

Newbury Historical Society
Minutes of Special Meeting on Newspaper Digitization Project
February 18, 2015

Board members present: Bill Weiler, Margie Weiler, Deane Geddes, Ashley Geddes, Paula Falkowski, and Claire Vanatta

Bill called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.

Newspaper Digitization Project

Bill showed a letter from the Richards Free Library asking area historical societies to contribute to a project to digitize their holdings of area newspapers. He gave some background information on previous work with these newspapers including Tracy Messer's copies of selected columns that expanded to cover a period of 5 – 10 years. Bill later copied images from these newspapers for another 4-5 years onto thumb drives from which he made prints, and which Paula is in the process of indexing. The new project involves making a complete set of digital images along with text extracted using Optical Character Recognition (OCR) which will in turn be indexed. The entire collection will be available online.

Several months ago, Bill was thinking about how useful the town columns were and how time consuming it was to go to the library to get prints of the columns. He decided to see how much it would cost to get the microfilms digitized. When he discovered that he would have to get permission from the owner, he called the library. When he described what he wanted to do, he learned that the library had already started a project a year before to, not only digitize, but also make the files searchable. The project was dropped when the original benefactor backed out. After extensive discussion with a library representative, he offered his own financial contribution and also suggested that they start with a fresh print from the master microfilm that is now at New England Micrographics. The Library now needs to raise about \$5-6,000 and has asked the historical societies in the 10 neighboring towns to contribute. So far, 2 have pledged \$1,000 each, one is considering a contribution, and one has not replied after an initial inquiry.

After some discussion, Deane made a motion that we pledge \$1,000 towards this project and that we keep the agenda item open if an additional contribution is needed. Paula seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Margie Weiler, Secretary

MEETING DATES:

Board Meetings (2nd Thursday, odd months):

March 12

May 14

July 9

September 10

November 12

Annual Meeting: August 2