



## Minutes

### Royal Oak Historical Commission Meeting

September 25, 2024, 7:00 p.m.  
Orson Starr House Museum  
3123 North Main Street  
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Present: Patrick Andras  
Alex Kerrigan  
Kathy Putnam  
Nancy Robinson  
Richard Karlowski  
Isaac Wolf

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#### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm.

#### 2. Roll Call

#### 3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Kathy Putnam  
Seconded by: Patrick Andras

Motion to approve the September 25, 2024 historical commission meeting agenda was approved.

#### 4. Public Comment

Resident from neighborhood attended. He has been passing by Orson Starr House Museum and then saw meeting posted.

#### 5. Approval of Minutes

Kathy Putnam wanted to have the minutes double-checked meeting dates were correct. After that was confirmed discussion closed.

Moved by: Kathy Putnam  
Seconded by: Richard Karlowski

Motion to approve the June 26, 2024 historical commission meeting minutes was approved.

#### 6. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Rick Karlowksi reported that last update he was able to obtain from the Finance Department was dated July 1 2024; therefore he did not have an accurate report. He states there is approximately \$11,400 in the fund balance.

There were no reimbursements to approve. Staff liaison Schwanger stated if there are purchases needed she can arrange to meet members to put on the her city-issued purchase credit card so volunteer members are not without personal funds.

## **7. Historic and Community Group Reports**

### **7.a Interclub**

Kathy Putnam attended Sept meeting there were only eight members present. She said prior to Covid meetings had about 30 in attendance. Meetings going forward will be held on Thursdays at 9:00am. After reviewing the upcoming meeting topics and examining the goals the HC had for attending - raise awareness and increase attendance at HC events - Chair Kerrigan suggested to take a break for a year.

Moved by: Kathy Putnam  
Seconded by: Isaac Wolf

Motion to not renew membership to the Interclub Council for a year was approved.

Motion Adopted

#### **7.a.1 Meeting Schedule**

### **7.b Historic District Study Committee**

Patrick Andrus gave an update about the Historic Context Report. There is a new representative from Chronicle and he will be redoing to add the story - context - around our resources. He will update monthly via Teams at HDSC meetings if any HC members wish to attend they are welcome.

### **7.c Orson Starr Open House**

September 8th open house started with light attendance but the last hour it picked up greatly. Volunteer docent Don Calder helped by staying the entire day.

## **8. New Business**

### **8.a October Open House**

October 13 will be the next Open House. Chair Kerrigan will buy cider and doughnuts for refreshments. SL Schwanger said she will get name tags ordered for members and volunteer docents for the open houses and events.

### **8.b PBS Interview**

Flyer Paranormal has garnered some interest and Chair Kerrigan will be interviewed for the October 5th segment of One Detroit - Halloween Happenings around Metro Detroit. SL Schwanger will provide RO logo jacket for her to wear for the interview.

### **8.c Halloween Paranormal Tours**

Two tours are scheduled for the upcoming weekend September 27 and 28. Flyer Paranormal has been prompt providing the certificates of insurance in advance of each event.

### **8.d Pests**

Chair Kerrigan reported she has found evidence of pests inside the house. There is a hole in the closet on the first floor. The pest appears to have chewed the hole to get into the closet but has not been able to gain any access to the rest of the museum on first or second floors. There also evidence they have been in the basement and this is likely where there are getting into the house from outside.

## **9. Unfinished Business**

### **9.a Painting**

Exterior painting and roof replacement led to larger discussion of various maintenance issues. The group created a list and SL Schwanger will reach out to the operations manager at Department of Public Services. This includes easy immediate needs and long-term more involved projects:

Mulch - delivered to driveway for HC members to distribute to flower beds

Hole Closet Wall - closet on first floor needs the hole previously mentioned to be patched to close the access for the pests to insure they do not gain access to the first / second floors

Gutters - cleaned and also repairs needed in some areas

Basement Flooding - part of bigger issue problems but hopefully addressing the gutters will alleviate some of this

Sprinkler System - needs to be repaired (more critical in spring)

Exterior Painting - HC members will explore getting vendor familiar with historically designated properties to ensure things like painting windows closed can be repaired and not repeated and to paint in colors manner of the time (also spring project). Will need certificate of appropriateness from Historic District Commission.

Roof - roof is at end of life and needs replacement as soon as possible to prevent any damage to the interior and this can also be a contributing

factor to the basement flooding. Will also require HDC approval and discussions have begun with them about approved alternate materials rather than cedar shakes which can replicate the look while being more cost effective and energy efficient and sustainable. The RO HDC does NOT mandate original materials as some HDC in Michigan do because they do want properties to be more sustainable.

SL Schwanger to send email to the DPS operations director.

**9.b 180 Year Celebration**

HC will continue to plan this event for September 2025. SL Schwanger will contact the police chief about having their staff create a route for a 1.8k run/walk - hope of route to Historical Society Museum and/or Almon Starr Home.

**9.c Roof Repair | Replacement**

See a. Painting for full discussion on all maintenance concerns.

**10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14pm.