

Muscatine County Historic Preservation Commission OFFICIAL PUBLIC AND MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

12 Noon, Tuesday, February 17, 2026

At West Liberty Historic Depot (405 N. Elm St, West Liberty)

Members in attendance (X-present, E-excused, A-absent)

Chris Brase	X	Bill Koellner	X
Lynn Pruitt	X	Dave Lerch	X
Becky Allgood	X	Sue O'Donnell	X
Michelle Elizondo	E	Elise Shield	A
Joe Harper	X	Todd Stamner	E
John Kiwala	A		

Approval:

- A. Meeting called to order by Chair Chris Brase
- B. Agenda- Motion to approve by Harper, 2nd by, Koellner. Motion passed
- C. January 20, 2025, minutes- Motion to approved by Harper 2nd by Pruitt. Motion passed

Old Business:

- A. **Historic Transportation-** Pruitt and O'Donnell reported that letters went out and signs are ready to be ordered. A discussion was held about putting signs on putting signs on public land which is the easier way to go if possible. It was announced that we have installed 256 historic signs in the county to date and that we will be looking into getting more to put on all historic sites in county.
- B. **Underground Railroad –** Brase did extensive research on this subject. His findings are attached to these minutes.
- C. **Iowa Economic Development Authority –** Next CLG Grant may open in June pending funding. Brase reported that the Stagecoach Inn was not eligible to apply for the Iowa Rural Heritage Revitalization Grant.
- D. **Fruit and Vegetable Industry –** Signs. Letters will go out in February to property owner, regarding signage that will be installed in the spring.
- E. **Century & Heritage Farms -** A discussion was held on Century & Heritage Farms and it was decided that we would wait until after the Planning for Preservation project is done to see if this should be added to our list of projects.
- F. **West Liberty Historic Neighborhood CLG Grant –** The Historian has completed the written research on 48 homes out of 63 possible homes so far. Allgood asked if after this survey is completed West Liberty and Wilton could go together for a grant to put these neighborhoods on the National Register of Historic Places. A discussion was held.
- G. **Fairport Fish Hatchery –** Brase reported that the Earth Day event will be April 25 and has asking for volunteers from this group.
- H. **Muscatine County Fair –** Dates for the fair are July 15 – 19. A discussion was held on getting a space and partnering with other historic groups in the county. The group agreed that our commission should take the lead on this and that we would want a space at the fair that would include these historic groups.

New Business:

A. **Next Meeting**-Will be March 17th.

Meeting adjourned at 1:10 pm.

Minutes submitted by:

Rebeckah Allgood

Minutes Approved Date: ___/___/___ by: _____

Date	Fact	Citation/Source
1824 Jun 23	Albert F Keith Born Columbiana County Ohio a dedicated abolitionist buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery.	Obituary, Muscatine Journal 25, Mar, 1910 Page 5
1856	Came to West Liberty helped to build and run old flouring mill	Obituary, Muscatine Journal 25, Mar, 1910 Page 5
1857	steam powered flour mill was built located at Clay and Third streets	One Hundred years of history: commemorating a century of progress in West Liberty community. Published 1938: Industries at West Liberty by Mr & Mrs Frank Weber One Hundred years of history: commemorating a century of progress in West Liberty community. Published 1938: Industries at West Liberty by Mr & Mrs Frank Weber
1858	Brown led the liberation of a group of enslaved Missourians across Iowa	1866 July Annals of Iowa Page 715
1858-59	After wintering in Kansas, he guided them north through Nebraska and Iowa	
1859 Feb	John Brown and 12 freedom seekers arrive in Springdale, Iowa last two weeks at Springdale, awaiting rail transportation arrangements.	
1859 Mar 9	W. Penn. Clarke undertook to obtain a closed box car Miller (rail agent) was asked for a box car and cost, paid \$50 and needed car at once down at the mill party arrives in West Liberty and stays overnight at Keith's Mill.	1866 July Annals of Iowa Page 716

- 1859 Mar 10 the group boards an empty boxcar at the mill and departs on the Chicago-Rock Island Railroad for Chicago
- marked one of the final Iowa legs of Brown's escort of freedom seekers toward Canada
- 1859 Oct Brown returns east, later launching the Harpers Ferry raid in October 1859.
- 1859 Dec 2 John Brown executed his raid on Harper Ferry less than nine months after leaving West Liberty
- 1871 Thomas W. Rogers in company with C. Wiestflog purchased the Mill, it is run by steam, located near central part of town, conveniently near the Depot and switch-track and has capacity for 50 barrels/day and agrinding capacity for chop feed from 150-200 bushel daily
- Portrait and Biographical Album, Muscatine County, Iowa, Acme Publishing co 1899 Page 468
- 1876 Rodgers & Hand Prop'r's flour mill, Clay St
Caffee's History & Directory 1876, Page 315
- 1876 Hand & Rogers, proprs West Liberty Mills, cor 4th and Clay
Caffee's History & Directory 1876, Page 315
- 1876 Hand A A, (west Liberty Mills), res Clay
Owen's Gazetteer 7 Directory of Muscatine County Iowa;
- 1879 West Liberty contains a large steam flouring Mill
F.E. Owen Publisher 1879: Page 129
- 1879 Messers. Rogers & Rambach are proprietors of a flouring mill
Owen's Gazetteer 7 Directory of Muscatine County Iowa;
- 1879 Rogers & Rambach, (T W R & M R), proprs City Mills
F.E. Owen Publisher 1879: Page 132
- ?? Rogers & Rambach were owners of one of West Liberty's
One Hounded years of history: commemorating a
early flour mills, taking over the former Keith Brothers mill
century of progress in West Liberty community.
sometime after the Civil War.
Published 1938: Industries at West Liberty by Mr & Mrs
Frank Weber

Operated by Rogers & Weisflaugh

1888

Keith's Mill was destoried by Fire

Property owned by Tom Rogers: Mill burned down; laundry burned down

One Houndred years of history: commemorating a century of progress in West Liberty community.

Published 1938: Industries at West Liberty by Mr & Mrs

Frank Weber

One Houndred years of history: commemorating a century of progress in West Liberty community.

Published 1938: Industries at West Liberty by Mr & Mrs

Frank Weber

One Houndred years of history: commemorating a century of progress in West Liberty community.

Published 1938: Our Old Buildings by Allie Sissell

History of Johnson County Iowa 1836-1882 Page
465-470
