



## **CLAVERRACK HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

### **Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)**

**August 17th, 2026**

#### **Attendance**

Present: Gary Davis, Paula Ptaszek, Bob LaPorta, Thea Schoep, and Noelle Toland.

#### **Approval of Previous Minutes**

The Board reviewed the minutes of the July 20, 2026 meeting.

Bob LaPorta noted that the July minutes incorrectly attributed the Trivia Night report to him rather than Paula Ptaszek. The Board also clarified that Trivia Night is scheduled for September 25, 2026, rather than being tentatively scheduled.

Bob LaPorta moved to approve the July 20, 2026 minutes with corrections. The motion was seconded and approved.

#### **Future Program: Steamboat Days on the Hudson**

Thea Schoep revisited the offer from Captain Stanley Wilcox to present his program, *Steamboat Days on the Hudson*, for the Society.

The Board discussed possible dates and agreed that November would be preferable given the September Trivia Night and other October commitments. Saturday, November 21, from approximately 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., was identified as a possible date and time, subject to Captain Wilcox's availability.

**ACTION:** Thea Schoep will contact Captain Stanley Wilcox regarding his availability for November 21.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Paula Ptaszek presented a written Treasurer's Report.

The Board reviewed recent Square transactions and discussed how Square processing fees are reflected in deposits to the Society's bank account.

The Board agreed that the new one-page Treasurer's Report format is appropriate for future meetings. A copy will be distributed to Board members.

**ACTION:** Noelle Toland will review the Square settings and clarify how processing fees are being handled.

## Grant Activity

The Board discussed upcoming grant opportunities. Potential funding sources discussed included the Bank of Greene County, Stewart's, Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, and Dyson Foundation.

Members noted that grant opportunities generally begin to increase again in the fall and continue into the spring. The Board will continue monitoring opportunities and identifying projects appropriate for available grants.

## Website

Secretary Noelle Toland provided an update on the Society's website and online membership system.

The Society's online membership and donation functions through Square are now live. Noelle reported that Square can also be used to manage membership information, eliminating the need for the separate membership management software previously considered and allowing the Society to manage these functions without an additional software subscription.

Noelle will continue configuring Square to automate thank-you communications for online memberships and donations.

The Board also discussed membership cards and agreed that members who join and pay electronically should receive their thank-you communication and membership card electronically. Members who join by mail with cash or check will receive a physical membership card and acknowledgment by mail. Physical cards may also be provided at in-person events when appropriate.

A motion was made to establish this procedure for membership acknowledgments and cards. Bob LaPorta seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

**ACTION:** Noelle Toland will continue configuring Square to automate thank-you communications for online memberships and donations.

## Membership

The Board discussed current membership dues and the value of Society membership. Members noted that dues are currently low and discussed the possibility of reviewing membership levels and benefits in the future. No changes to membership dues were made at this meeting.

The Board also discussed increasing awareness that Society meetings are open to members and continuing to promote meetings and events through the website and social media.

## **Website Archives and Digitization**

Noelle Toland reported that selected historical posts from the Society's Facebook and Instagram accounts are being added to the website to expand its historical content.

The Society's digital workspace is also ready to receive scanned historical materials. The Board discussed arranging training on the scanner so that materials including historic journals and diaries can begin to be digitized and preserved.

The Board noted gaps in the meeting minutes currently available on the website, particularly for 2025 and early 2026.

**ACTION:** Bob LaPorta will provide Noelle Toland with the digital meeting minutes in his possession so they can be added to the website.

## **Social Media and Historical Research**

Noelle Toland reported continued growth in interest and engagement through the Society's social media channels.

She also reported receiving information regarding a collection of historic photographic negatives taken by Edward E. Heermance, a former Claverack resident and photographer. Research is underway into Heermance, his family, and his connections to Claverack and Hudson. The material may provide content for future historical posts and research.

## **Historic House Tour**

The Board continued discussion of a possible future Historic House Tour.

