

ACHA Annual Meeting  
June 2016 to June 2017  
June 8, 2017

The ACHA annual meeting was called to order by President Jennifer Dorsey at 4:40 pm. Ms. Dorsey welcomed the membership and thanked them for attending.

Minutes: A motion to accept the minutes from the previous year's annual meeting was made by Paula Hemmings, seconded by Keith Bennett, and approved with all in favor.

Elections: Worth Gretter, chair of the Nominating Committee, presented three slates:

New trustee nominees were Lisa O'Brien, Jeneeta O'Connor, and Krysta Dennis. The mailed message to the membership had listed Tim Nichols instead of Krysta Dennis, but due to the sudden death of his son he is not being proposed as a Trustee. Mr. Gretter recommended a vote on the entire slate, there were no objections, and the slate was approved with all in favor.

Trustees nominated for an additional three-year term were Keith Bennett, Paula Hemmings, and Walter Wheeler, as well as interim Trustee Ken Mortenson (previously appointed by the Board to fill a vacancy). Mr. Gretter recommended a vote on the entire slate, there were no objections, and the slate was approved with all in favor.

Officers proposed for a one-year term include Jennifer Dorsey for President, Paula Hemmings for First Vice President, Maeve McEneny for Second Vice President, Worth Gretter for Secretary, and Wendy Burch for Treasurer. Mr. Gretter recommended a vote on the entire slate, there were no objections, and the slate was approved with all in favor.

Treasurer's Report: Wendy Burch presented the Treasurer's Report. She first thanked Jillian Altenburg for her service as Executive Director, as Jillian has resigned effective mid-July.

Ms. Burch indicated that ACHA is on budget, and income is up from last year due to donations for Ten Broeck Mansion maintenance and improvements.

There was no audit this year as it is not required by New York state law and the Board chose to appoint an Audit Committee rather than expend funds for an auditor. The Audit and Finance Committees performed a review that found minor problems, which led to a strengthening of internal controls.

The ACHA fund at Edward Jones is slowly increasing, and the intent is that this will eventually be an endowment.

Finance Committee: Committee chair Eric Johnson read the written report. A summary is included here:

ACHA went from a deficit of \$13,148 in 2015 to a surplus of \$17,741 in 2016, largely due to an increase in Community Fund income distributions and an increase in restricted donations. The year-end cash position increased by \$30,835 from the previous year and at December 31 was

\$100,242, but a large portion is restricted funding for renovation of the Mansion front porch and upgrading of the heating system.

Mr. Johnson discussed the status of ACHA investments such as stocks and bonds, which were received as gifts and help fund ACHA operations. There is also a donor advised fund that was established in 2016 to fund ACHA projects but does not show on the balance sheet as it is not an asset of ACHA.

The Audit Committee found discrepancies in check signing procedures – some checks that required two signatures had only one. As this was not caught by the bank, the Finance Committee will institute a periodic review of check signatures.

ACHA continues to experience a cash flow problem during the year, as the bulk of our revenue comes in at year end.

Collections Committee: Committee member Carol Felsen read the written report of committee chair Walter Wheeler. A summary is included here:

The Olcott family dining room has been furnished, largely with loans from the Schenectady County Historical Society.

The southwest room on the second floor has been repapered with historically correct wallpaper, and wallpaper has also been selected for the northeast room, which will be interpreted as the bedroom of a retired officer of the War of 1812.

Work continues on improving the collections database and making it accessible online.

Building and Grounds Committee: Committee chair Jay Jakovic presented a written report which is summarized here:

Accomplishments include tree trimming, electrical work, a new hot water heater, repairs to the heating system, improvements to the alarm system, installation of a Knox box, general cleanup, and determining that there is not asbestos in the ceiling of the former basement office.

Projects underway are rebuilding of the front porch and upgrading of the heating system, with the addition of air conditioning. In the planning stage are extension of the bluestone walkway to the parking lot and exterior lighting upgrades.

Mr. Jakovic thanked the Building and Grounds Committee, and especially the Master Gardeners for their work on the grounds.

A question was asked about the condition of the parking lot. Mr. Jakovic replied that the city of Albany had been expected to repave it with the Swan Street paving (as the city owns half of the lot), but didn't. The committee is presently seeking estimates for this work.

A second question concerned the status of the blue house on Livingston Ave just west of the Mansion. Mr. Jakovic replied that this house is now in the hands of the Albany County Land Bank, and the committee is watching it.

Programs and Education Committee: Wendy Burch stated that she and Arlene Way would be succeeded as co-chairs of the committee by Matt Hamm and Maeve McEneny. The school programs which started development under former Education Coordinator Sarah Johnson are ramping up under current Education Coordinator Karen Giordano. In addition, ACHA currently has 12 docents and has had an intern each quarter of the year.

A written list of the programs of the last year was provided, including exhibits, archaeology camp for kids, theatrical and dance productions in the garden and the Mansion, a garden tea, pub crawls, Valentine's dinner, numerous Holiday House events, the Gala, Living History Day, and a book group.

Albany County History Collaborative: Committee chair Marie Erkes provided a written report, which is summarized here:

The ACHC, which ties together all 11 historical societies in Albany County. There is a website, <http://www.albanycountyhistory.org>, which provides information on each society and includes links to many sites of local historical interest.

