

Informal Meeting to Discuss Where as an Organization we are Going January 31, 2026

A meeting was held to primarily discuss the future for the Black Tavern, specifically in what direction does the Tavern do we go from here. After a wonderful breakfast the discussion started with forming a committee to find a replacement for the caretaker position. There was a discussion on whether the caretaker could be a board member. In past years, it was relayed that there could be a conflict and therefore the caretaker could not be a voting member (although invited to attend meetings). Whether they attended or not, the board needed a 'caretakers' report before each meeting. Even though Bob Ducharme is the current caretaker, he also sits on the board (and chairs many committees), so this has not been a problem. After discussion it was agreed that the caretaker can sit on the board, but must reclude himself on all votes that pertain to matters the caretaker could benefit from. It was agreed that the Executive Committee along with Tom Boyd would comprise the Search Committee. Once a candidate (or two) has been singled down, they will appear before the complete board for their questions/consideration. There was a discussion on how we should advertise the position. We decided to put something in the Newsletter that would tell people we are looking, but not technically advertise. Bob showed us a copy of his job description (and Marc took a picture and forwarded it to all members) which is still a very good base to what we need now. Some things need to be tweaked, but a good start.

Candidates for the Caretaker Position

Linda Bazinet relayed that she had received a call from Mark Goodney. Mark is a friend of Chuck Squires who told him about the opening. Mark and his partner are interested in the Caretaker position at the Tavern and when he called, regaled Linda with his qualifications (he is a woodworker, his father was a woodworker, his partner is a landscaper, etc.). Linda relayed to him that a search committee had not yet been formed, but she would pass on his information. Apparently, Mark contacted a number of people on the board to make sure he had an opportunity to interview. After our meeting Mark called Bob Ducharme to see how the meeting went, and whether a search committee had been formed and to let him know how interested he is in the position.

Also interested in the position is Eric Clearwater. Eric and his wife were the caretakers before Bob took it over in 2009.

Will and Pam also know of someone they think could be a good choice for the position. Although not told of the position yet, Andrew Casavant is a music teacher and manager of the Music Store in Southbridge, and doubles as a handy man. He is in his late 30's and has a 14-year-old daughter. Hezekiah Healy is Andrew's 6Xgreat grandfather through the Williams line.

Housekeeping Information:

- We now have a credit card. Will will take care of making sure the proper people have access.
- A handout was given to those present with the boards contact information, along with a list of dates of 2026 meetings.
- Will relayed that we received the final check from the Nancy Vajcovec estate for \$7,500.
- We need a new Newsletter Chairman (with the completion of the 2026 newsletter, Bob is stepping down).
- We need a new Programs Chairman (once all programs are set for 2026, Bob is stepping down).

- As a member of the Historical Society of Dudley, Dave Proulx relayed that they are trying to get the Declaration of Independence read on the steps of the Congregational Church on July 4th 2026 in celebration of the Country's 250 anniversary. Also at that time, they are trying to get Nichols, the Catholic Church and the Congregational Church to ring their bells all at noon on the 4th.
- There was a discussion on how we get more people to visit the Tavern. One way may be to get in touch with the history department of Shepherd Hill or other schools to make them aware when we have a program that their students may benefit from.
- Nancy and Scott Roy along with Pam Williams are working on a Members Appreciation Picnic this summer. It was agreed that August 1st would be a good time to have it. We are looking at having hamburgers, hot dogs, etc., and to have games. There was also discussion on what kind of music we might want to have. A 'Save the Date' will go out in the Newsletter, but an email with requests for RSVP will also go out closer to the event.

After we finished our discussion, we cleaned up, and then helped take the Christmas decorations down.

Those present: E. Bazinet, L. Bazinet, B. Ducharme, B. Grzyb, M. Moseley, W. Moseley, A. Poirier, D. Proulx, N. Roy, S. Roy, P. Williams