



Pierce House Property Committee Meeting
Minutes August 1, 2023

Pierce House Committee Attendees:

Peter Braun, Margi Byrnes, Ann Crosby, Terry Green (Chair), Barbara Peskin and Collette Sizer

Other Attendees:

Maureen Belt, (Minute Taker), Dan Pereira (Assistant Town Administrator), Fuat Koro (liaison to the Finance Committee), and Jennifer Westlund (Pierce House Director)

WELCOME:

Pierce House Building Use and Fee Schedule subcommittee

Terry called to order a meeting of the Pierce House Building Use and Fee Schedule subcommittee at 5:35 p.m.

Margi moved that the subcommittee's minutes be approved. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously without discussion.

Terry adjourned the subcommittee meeting at 5:36.

Terry opened the PH Property Committee Meeting at 5:36.

Barbara moved that the minutes of June 13, 2023 be approved. Peter seconded the motion, adding a request to change the header to "requisition approval" and not "budget." Barbara asked to include additional details and a heading for "starting amounts" as well as balances on the four capital accounts Dan discussed. The minutes were approved unanimously with Peter's and Barbara's recommendations.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - There were no public comments.

I. FINANCES

EVENT SOUND MANAGEMENT

Dan said recent PH events generated discussions among neighbors who asked that the volumes be lowered. Jen said she provides vendors with volume requirements and checks volume and decibel levels at various checkpoints throughout the event. A July 1, 2023 event was problematic, and the offending vendor has since been permanently removed from the vendor list and banned from PH. Dan added that

neighbors “from quite a distance” voiced complaints. He reached out to the Board of Health to double check on the calibrations to ensure accuracy.

The Board of Health tested the properties and recorded numbers consistent with Jen’s numbers. The Board said the PH is in compliance with legal requirements if all protocols are followed. Weston Road properties are in the margin of error.

Dan added that though the sounds could be heard from a distance, they did not qualify as a nuisance. He added that the Board of Health was very helpful.

In attempt to be proactive, he discussed wireless sound monitors that can be used during events. Once volumes or decibels exceed a certain limit, the monitor would send real-time notifications to both Jen and the vendor. The units cost \$4,200/year to rent or \$9,000 to purchase. The unit screens out background noise, such as aircraft and traffic. Dan suggested ownership would be more cost-effective. In answer to members’ questions, Dan and Fuat, who works in the industry, said the unit was tamper proof and did not require costly regular maintenance. Fuat said the unit Dan proposed is ideal for PH’s needs. Barbara asked if used models are on the market. Dan added that PH needs to take the sound issue seriously and the purchase of the monitor is a legitimate operational improvement that neighbors will appreciate.

Terry remembered a discussion about the client contracts stating a penalty if the sound level was violated. Jen said we do not have that in our current contracts. Terry said she would review the past minutes to see if the vendor or client loses the deposit.

Dan also recommended the PH allocate \$1,800 to purchase 16 additional feet of acoustic paneling to reduce sound travel. The former tent layout person, Gino Tomasetti, knew where all audio equipment needed to be placed for optimal acoustics. He was very specific that speakers be placed in a precise location. A curtain could screen them. Jenn said the speakers were placed in the middle of the tent for the problematic July 1 event. She added that clients and vendors are bringing their own screens. Ann suggested a trellis of faux flowers, and Dan suggested the PH purchase a reusable cloth.

Terry motioned the appropriation of up to \$9,000 for the purchase of the sound monitoring system. Peter seconded. Barbara asked if other town departments would use it, thus help with the cost. The motion was approved unanimously.

KITCHEN UPDATE - Dan said the Board of Health approved the proposed appliances and plumbing tasks. Jenn has given contractors, Kirkland and Shaw, four August dates for installation. Even with the purchase of higher-quality commercial grade appliances, the project totaled less than the allocated \$45,000.

PIERCE HOUSE FINANCES ACTUAL RESULTS -

FY 24 BUDGET - Peter said the Fiscal Year of July 1 to June 30 cuts right into the middle of PH’s busiest revenue season, which makes the budget difficult to track. He

referred to a worksheet-in-progress designed to predict future revenues and cash flow for upcoming Fiscal Years. The worksheet included “bookings” and “holds” of events from July 1, 2023 to October 2025 - the future-most date which an event is booked and a deposit received.

The worksheet revealed \$25,000 in past-due revenue. Dan said he does his best to collect fees, but he does not have a professional billing system or aggressive collection department. Jenn added that some revenue has come in since the worksheet was printed.

In answer to Ann’s question, she said, an event is held until either a deposit is received, or if another client requests that date. Upon the latter, Jenn lets the “hold” prospect know someone else expressed interest in that date and allows them a short window to place a deposit or relinquish the date.

Fuat asked if there were ever any collection problems, to which Dan answered no, but a small number of clients had to be billed multiple times. Jenn said the billing process is becoming more cohesive.

