



Somersworth Cultural Commission

One Government Way
Somersworth, NH 03878

Minutes of Regular Meeting of 2 May 2017: 1st Draft

Present:

Martin P Dumont Sr., Chair
Dana Hilliard, Mayor
Richard Boulanger
Gerry Corr
Diane Crawford
Celeste Feren
Sharon Hodsdon
Jenne Holmes
Rick Michaud
Pius Charles Murray, Secretary

In abstentia:

Maureen Jackman
Peter Mathieu
Rachael Wattimena
Dylan Zinkevich

Agenda & Minutes

I. Call to Order: At 6:00pm by the Chair.

II. Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes of the 28 March 2017 meeting as submitted was made by Mr. Michaud and seconded by Ms. Holmes. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Thetford Mines: The Mayor reported that on 3 May 2017 he would be inviting the Mayor of Thetford Mines officially to attend the Food Truck Festival in Somersworth which is scheduled for 24 June 2017. To the question how many Thetford Mines people would be coming, the Mayor guessed that both the Mayor and his wife, as well as a mayoral aide. The Mayor furthermore reported the sign “Thetford Mines” with mileage from Somersworth to Thetford Mines would be erected when the Mayor of Thetford Mines comes, and its opposite, the Somersworth sign with mileage from Thetford Mines to Somersworth, would be erected in Thetford Mines in August 2017. Since Somersworth is part of the North American Franco Network, it has been assigned a space on the Network’s website that Somersworth may upload content it wishes to in order to advertize the city and its Franco-American heritage for free. Somersworth has been invited to attend the next North American Franco Network Conference which will be held in Quebec. The Chair reported that Ken Houle was all in for organizing the run between Somersworth and Thetford Mines, and/or vice-versa. According to the Chair, Mr. Houle thinks it is too close to the August 2017 visit to Thetford Mines to get anything organized, but certainly by next year a run could happen. The Chair volunteered to ask Mr. Houle to attend the next Cultural Committee’s meeting to discuss this more in depth. To the question what form this run would take, the Chair responded that it is a relay-like race with a number of runners (e.g. ten or so) participating on a team and running a certain distance, accompanied by a limousine with the other runners.

As an update to the bus trip to Thetford Mines in August 2017, the Chair reported that twenty-two people had sign up so far; the bus holds 52-54. The trip’s itinerary leaves Somersworth on Friday, 18 August 2017, at noontime and hope that some sort of dinner is provided upon arrival. The return trip leaves on Sunday, 20 August 2017, late afternoon. The Chair asked the Mayor to confirm the hotel so that an estimated budget for each person attending could be developed. The Music Festival itself is on Saturday, 19 August 2017; the Chair did not know if a guide would be provided for the group.

IV. Student Exchange: The Mayor reported that Ms. Jackman has spoken with the principal of the English language school in Thetford Mines to begin planning for a Student Exchange during the next academic year since it is too late in the current academic year to arrange such an exchange.

V. Flag raising: Mr. Michaud reported that the next scheduled flag raising under the Cultural Committee’s auspices is the Quebec Provincial flag which will be raised on Friday, 16 June 2017, in time for the provincial Feast of St. John the Baptist.



The Mayor reported that Citizen’s Place has become quite popular and that many organizations have inquire about raising flags there for their celebrations. The most recent flag raising was that of the Flag of the State of Israel on 1 May 2017 to observe three important observances in Jewish history; the raising was covered by an excellent article in the newspaper with accompanying pictures (cf. <http://www.fosters.com/news/20170501/somersworth-marks-israeli-observances>).

VI. Student Report: In the absence of both students, the Chair inquired if any progress had been made on the recommendations that Mr. Corr had made at the last meeting to them concerning the gathering and analysis of student demographic information. Ms. Feren said that Ms. Wattimena was in the process of gathering some information through the use of social media. Mr. Corr asked Ms. Feren to have the information sent to him as soon as the students had gathered it and he would make recommendations for the next step.

VII. Nuns' story: Mr. Boulanger reported he has assembled as complete a story of all the nuns who had taught in Somersworth's parochial schools as possible. The Chair recommended trying to get some students to collate the material. Ms. Feren said that the AP History students would have some time after their end of year exam on Friday, 5 May 2017 and before they graduate at the beginning of June. The goal according to the Chair is to present the finished product to the Somersworth Historical Museum.

VIII. Cultural Dinner: The Chair reported that he was purchasing tickets to the Cultural Dinner for all the Cultural Committee members who could attend as a thank-you for their yeoman's work on the Committee. Mr. Murray regretfully had to decline because he already had a previously scheduled meeting.

IX. Cookbook: The Chair reported that the Somersworth Cookbook is still on the backburner. The Mayor was hoping to receive a copy to duplicate. Ms. Holmes volunteered to ask the Historical Society if she could identify the exact copy needed.

XI. Stop Sign: The Mayor stated that he would try to convince the Mayor of Thetford Mines to donate the five "Stop/Arrêt" signs as a sign of friendship between the two cities.



XI. 125th Anniversary Celebration: The Chair announced that Ms. Holmes had been named Chair of the city's 125th Anniversary Committee and that Mr. Michaud was Vice-Chair; both are also members of the Cultural Committee, providing excellent opportunities for cross-fertilization and cooperation. The Committee at the request of the Chair undertook some brainstorming to try to raise ideas for cooperation and coordination. Mr. Corr asked the Mayor what his expectations were for attendance and fundraising and offered to serve on the 125th Anniversary Committee where his expertise was greatly welcomed by Ms. Holmes. The Chair asked Ms. Holmes to explain briefly her thoughts on the Committee's *modus operandi*, recognizing that the 125th Anniversary Committee had yet to meet. Ms. Holmes explained that she would like to see a number of city organizations become involved, using that cross-pollination to get ideas for events (type, size, number) and for fundraising. The Chair stated that he was willing to approach Mr. Peter Harrity about organizing a golf tournament on behalf of the city next year. The Mayor thought a flag swapping ceremony would be appropriate; the Mayor also thought that since 2017 is Thetford Mines's 125th Anniversary, sending a Happy Birthday gift with

Happy Birthday in French would be appropriate. Ms. Feren suggested approaching the New Hampshire Humanities for funding of a large scale project of historical interest. The Chair recommended continuing to brainstorm at the next meeting.

As to the official emblem of the 125th Anniversary, the Mayor informed the Commission that there was a contest going on in the Somersworth Middle School among its students. The symbol chosen would probably serve as the anniversary's official symbol.

XII. Next Meeting: TBD.

XIII. Adjournment:

Sincerely yours,

Pius Charles Murray

(Mr.) Pius Charles Murray
Secretary