The quarterly ACHC meetings are hosted by different member societies and usually include a short business meeting followed by a workshop or presentation of general interest.

Mr. Gretter elaborated on the relationship between ACHA and ACHC. The historical societies are volunteer groups without staff, and they appreciate ACHA coordinating joint projects like the website. Mr. Gretter also thanked Ms. Erkes for her many efforts on behalf of the ACHC.

Keith Bennett stated that he was working on a flyer for ACHC, with the idea that it could go in brochure racks at hotels and similar locations.

Development Committee: In the absence of a presently serving committee chair, committee member Karl Felsen reported that:

The front porch restoration is being done with \$3.5K from an Albany County grant, gifts from ACHA members, and disbursements from the donor advised fund that supports ACHA projects.

The endowment mentioned earlier is slowly increasing with a goal of \$250K.

The City Club of Albany will provide \$1K to fund new ACHA brochures.

The second floor northeast room (the 1812 room) is being restored with funding from the Daughters of 1812 and Board of Trustees contributions.

The heating upgrade and A/C installation is largely supported by Board of Trustees gifts.

After receiving a previous grant from the Daughters of the American Revolution, ACHA has been invited to apply again. Mr. Felsen is seeking a \$10K DAR grant to be matched with a \$10K Bender Foundation grant.

Another idea currently being pursued is a historic preservation grant from the Regional Economic Development Council of \$100K or more, to be used for brick repair, parking lot paving, and extension of the bluestone walkway. The Robeson Foundation is another possible source of funding for the walkway. Joint grants with other ACHC societies are also being explored.

Membership Committee: In the absence of a presently serving committee chair, Executive Director Jillian Altenburg reported that current ACHC membership is around 250. She discussed the revised member guidelines and the efforts to recruit new members at ACHA events.

Executive Director: Ms. Altenburg stated that this would be her last meeting as Executive Director, and that the new Executive Director will be Samantha Hall-Saladino, who was unfortunately unable to attend. She introduced Karen Giordano, the Education Coordinator, who joined the staff in the last year, and also Aaron Holbitter, the Administrative Clerk but perhaps better titled as Creative Director due to his work on the newsletter, social media, etc.

Ms. Altenburg talked about her efforts to sustain ACHA with partnerships, creative programs, public awareness, etc. She highlight some of ACHA's most successful programs, such as Living History Day and archaeology camp, and also our partnerships with other organizations such as Confetti Stage ("Comedy of Errors"), Nacra Stage ("Isadora Duncan"), and Siena College ("Votes for Women"). The Holiday Gala and Valentine's Day dinner are successful and ongoing. Staffing, visitors, and rentals have all increased.

Finally, Ms. Altenburg stated that she had enjoyed working with a great Board of Trustees and that she would miss them.

Education Coordinator: Ms. Giordano stated that she has three jobs: hiring and supervising an intern each quarter, managing volunteers and docents, and interacting with schools and families.

The fall/winter 2016 intern, Jesse Serfilippi, completed the new school curriculum. The winter/spring 2017 intern, Lillian Byers, added information about the school curriculum to the Ten Broeck Mansion website. An intern is presently being hired for spring/summer 2017 and will be involved in creating an online database of ACHA collections items.

Ms. Giordano has recruited five new docents and now has 12 assisting with tours over the summer. Docent training is ongoing, and a docent appreciation event is planned.

The school program "The People of Prospect: An Exploration of Historic Ten Broeck Mansion" has been tested on a group of trustees and is ready for school visits in the fall. The program uses replica historic objects that students can handle as part of interactive activities. There is a possibility that the program will be offered to camps or home school groups prior to the start of the school year.

Family activities proved popular at Living History Day, so Ms. Giordano will build on that by offering addition family activities over the summer.

President: President Jennifer Dorsey extended recognition and thanks to many:

- The Nominating Committee (Claudia Engerhardt, Matt Hamm, Suzanne Waltz, Mimi O'Neill, and Worth Gretter, chair)
- The new Trustees now joining the ACHA team (Lisa O'Brien, Jeneeta O'Connor, and Krysta Dennis)
- The committee chairs for their productive committees this year
- Ms. Erkes for her efforts with the Albany County History Collaborative
- Ms. Altenburg for all she has accomplished during her tenure as Executive Director
- The interview committee (Paula Hemmings, Stephanie Ferentinos, and Carol Felsen) for their diligent search for the next Executive Director.

Ms. Dorsey announced that a homecoming celebration would be held November 4<sup>th</sup> for Ms. Altenburg and the new baby.

Ms. Dorsey spoke about the new Executive Director, Samantha Hall-Saladino, and her work at the Shaker Heritage Society and as Fulton County Historian. She will work with Ms. Altenburg for the first two weeks of July and assume the Executive Director role as of July 15.

Ms. Erkes asked a question whether meeting minutes could be issued sooner. Because the Board and the Executive Committee meet alternate months, it is two months before the minutes of any meeting are presented for review and approval. By that time, memory has faded and it is difficult to confirm the accuracy of the minutes. Ms. Dorsey and Mr. Gretter agreed that minutes could be sent out sooner for review.

A motion to adjourn was made by Paula Hemmings, seconded by Wendy Burch, and approved with all in favor. The meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.