CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by RSRPD Chair Elaine Freeman at 5:30 p.m. In attendance were SVHS President Vicki Spilka, Vice President Judy Pepiot, Secretary Alex Walker, and the following RSRPD Staff: Board Member Kate O’Brien, Strathearn Historical Park Specialist Carolyn Valdez, Director of Planning and Maintenance Wayne Nakaoka, and Administrative Secretary Barbara Meinel.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 9, 2019 MEETING: Secretary Walker moved to approve the minutes as presented, which were approved by a unanimous vote.

UPDATE ON REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR TO PROVIDE LIVE-IN CARETAKER SERVICES AT ROBERT P. STRATHEARN HISTORICAL PARK: Nakaoka reported that an ad for Proposals for an Independent Contractor to Provide Live-In Caretaker Services at Robert P. Strathearn Historical Park was placed in the Ventura County Star and the Simi Valley Acorn. Historical Society Secretary Walker stated that she had received a few calls about the caretaker position at the park, and she referred them to the Park District. Nakaoka stated that the deadline for submission of proposals is 5:00 p.m. on Friday, November 22, 2019.

REPORT ON HERITAGE HALLOWEEN EVENT HELD AT STRATHEARN HISTORICAL PARK ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19: Ms. Walker reported that it was a wonderful event, and that some of the costumes worn by the children who attended were very creative. Some of the Historical Society Board members and docents attended, and overall attendance was up from last year. It was estimated that there were between 500-600 participants, based upon the amount of candy boxes that were distributed. The Historical Society is going to purchase clickers to better count attendees at future events held at Strathearn Park. Ms. Valdez added that Recreation Coordinator Jeannie Liss, who chaired and coordinated the entire event, did a fantastic job.
VI. REPORT ON DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS EVENT HELD ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27 AT STRATHEARN HISTORICAL PARK: Secretary Walker reported that the gross revenue received from the event is estimated to be about $11,200. Attendance was up from last year, with an estimate of well over 1,000 attendees. Chair Freeman asked if there were any reporters present at the event, and Ms. Valdez responded that there was a reporter who came from Moorpark College, and Vice President Pepiot said a representative from The Acorn was taking pictures at the event. Sponsorships for the event were up, and this is an important fundraiser for the Historical Society.

Ms. Walker also reported that she walked around the park during the event and some attendees were asking questions about the park. She gave them brochures and suggested that they follow the Historical Society on Facebook.

VII. REVIEW OF HISTORICAL SOCIETY’S GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND DINNER HELD ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1: The annual attendance at the membership meeting and dinner was higher than expected. The entertainment was good and the guests enjoyed the Jeopardy game that was played. There were more homemade items for dinner and the menu worked out better than in past years with the Historical Society providing the dessert this year. Overall it was a nice event.

VIII. UPDATE ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8th HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE AT STRATHEARN HISTORICAL PARK: Park Specialist Valdez stated that the open house, which is listed on the Historical Society’s website, will take place on Sunday, December 8 from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. at Strathearn Historical Park. Linda Bosley is chairing the event, which will be free to the public. There will be performances by various musical groups, and Santa will be in attendance.

IX. OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST: Nakaoka reported that the 9” El Camino Real bell that the Committee wanted to purchase to display at the park is not available. The choices are between a 9-1/2” tall Guidepost Desk Bell and an 8.25” diameter bell. The Committee determined that they prefer the 8.25” bell, which should be engraved with the words El Camino Real. The bell will be put on display in a window in the adobe.

Chair Freeman asked how the Colony House is going. Nakaoka responded that the project is going well. The house has been relocated to its permanent location, the two sections of the house have been put together, and the wood siding is being installed. Chair Freeman asked how many rooms are in the house, and Nakaoka responded that there are two bedrooms upstairs and five rooms downstairs.

Chair Freeman also asked about getting an estimate for how much it would cost to finish the interior of each room so that some fundraising activities might be started. Ms. Walker mentioned that she has a template that could be used to make categories of who might donate
supplies and materials for the interior of the house or who might sponsor purchases for the interior rooms.

The possibility of the Chamber's Leadership Program taking on a role in the remodeling of a room in the interior of the Colony House was also mentioned.

Ms. Walker also mentioned that she had been contacted by an award winning Historical Drama Company that does specific historical presentations at different locations. They are coming to this area in June of next year, and might be able to do a Simi specific presentation as a fundraiser. Ms. Walker added that she had been told they would be willing to cut their normal fee, and she is planning to discuss the idea with the Historical Society Board.

Secretary Walker thanked Director of Planning & Maintenance Nakaoka for sending a crew over to Strathearn to relocate and split the electrical in the Visitors Center. Ms. Valdez has been able to expand the touch area, and the electrical split will enable them to place a cash register by the counter.

Ms. Walker also told the Committee that the architect who is remodeling Union Bank on Los Angeles Avenue called Strathearn Park to see if there are any digitized historical photographs kept at Strathearn that could possibly be used to decorate a wall in the remodeled bank. He mentioned the possibility of asking his client if he would be willing to make a donation to Strathearn for use of the photographs. The architect was invited to go to Strathearn if he so wishes to see the available digitized photographs.

Ms. Walker asked Nakaoka to advise the Committee regarding how staff is being moved around. She is concerned about how much time Carolyn is spending on Park District items. The policy is that Ms. Valdez's time is to be split 50/50 between the Historical Society and the Park District, but it seems that she has been spending more time on Park District matters, especially since Recreation Coordinator Liss was moved to Oak Park. Ms. Valdez has been instrumental in increasing revenue for the Historical Society through weddings and events booked at the park, and her work on Historical Society items is extremely important. Nakaoka responded that some ideas are being considered, such as putting Strathearn Park under Recreation, which has a larger staff, since the park is more of a permitted type facility. He also mentioned that the Veterans Day event, which has taken quite a bit of Ms. Valdez's time, may also be moved to Recreation, but nothing has been decided yet.

Director Freeman said the Historical Society ladies are doing a fantastic job.

Ms. Walker told the Committee that the Historical Society Board has some fun things in mind for 2020, including a possible Roaring 20's event.
X. SET TIME AND DATE FOR NEXT MEETING: Monday, December 2, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.

XI. ADJOURN MEETING: The meeting was adjourned by Chair Freeman at 6:00 p.m.

Wayne Nakaoka
Director of Planning & Maintenance