

SWEETSER LECTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting of 11/17/21

Attending: Sara Murphy, Joe Spear, Lorraine Lackey, Jeanne Blumer, Julie Scott, Helen Hincman and Susan Kilkelly

Secretary's report

The minutes of the meeting of 11/3/21, taken by Susan Kilkelly substituting for Faith Hodgkins were approved.

Treasurer's report -

The treasurer reported only one change since 11/3. We made a payment of \$250 to the Emmanuel Episcopal Church for the use of their space for our meetings in the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

Acceptance of the Treasurer's report was moved, seconded and passed

Old Business

1) Memorial for Diane Lind - In addition to honoring her at the next lecture, the committee talked about making a donation to The Scholarship Foundation in her memory. Susan will check on the appropriate fund.

2) Committee assignments - no changes since last meeting

3) Web Page design - Lorraine followed up with the suggestion of contacting Ian at WCAT. He is not able to do web design for us himself. He suggested Bostonwebgroup.com a company with offices in Boston and Wakefield. From their website, it appears that what they do is more, and probably more costly, than we are looking for. His other suggestion was to ask the High School if there is a student who could do a basic web site for us.

Sara mentioned that she knows a young person named Dylan who would be willing to try to set up a basic web site for us. The committee agreed that she should talk to him further.

4) Meeting leaders: As we did in the past, Sara asked that we take turns leading the meetings working from the agenda she will provide. Lorraine will take the first meeting in January.

5) Scheduling lectures in fall 2022. Sara checked the calendar and there are no holidays conflicting with Wednesdays. She suggested we plan to hold the lectures on Wednesdays. The committee agreed, keeping in mind, of course, that the final dates will depend on the speakers and the availability of the Savings Bank Theatre.

New Business

Speakers: The first question was do we still want to go with the speakers that were scheduled for Spring 2020? After discussion, the general consensus was that we are still interested in Sanjay Chopra, but not the other two. Barbara Berenson's topic of the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage will be out of date. Others had second thoughts about the suitability of Dan Szczesny as a speaker.

Sara had a list of new speakers she wanted us to think about. Various committee members expressed the opinion that we should strive for an uplifting series next year.

Paul D'Angelo - local comedian - Sara had polled several regular attendees who did not think he would be a good choice at all. Julie still feels strongly that he would be a great choice. One question to follow up on is whether he would only do a comedy routine or whether he could do a humorous talk about his career, growing up in Wakefield or another topic.

Sara Georgini of the Mass Historical Society is likely too expensive for this year as Sanjay Chopra's fee will take most of the amount we are comfortable paying.

Jane Healey of Melrose writes historical novels which are very highly regarded. Her latest is about the OSS in WWII. People who have heard her speak liked her.

Tracy Kidder of Western Mass and Jeff Kinney of Plainville are just plain out of our league. Jeff Kinney's fee is \$100,000 to \$200,000. A children's author like Jeff Kinney might be a draw for a Sunday afternoon talk for families, but not at that price.

Kate Clifford Larson spoke a few years ago about Rosemary Kennedy. She has a new book on the suffrage movement, but that is not a topic we want this year. She has also written about Harriett Tubman.

Stephen Puleo is a perennial favorite with the Sweetser audience. His latest book, with very long title, is about US humanitarian mission to Ireland during the famine.

Ted Reinstein also spoke a few years ago. Not everyone on the committee like his talk. He does a lot of speaking at area libraries and would probably be a good draw, unless everyone has already seen him at their local library.

Of this list, we directed Sara to send inquiry letters about availability next fall to: S. Chopra, P. D'angelo, J. Healey, K. Clifford Larson, S. Puleo and maybe Ted Reinstein.

Other suggestions for speakers both realistic and dream candidates if we only had the money included:

Ken Burns, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Beverly Beckham, David Gallo and Dan Shaughnessy.

Committee members will be on the lookout for speaker ideas. Any good prospects should be passed on to Sara so an inquiry can be made.

Motion to adjourn moved, seconded and passed

Next meeting will be January 2022 at a date and time to be determined.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Kilkelly

