

101st Report of the
ELDON HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. Note: Prior to the formal meeting, a short video was shown of Christmas decorations within the house. The Staff then provided a virtual tour of Eldon House giving a walk-through of select rooms (T. Wittmann - drawing room, B. Ardiel - dining room, N. Michienzi - library), which included brief overviews of Victorian Christmas traditions, including food, decorations, and greenery.

Meeting held via remote electronic format, Thursday, December 17, 2020 commencing at 4:45 p.m.

Present: M. Donachie (Chair), M. Spencer Golovchenko, T. Regnier, R. Griesmayer, L. Henderson, J. O'Neil, R. Koudys, M. Majumdar, R. Armistead, T. Wittmann, B. Ardiel, N. Michienzi

Guest: K. Gonyou, City Heritage Planner

2. **Approval of the Agenda**

SPENCER GOLOVCHENKO AND GRIESMAYER

That the amended Agenda **BE APPROVED** with addition under item #8 of reports for the Education Committee and Strategy and Innovation Committee.

CARRIED

3. **Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

R. Koudys declares conflict of interest with agenda item #7 Farhi Holdings Development.

4. **Remarks** – M. Donachie, Chair

The Chair expressed appreciation to all for joining the special Christmas meeting, and especially to the staff whose presentation provided some holiday atmosphere and shared traditions. He greatly appreciates everyone's patience and ongoing support as the new board Chair. A letter by M. Donachie was sent to the City in support of an expansion of the Executive Committee to include the role of Former Chair. The request was endorsed by Community and Protective Services Committee today; once it is approved by City Council this will be dealt with by the City Clerk. Additional information is coming related to a template for an updated procedure by-law. There is also ongoing conversation with the City Clerk on filling the 9th board member position with some action coming soon.

5. **Approval of 100th Report of the Eldon House Board of Directors (attached)**

SPENCER GOLOVCHENKO AND KOUDYS

That the 100th Report of the Eldon House Board **BE APPROVED**.

CARRIED

6. **Overview of Staff and Financial Reports (attached)**

The following update by Curator Director T. Wittmann was given:

- Contingency plans are ready, if the Province moves to a Grey Level lockdown and the museum must once again be closed to the public.
- There is a recent need to rely on the House HVAC system installed this summer, as the boiler required repair. This has resulted in an increase in the heating cost being incurred, as the boiler was cheaper to run. A more permanent fix for the boiler is being investigated.
- Corporate Asset Management (CAM) is City of London department that is working to comply with new legislation. There is approximately 10-15 days of follow up work by Eldon House staff to review the report, provide input to the CAM team and meet compliance with the required documentation. There are two different issues being quantified: the assets of the corporation and tracking of how we operate the museum.

GRIESMAYER AND MAJUMDAR

That the Staff and Financial Reports as distributed **BE RECEIVED**.

CARRIED

7. T. Wittmann/M. Donachie – Farhi Holdings Development – brief update

M. Donachie informed that he wrote a letter on December 4 to the Farhi Ridout Project team asking that future correspondence be addressed to Board Chair, M. Donachie and Curator Director, T. Wittmann and also advised that Eldon House has not taken or expressed a formal position or opinion on the project. The planning process is still underway with the zoning amendment request coming in early 2021. For more information, K. Gonyou suggested contacting fellow heritage planner L. Dent, who is responsible for this planning file. R. Koudys provided an update that T. Tillmann will check into the status of a Farhi response to heritage concerns raised last year by the Eldon House board.

8. Committee reports

Education Committee (L. Henderson)

The Committee met on November 27 via Zoom and welcomed new member, P. Finneron, who is an asset with her career in the heritage field. B. Ardiel provided an update on the future potential of a new student workbook, with the possibility of it being translated into French. This will assist in reaching wider audiences by expanding availability through broader access and distribution to southwestern Ontario schools. Another idea is a garden workbook to be created for usage this Spring. Virtual tours are being developed for schools and the Memory Lane programme. Currently, heritage sites are working to create virtual content for Museum School, so they can participate and be involved in this programme but waiting to hear back from the local school boards.

Strategy and Innovation Committee (M. Majumdar)

The Committee Chair met with T. Wittmann recently to discuss the process for National Historic Site status. This status is achieved by recognizing historical significance via one of three levels of place, person or event, with more stringent criteria applied than in the past. In the case of Eldon House, the option to highlight a person of historical significance holds the most promise. The committee

plans to meet in January to discuss an approach to focus on Amelia Harris, matriarch of the family and all Harris women diarists in the application.

SPENCER GOLOVCHENKO AND KOUDYS

That the verbal committee reports provided by L. Henderson and M. Majumdar **BE RECEIVED**.

NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Those in attendance joined in as M. Donachie offered a festive toast to celebrate the holiday season.

KOUDYS

Motion to adjourn.

CARRIED

Adjourned at 6:28 PM.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, January 21, 2021