Members discussed using the restoration of Chris Tine's historic home as a way to begin generating interest in Claverack's historic houses through website and social media content.

A list of Claverack properties on the National Register of Historic Places is also being obtained as a potential resource for future planning.

No member volunteered at this time to chair a House Tour planning committee, and no formal action was taken.

## **Red Mills Historic Marker**

The Board received an update on efforts to obtain a historic marker for Red Mills.

Town Historian Jeannie is conducting the documentary research necessary for a potential Pomeroy Foundation application, including deed research. The Society will assist with promotion and public outreach if the marker project moves forward.

Members also discussed the possibility of incorporating historic photographs, paintings, drawings, and other images of Red Mills into a future exhibit or event associated with the project.

## **Revolutionary War Patriot Recognition**

The Board discussed information received regarding opportunities to recognize Revolutionary War patriots buried in Claverack-area cemeteries.

Bob LaPorta noted that the DAR maintains information concerning Revolutionary War veterans buried locally.

The Board also discussed contacting representatives of the Reformed Dutch Church of Claverack and coordinating with John Carpenter of the Sons of the American Revolution regarding possible recognition of local Revolutionary War patriots.

**ACTION:** Bob LaPorta will speak with Town Historian Jeannie regarding obtaining the list of Revolutionary War veterans buried locally.

## **Trivia Night Fundraiser**

The Board continued planning for the Society's Trivia Night fundraiser, scheduled for September 25, 2026, at Old Klaverack Brewery.

The brewery will provide prizes for the event.

Noelle Toland reported that Trivia Night is listed on the Society's website calendar and will also be promoted as a Facebook event. Promotional materials will identify the event as a collaboration with Old Klaverack Brewery.

The Board authorized the purchase of colored paper for printing promotional flyers.

**ACTION:** Noelle Toland will create and promote the Facebook event for Trivia Night.

## **Bylaws and Constitution**

The revised bylaws are currently available on the Society's website in draft form.

The Board initially discussed voting on the revised bylaws at the September meeting following the required 30-day review period. During discussion, Bob LaPorta identified inconsistencies between the proposed bylaws and the Society's Constitution, particularly concerning officer terms and staggered trustee terms.

The Board agreed that the Constitution should be restored to the website in draft form and reviewed alongside the proposed bylaws.

The Board will use the coming month to reconcile the Constitution and bylaws and revisit both documents at the September meeting.

**ACTION:** Restore the Constitution to the Society's website in draft form for review alongside the proposed bylaws.

## Membership Development

The Board received information regarding Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) as a possible method of reaching Claverack-area residents who are not currently Society members. The service would allow promotional material to be distributed throughout selected postal routes.

Additional information regarding the program will be circulated for review. Design work could be completed internally, reducing the cost of a future mailing.

The Board also reviewed a draft renewal letter intended for members whose dues are not current. The revised draft will be circulated to Board members, and the Board expressed support for proceeding with a membership renewal mailing.

**ACTION:** Circulate additional information regarding EDDM for Board review.

**ACTION:** Circulate the revised membership renewal letter and proceed with the renewal mailing.

## Mailing Address

The Board confirmed that the Society may use the Town of Claverack's Post Office Box V in Mellenville, New York, as its mailing address.

Mail sent to the Society at that address will be collected from the Town office.

## Additional Program Opportunities

The Board discussed an offer from an author whose forthcoming book relates to the history of Mum Bett. The author, who lives in Massachusetts, proposed a virtual author talk and question-and-answer program.

Members discussed the possibility of partnering with other local organizations or libraries to broaden participation in a virtual program. The proposal will be explored further.

The Board also discussed resources related to Revolutionary War history and opportunities to share additional local historical material through the Society's website and social media.

Noelle Toland reported that she is working to develop a social media series featuring material from Town Historian Jeane, who has expressed interest in participating.

## Adjournment

There being no further business, Bob LaPorta moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and approved.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Noelle Toland  
Secretary  
Claverack Historical Society