

Ashburnham 250th Celebration Committee Minutes of May 15, 2014 Meeting

Present: Steve Coswell, Chair; Pat Frederick, Secretary; Patty Johnson, Treasurer;
Members: Susan Brennan, Barbara DiVito, and Linda Ramsdell.
Guests: Rutland parade organizers, sisters Karen and Lynne Greenwood

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Steve Coswell.
The Secretary's report was accepted as written.
The Treasurer's report was read and accepted as written.

The town of Rutland has an annual, three- or four-day celebration around the Fourth of July, including a parade, among other activities. Karen Greenwood and her sister Lynne, as longtime parade organizers, came to advise us in planning Ashburnham's 250th Anniversary Parade, for September, 2015.

Rutland's Parade Committee is made up of 10 to 12 members, with additional helpers on the day of the parade, including three people whose responsibility is to line up the floats. They have had as many as 23 floats. Fundraising is done via town-wide mailing. Commemorative coins don't sell well as a fundraiser.

Participants in the parade – marchers, floats, etc. – are not charged any fee. They have 10 or 11 porta-potties along the parade route. A cleanup crew after the parade can be arranged from the County Sheriff's office. A military flyover is an exciting addition to the parade, and doesn't cost anything.

The Greenwoods also had suggestions for the fireworks show, which in our case is several months ahead of the parade date:
A volleyball tournament is a good activity to pass the time as people wait for the fireworks. Glow sticks are a popular sale item at fireworks shows.

If a band plays after the fireworks show, some people will stay to listen, so not everyone will be leaving at the same time. This relieves traffic congestion.

The Greenwoods will be available as consultants when we need advice. They did not charge us this time for sharing their expertise.

On other matters:

The Celebration Committee needs to open the preliminary Time Capsule in June of this year, to access the instructions for the formal centennial opening of the actual Time Capsules in 2015.

We need to include school teachers in plans for the 250th Anniversary Celebration. Preferably, a representative of the Committee will be able to make a presentation at a teachers' gathering. We need to distribute an informational handout to teachers by August, 2014, outlining plans for the year, and asking for suggestions on student participation. This could include anniversary-related Town History studies, floats by school groups, artwork for the "Paint the Town" project, and in the case of some of the high school boys, the beard-growing contest.

Barbara suggested an Overlook teacher as a good organizer, whom we should contact. Barbara will also design a postcard listing Anniversary events, for a town-wide mailing.

Dottie Munroe has written a blurb about the "Paint the Town" art event.

At Ashburnham Downtown Day this year, we will hand out a refrigerator magnet with a birthday cake logo, and the words, "Celebrate 250 Years / Ashburnham Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow / Parade Sept. 27, 2015: Be Part of It!" Magnets are available online; we should order 500.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 pm. The Committee will meet next on June 12, 7:00 pm in the Malcolm Stewart Room of the Stevens Memorial Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia H. Frederick

Patricia H. Frederick, Secretary