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Leadership Changes at Portsmouth Historical Society

Portsmouth Historical Society Welcomes Ellen Fineberg

Portsmouth Historical Society Board of Directors is very pleased to announce that Ellen Fineberg has been engaged to serve as Interim Executive Director beginning January 1, 2019. Current Executive Director Kathleen Soldati will be retiring December 31, 2018 after three years of exemplary leadership.

“We are delighted that Ellen Fineberg has agreed to accept the position of Interim Executive Director during this time of transition, enabling the Historical Society's Board of Trustees to carefully plan and conduct a successful search for the next director over the coming months.” said Martha Fuller Clark, vice chair of the PHS Board of Trustees. Fuller Clark noted that the use of interim executive directors is now considered a “best practice” for institutions when undergoing a change in leadership.

Fineberg, a 30-year Portsmouth resident, is an active member of the community. Her public service includes thirteen years sitting on the Historic District Commission; guiding the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Arts and Culture; serving on the Portsmouth Advocates; co-authoring Portsmouth's Cultural Plan and being a board member of Art-Speak! Portsmouth's Cultural Commission.

“Ellen brings just the right combination of skills and experience to Portsmouth Historical Society to serve on an interim basis - from

her nonprofit expertise and her passion for community service to her familiarity with historic Portsmouth and the community at large. She is ideally suited for our current situation. The board is thrilled that she will be leading the organization beginning in the new year,” said Portsmouth Historical president Dan Hoefle.

Fineberg has also held nonprofit leadership roles at the Peabody Essex Museum, the Women’s Business Center and NH Kids Count. She currently serves on the Board of the Portsmouth Athenaeum and helped coordinate TEDxPortsmouth 2018.

Dan Hoefle points to the evolution of Portsmouth Historical in recent years under outgoing director Soldati. Hoefle added, “People have been so impressed by the Edmund Tarbell and Gertrude Fiske art exhibitions. During her tenure, Kathleen built a stellar professional staff and volunteer support system. She oversaw expanded programming, needed upgrades to our buildings and the establishment of Portsmouth400. As a result of her work and that of the entire staff over the past three years, memberships and visitor interactions have increased dramatically. We are grateful for all Kathleen accomplished during her tenure.”

Portsmouth Historical Society, is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 nonprofit that operates Discover Portsmouth, a facility housing exhibition galleries, a welcome center and museum shop, and the John Paul Jones House Museum and Garden, both in downtown Portsmouth. Both locations are open seasonally, seven days a week. Discover Portsmouth is located at 10 Middle Street; the John Paul Jones House Museum and Garden is located across the street at 43 Middle Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801. For more information, call 603-436-8433 or visit www.portsmouthhistory.org