed. The landscaping bill could increase to approximately \$18,000 with mowing fees. There were three additional - and final - payments to Waltham Pest Control. Jen added that she canceled their service twice since the last meeting. The kitchen project has added a significant increase to the repairs and maintenance budget to the point the budget may have a negative bottom line.

Kim followed up on the plan to merge Pierce House composting with the school department's composting. The schools have not yet launched their program, so she is meeting with the DPW about partnering with them. She will follow up at the next meeting.

The advertisement budget includes the costs to subscribe to online wedding sites, including The Knot, The Wire and Zola. Jen added she may be able to advertise at no cost at a trade show.

Peter Braun made a motion to approve the list of requisitions presented with the changes discussed. Terry seconded and it was approved unanimously.

D. Walkway Proposal - Ann, Jen and Terry met earlier, with members from the Conservation Commission, and discussed installing pavers connecting the tent to the driveway and the tent to the side porch to improve the walkways and limit the mud that collects there in wet weather. Ann sought the committee's permission to speak with the Historical Commission at their July meeting to discuss installing safety railings on four sets of outdoor stairs, installing pavers to extend the walkways, and a remedy to control the erosion along the driveway.

Jen said guests at a recent wedding parked on the lawn, a practice which must cease.

Kim suggested the committee share newsworthy items in the Select Board's newsletter. Barbara agreed to provide the content.

The committee unanimously agreed to allow Ann to speak on its behalf to the Historical Commission. Ann will share details at the Aug. 1 meeting.

V. Director's Report - Jen said the weddings are going very well and the only complaint has been a neighbor recording noise levels at the wedding. The neighbor has agreed to stop.

A milk snake, which Jen estimates to be about 6-feet long by 5-inches wide, has taken residence by the pond. She contacted Lincoln Police who put her in touch with animal control. Milk snakes are harmless to humans, however their presence at weddings and other events may not be to every guest's liking.

Jen has been busy with appointments and bookings and there is only one free date in September 2024. Already two dates are booked for 2025.

Her new furniture arrived and came under budget.

There was discussion about hiring an assistant for Jen during the busy season.

Representatives from Home Depot took measurements of the closet and bedroom in the apartment. The carpet needs to be replaced because the existing one smells of pet odor.

Terry suggested tax work-off residents could answer phones and help with the gardens, decreasing the contractor's invoice.

Jen had a lengthy conversation with a parent on the eighth grade graduation committee. The parent asked if the students could celebrate under the tent at Pierce House and the parents at Bemis Hall. Seventh grade parents would supervise the students. Jen was not keen on the idea, an opinion backed by Ann. Ann has chaperoned school dances in the past at Bemis Hall, and said it was a production keeping Lincoln School kids inside the building and their friends from private school out. Jen asked and received the committee's permission to tell the parent no.

Adjournment: The committee agreed to hold its next meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 1 to accommodate members' vacation schedules. Terry Green adjourned the meeting at 7:02.

PIERCE HOUSE FINANCIAL INFORMATION

	FY22 Actual	FY23 Budget	FY23 YTD 5/31/2023	Prior YTD 5/31/2022
REVENUES				
Balance forward from prior year	\$ 264,148.87		\$ 323,686.76	\$ 177,079.00
PROGRAM REVENUE				
Restitution of Property (repayment for damage)	\$ -		\$ -	
Flat Fee Events	\$ 178,416.00	\$ 159,300.00	\$ 150,435.00	\$ 162,323.50
Tent Revenue	\$ 20,405.00	\$ 23,895.00	\$ 21,911.00	\$ 17,930.00
Cleaning Fees	\$ 13,200.00	\$ 5,576.00	\$ 13,800.00	\$ 10,600.00
Police Details	\$ 5,600.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,780.00	\$ 4,700.00
Kitchen Fees	\$ 300.00		\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
Total Program Revenue	\$ 217,921.00	\$ 191,771.00	\$ 188,226.00	\$ 195,853.50
EXPENSES				
Director's Compensation	\$ 57,375.00	\$ 63,895.00	\$ 57,486.60	\$ 51,659.58
Director's Commission	\$ 29,517.05	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 23,802.75	\$ 24,318.05
Part Time Staff Compensation	\$ -	\$ 4,800.00	\$ -	\$ -
Utilities (Gas/Electric/Water)	\$ 16,112.16	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 14,918.98	\$ 14,796.78
Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 5,681.80	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 9,257.68	\$ 2,681.80
Cleaning	\$ 17,118.05	\$ 11,411.00	\$ 19,100.00	\$ 11,918.05
Landscaping	\$ 11,787.57	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 14,043.23	\$ 9,556.00
Police Details	\$ 1,249.60	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,478.64	\$ 761.60
Other Contracted Services	\$ 1,260.76	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 4,419.79	\$ 1,260.76
Clinical Services (Wellness clinics)	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 3,750.00
Communication Services & Internet	\$ 4,161.39	\$ 3,514.00	\$ 3,797.19	\$ 3,765.27
Advertising	\$ 7,400.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 10,652.26	\$ 7,400.00
First Day	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Supplies & Misc Charges	\$ 3,280.58	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 1,998.82	\$ 3,108.14
Total Program Expenses	\$ 158,693.96	\$ 163,820.00	\$ 166,955.94	\$ 134,976.03
Program Net (Loss)/Surplus for FY	\$ 59,227.04	\$ 27,951.00	\$ 21,270.06	\$ 60,877.47