

For those who were unable to attend the 2020 Annual Meeting, here are the highlights:

Chris Ortwein, Bronson Plocus and Patti Rohrbach were voted in as new BHDA Board members for three year terms (2020 – 2022). Chris will work with Tim Shannon as she transitions into the lead Membership role. Bronson will remain as an At-Large member and Patti will helm Grants.

The proposed Mission Statement was introduced, discussed and approved by the assembled members in accordance with the Bylaws. Prior to the vote, several members asked for an explanation of each of the “bullet points”, particularly regarding “promoting cultural and civic engagement for residents that live within the District and beyond.” Alan Lowcher, President, BHDA, explained that the proposed Mission Statement realizes the direction that the members want to take the BHDA, as expressed in the 2019 Town Hall, to become more engaged with residents and events within the City of Bethlehem.

Mark Nebbia, Chair, Holiday House Tour 2020, provided a status report on preparations to date, and where help was needed on various subcommittees. He also announced that net proceeds from the Tour would be shared among the BHDA current grant program, Historic Bethlehem Museum and Sites (HBMS) Gemeinhaus shutter restoration project (in support of “tentative” World Heritage Site designation for Historic Moravian Bethlehem), and a local charity to be named in the future. The Tour date is December 12, 2020, from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM.

Lori Ann Wukitsch, Vice President and Managing Director, HBMS, provided an update on the World Heritage Site designation process. Historic Moravian Bethlehem is “in the running” and a site visit by the UNESCO committee representatives is the next step. Bruce Haines, Managing Partner, Historic Hotel Bethlehem, unveiled the new “Visit Historic Bethlehem” website: it is informative, detailed, and fun. Check it out.

The next BHDA Board meeting will be held February 25, 2020, at 6:30 PM in the Laros Room, BAPL Main Branch, on Church Street. The Board meetings are open to any member who wishes to attend.