Terry thanked everyone and said the committee would vote on a budget at the Sept. 12, 2023 meeting. Peter said the committee could be budgeting for a loss, but added the \$40,000 contribution from the town has been helpful.

PIERCE HOUSE BUILDING USE AND FEE SCHEDULE - review - This subcommittee met in May to create a fee schedule and policies for potential users. Jenn shared that a Lincoln resident told her that the previous director approved their using the PH in October at no cost to host a fundraiser to benefit Dana-Farber. The event would include food trucks, portable toilets and more than 200 guests. Jenn could not locate any documentation and the event was not posted on the calendar. The resident said permission was granted via Gmail. Ann said the guest count exceeds the PH capacity. Peter asked why the fee would be waived and was concerned about traffic, noise and wear-and-tear on the house and grounds. A lengthy conversation ensued regarding what category on the proposed fee schedule would best suit the resident. A preliminary consensus was made to allow the vent with a 200-person cap and the client receive a the 20-percent resident discount.

Another conversation involved the last sentence in the draft’s second paragraph: defining what is a financial hardship and, if time was of the essence, how could the committee vote on such a request without violating Open Meeting laws.

Ann proposed striking the word “community” and inserting “organizations” under the Group C header. Multiple members were uncomfortable with the vague definition of

the Group B classification.

Terry motioned to delete the last sentence of the second paragraph and Group B and to have the committee revisit this agenda item again in the coming months.

Peter seconded adding that commensurate changes to the fee schedule be included. The motion passed unanimously.

REQUISITION APPROVALS - The committee reviewed the actual requisition results attached to these minutes.

Terry motioned to approve the requisitions. Peter seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

WALKWAY PROPOSAL UPDATE - Ann met with the Historical Commission in July. The commission approved wrought-iron handrails from the walkway up to the tent, and for the walkway from the tent to kitchen to be filled in. She agreed to get cost estimates to present at the next meeting.

RECYCLING AT PIERCE HOUSE - Terry tabled this item to a future meeting.

V. OPERATIONS

A. DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Jenn promised a stellar presentation at next month's meeting.

Barbara read aloud her submission on the PH renovations for the Select Board's newsletter. At Dan's suggestion, she will include photos.

Ann said the Historical Commission will open dialogue on the driveway erosion, adding members did not seem keen on discussing it at her meeting with them. Peter suggested she include a Select Board member at future discussions. Terry said to let the topic go as it has been ongoing and unresolved for three years.

Terry adjourned the meeting at 7:39.

PIERCE HOUSE FINANCIAL INFORMATION

	FY22 Actual	FY23 Budget	FY23 PRELIM FINAL	Prior YTD 6/30/2022
REVENUES				
PROGRAM REVENUE				
Restitution of Property (repayment for damage)	\$ -		\$ -	
Flat Fee Events	\$ 178,416.00	\$ 159,300.00	\$ 157,155.00	\$ 178,416.00
Tent Revenue	\$ 20,405.00	\$ 23,895.00	\$ 24,623.50	\$ 20,405.00
Cleaning Fees	\$ 13,200.00	\$ 5,576.00	\$ 14,700.00	\$ 13,200.00
Police Details	\$ 5,600.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,380.00	\$ 5,600.00
Kitchen Fees	\$ 300.00		\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
Total Program Revenue	\$ 217,921.00	\$ 191,771.00	\$ 199,158.50	\$ 217,921.00
EXPENSES				
Director's Compensation	\$ 57,375.00	\$ 63,895.00	\$ 62,571.06	\$ 57,375.00
Director's Commission	\$ 29,517.05	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 23,802.75	\$ 29,517.05
Part Time Staff Compensation	\$ -	\$ 4,800.00	\$ -	\$ -
Utilities (Gas/Electric/Water)	\$ 16,112.16	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 16,167.82	\$ 16,112.16
Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 5,681.80	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 9,447.30	\$ 5,681.80
Cleaning	\$ 17,118.05	\$ 11,411.00	\$ 24,200.00	\$ 17,118.05
Landscaping	\$ 11,787.57	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 17,890.98	\$ 11,787.57
Police Details	\$ 1,249.60	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,478.64	\$ 1,249.60
Other Contracted Services	\$ 1,260.76	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 4,774.53	\$ 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	\$ 3,989.71	\$ 4,161.39
Advertising	\$ 7,400.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 10,652.26	\$ 7,400.00
First Day	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Supplies & Misc Charges	\$ 3,280.58	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 2,612.29	\$ 3,280.58
Total Program Expenses	\$ 158,693.96	\$ 163,820.00	\$ 183,587.34	\$ 158,693.96
Program Net (Loss)/Surplus for FY	\$ 59,227.04	\$ 27,951.00	\$ 15,571.16	\$ 59,227.04