

Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan
Executive Director Report for Board of Trustees Meeting
August 2017 – September 2017

1. Reaccreditation:

- a. Waiting to hear reply for AAM on reaccreditation site visit.
- b. Working on updating employee handbook. The insurance company supplied us with a comprehensive template that is being revised to align with the Besser Museum by-laws.
- c. Working on updating Code of Ethics manual.

2. Besser Foundation Annual Support Letter: The Foundation Board is meeting at the Besser Museum on Thursday, September 14th to review grant requests. The Besser Museum letter requests the following for 2018:

- a. The Besser Museum request \$220,000 in operational support
- b. \$30,000 for Collection & Exhibit Manager position
- c. An additional \$10,000 for employee compensation
- d. A special project request of \$200,000 for the renovation of the Native American exhibit.

3. 2017 -2018 Budget:

- a. Treasurer, Judy Suszek and I have been working on the fiscal budget. The budget will be presented to the Board of Trustees at the September Board meeting.

4. Facilities:

- a. Bliss Painting is finishing up the Maltz Bank. The sign still needs to be painted
- b. Meridian Construction is working on the back patio. The rain slowed down the progress. However, the work that has been completed so far has stopped the rain from coming into the storage area. They should be done with the entire project shortly.
- c. Zann Construction completed the back-loading dock. We now need to install guard rails. We have secured a bid from Stevens.
- d. Investigating the possibility of contracting with someone to help with cleaning the museum, i.e. bathrooms, floors, etc.

5. Art:

- a. **Best Foot** non-juried art entries are being accepted from Sept 1st through Sept 15th. There have been lots of first time art exhibit participants. The exhibit will open on October 21st and run through Dec. 31st. Funds raised from Best Foot will go towards matting and framing the next fine art collection.
- b. Judy Dawley's second exhibit opened Sunday, August 13th and will run through the end of September. Her second book is for sale in the gift store. Her books are also being sold at Augie and Peggy Matuzak's new art gallery on Second Ave.

6. Planetarium:

- a. Tad attended the Spitz Training July 22nd.
- b. Power backup equipment has been purchased. Plans to install it are being made.
- c. Planetarium attendance continues to increase. August attendance was 439 people
- d. Tad will be attending the Great Lakes Planetarium Conference in October.
- e. Tad will be a guest on Bay108 radio station with Darrel Kelly every Friday morning in September. Hopefully this will turn into a regular slot. Tad will also be a guest on the WBKB morning news show periodically.
- f. Tad and John Heath will be partnering with Dark Sky events with both Negwegon State Park and Rockport State Park.
- g. Tad will be partnering with the Friends of TBNMS/NOAA for a glass bottom boat Dark Sky event on Friday, October 6th. This will be a featured event during the Lake Huron Discovery Tour.

7. Exhibits:

- a. Native American Exhibit project funded by the Cook Fund is underway.
 - i. Local historian and genealogist has compiled lots of information on the native families from the Hubbard Lake area.
 - ii. Frank Ettawageshik has agreed to work with the museum in a contracted capacity as the Native American advisor on the committee.
 - iii. The next few steps for the committee will be:
 1. drafting a strategic plan to request RFPs from exhibit firms
 2. Continue to research families and relatives in from regional area
 3. Collect oral histories of families, relatives, and citizens who knew local native American families from the area.
 4. Audit footage capture during the LHDT for repurposing for this project.
- b. Season of Light Exhibit
 - i. Work has begun on the plans for Season of Light. The exhibit opening, or the Season of Light reception is set for Saturday, November 18th. We will need to apply for a liquor license and book JJs catering for this event.

8. Great Lakes Fisheries Heritage Exhibit Committee:

Katherine V:

- a. The fundraiser went well raising a total \$3,373 after expenses.
- b. Tuffy has continued to make great progress on the Katherine V exhibit.
- c. The concrete pad and structure to protect and display the engine are underway.
 - i. Plans are also being discussed to get the engine back to the museum.

Chinook: Besser Museum will work with Good Design Group to create the conceptual plan with the \$10,000 Great Lakes Trust Fund gran

9. Marketing:

- a.** Marketing is ongoing. Marketing is reaching throughout Northern Michigan.
- b.** Marketing for Fall Harvest Fossil Fest has begun. Lafarge and Specification Stone Products will sponsor this event. Admission will be \$1 each – Planetarium \$1 each.
- c.** Besser Museum will participate in the last Alpena Art Walks on Friday, September 29th.

10. Education:

- a.** Kat and Tad ran their first Full Steam Ahead on Saturday, September 9th. There were 100 visitors to this event. This event is being funded by the Alpena Youth & Rec grant.
- b.** Kat did a lot of research and development for the activities station. There will be a total of 6 more Full Steam Ahead programs.
- c.** Fall Harvest Fossil Fest planning is taking place. The event is Saturday, October 7th.
- d.** Evaluation and assessment tools are being created to capture important visitor experience data.
- e.** Kat attended the Michigan Museum Association meeting at the Hartwick Pines visitor center in Grayling.

11. Gift Store:

- a.** New store products are always being researched. We are looking into Besser Museum Christmas ornaments. Gift Store sales are up again this month.
- b.** Ideas to marketing the gift store for the holiday shopping season are being discussed.

12. Other:

- a.** Working on the newsletter
- b.** Working to update the membership letters
- c.** Working on the Lake Huron Discovery Tour promotional pieces
- d.** Managing daily accounting tasks.