

East Windsor 250
Planning Meeting
6-30-2016

The first planning meeting for the 250th Anniversary Celebration of East Windsor met on the future patio of the Osborn House at the East Windsor Historical Society on June 30, 2016.

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm.

Attendance:

Present: Paul Anderson, Jason Bowsza, Dan Burnham, John Burnham, Ceil Donahue, Laura Harney, Michael Hunt, Diane Lajoie, Bob Maynard, Kathy Pippin, Richard Pippin, Debbie Talamini, Rebecca Talamini, Tom Talamini, Bill Thim, and Lynne Tracy-Thim.

Introduction:

Selectmen Bob Maynard, Jason Bowsza, and, Richard Pippin met with members of the Tolland 300th Anniversary committee to find out how they organized their 2015 events, including what did and didn't work for them. Mr. Maynard handed us a general outline of their June 16, 2016 meeting. Below are some of the high points they took from the meeting:

- Create a logo for the anniversary almost immediately. All signs, social media sights, press releases, and merchandise will have this logo for consistent branding. The marketing and branding will raise both money and interest in the events.
- Tolland had a contest in their high school to create/pick the slogan for the anniversary. Tolland's winner: "The Settler's Still Rock."
- Include local businesses, clubs, and civic groups. Ask for their help and their ideas. Be careful not to exclude groups; send the requests to all.
- Tolland's 300th Anniversary events lasted from May to September. They began with a gala and ended with a parade and picnic. A different business, club, or civic group hosted an event each weekend; the events were as diverse as the groups hosting them. The committee paid for health permits where needed so they knew everything was in order for the events.
- The planning was run by a main committee with subcommittees for different events or tasks. Recruit people in town established in the needed skill sets—ie graphic design, web design, advertising, party planning, fund raising, public safety, etc. All expenses had to be approved by the main central committee before the money was spent.
- Fundraising is tax free (and tax deductible for the donors) if we go through the town treasurer. This will require all meetings have posted agendas and minutes.
- The Town of Tolland gave a one-time donation of \$5000; an additional \$70,000 was donated by town businesses and the public.
- Additional money was raised by selling promotional materials with the anniversary logo on them. (car magnets, blankets, t-shirts, sweat shirts, hats, etc)

Suggestions and Ideas:

Based on the Tolland outline presented to us, we brainstormed the following ideas for our 250th Anniversary.

- Time Frame: It was suggested we might not want to cover as many months as Tolland did for their anniversary. After discussion it was accepted that we have event ideas that will cover the full time-frame (May to September).
- The parade can have floats from each of the towns East Windsor has been a part of throughout history. We can invite those towns to participate; this can increase knowledge of the events.
- If we are doing a write-up about a historical building, research and include that building's entire history.
- Our East Windsor Arcadia Book will be available to sell by August 2017. We will have books on hand to sell, perhaps as a package with the 250th anniversary program. (Ex. Acadia Book \$22; Program \$10; Combined \$25)
- We can do a reenactment of the arrival of the municipal charter. We should try to find any videos of past reenactments.
- We are going to ask Alan Brewer if we can borrow any of his father's information on planning the bicentennial celebrations. Charlie Brewer was the town historian and played a big role in the bicentennial planning.
- Parade and Picnic to close the celebration: We will need space for both set up and the final festivities. Possible suggestions included Phelps Road to the historical society – 2.5 miles; High School to the historical society, a route that will stay on Route 5, and a parade route that ends at the Park on Reservoir Avenue.
- Could we use food trucks for some of our events? This might require a variance or special permit based on the town charter; they can be hard to get due to state laws.
- Tour historical houses: There can be insurance issues with these tours; we will have to look into them.
- Bill Hosley from Enfield was mentioned to give a lecture series. Each meeting in the series could cover a different 50-year period in town.
- The Gala Fundraiser should be held at the beginning of the festivities: Add \$15 or \$20 per ticket over the cost of the event to go to the anniversary. Possible locations mentioned were The Merlot (too small), La Notte, Scout Hall (no alcohol).
- Time capsule: We will be excavating the current time capsule in the beginning of the events. We should close with a new time capsule. We can ask the kids in the high school to write themselves a letter to be placed in the time capsule.
- Merchandise Ideas: reusable grocery bags with the logo (possibly a sponsor such as Geissler's), mugs with the logo (should the mugs have sponsor names on the back?)
- Fundraising Levels: Use town landmarks to indicate sponsor levels instead of bronze, silver, gold, etc. Create lawn signs for the corporate sponsors with the sponsor level landmark on the sign. Thank the sponsors publicly at the town council meetings.

Additional Notes and Concerns:

The Committee decided all funds will go through the Town Treasurer. Town meeting documentation requirements will have to be met to use the town resources.

If there is any money left over after the 250th Anniversary events are complete we would like to keep the money in a designated fund to seed the 300th Anniversary celebrations.

An example of something that didn't work in Tolland was the Beard Growing contest. The main reason for the failure was they asked one of the two barbers in town if he would be willing to shape the beards for the contestants; the other barber felt slighted he wasn't asked and trash-talked the contest.

The next meeting will be Thursday July 7, 2016 at 7 pm at the East Windsor Historical Society. We will discuss how the organization chart should be set up.

The meeting adjourned at 8:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Lajoie