

**Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan  
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at 4:30 pm**

**Board Members Present:** Claudia Chapman, Jim Conboy, Clarence Cross, Jim Johnson, Michelle Miller, Diane Speer, Judy Suszek, Mike Beaulac, Sue Stender, Gary Goren, Ashley Peterson, Marie Fielder

**Others Present:** Executive Director Chris Witulski

**Absent:** Jean Thomas, Janet Young(excused), Mike Ableidinger(excused)

**Call to Order:** President Michelle Miller called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

**Minutes:** Jim Conboy moved to accept the minutes of the January 2022 meeting. Tuffy Cross supported. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Sue Stender presented the Treasurer's Report. Her report was accepted as presented and is available at the museum's website.

**Director's Report:**

1. ED Chris Witulski submitted a written Director's Report to the board accessible online at the museum's website.
2. Capital Project Update: Moran Ironworks is re-designing the seats to incorporate a rounded edge. Moran Ironworks is moving forward with the railing. The redesign of the benches will be shared with trustees. The project should be completed by the end of April.
3. Grant proposal for the Discover Northeast Michigan History exhibit: The grant proposal was shared with trustees and is due by March 1st to First Federal. ED Chris Witulski plans to submit by the end of the week.  
The MCACA grant is due June 1st.
4. Much work is being done behind the scenes: preparing items for storage, cleaning out areas, etc which impacts almost every room in the lower level.
5. Hired a new employee to support the collections work.
6. Total Fire will be back to complete another inspection. Despite the age of some sprinklers (50+ years of age) we are hoping they will continue to pass instruction. Current estimate is roughly \$300 per sprinkler head.

**Ad Hoc Committees:**

1. **Governance:** Judy Suszek reminded the trustees that the committee keeps an ongoing list of potential board members. We have four current board members whose terms expire summer 2022. If anyone would like to recommend someone to join the board, please let Judy or Chris know.
2. **Great Lakes Fisheries Heritage Exhibit:** Jim Johnson gave a brief report on the Chinook project. Currently waiting to hear back on the grant application. The committee is looking forward to painting and continuing the work.
  - A. Kathrine V: Tuffy Cross reported.

3. **Discovery Northeast Michigan History** (Native American exhibit): Chris inquired about any concerns with the name of the exhibit. Discussion occurred regarding a detailed Sloan plan shared with board members and shared information about funding streams for the strategic fundraising components. Further questions were posed regarding the potential use of Granum funds to support the architectural/exhibit master planning phase. As with any large project, an ad hoc committee will be developed - board members are to contact Chris or Michelle if interested. Board members should also revisit the Sloan plan to deepen their understanding of the depth and breadth of this project as well as become familiar with language to support a unified vision.
4. **Fine Art Committee:** Nothing to report this month
5. **Collections Committee:** Claudia Chapman, representing the committee, prepared an artifact accession proposal. **MOTION:** Tuffy Cross made a motion to accept the items as presented into the collections, supported by Mike Beulac. All in favor. Motion carried. The items are as follows:
  - a. Partial roll of textile from Frasier Products Co.
  - B. A National Cash Register Co. Credit System filing case, used at one of the McKim family businesses.
  - C. Five silver cocktail forks from the Alpena Hotel.
  - D. Wooden chest, engraved with "Elias Ericksen, Alpena P.O. Michigan, N. America"

**Old Business:**

**Planet/History Walk:** Later this month there should be information to report regarding the response on the grant.

**"The Town That Wouldn't Die":** Chris said the museum should have the reprinted copies of the books shortly.

**New Business:**

**Board authorization to use Granum funds for the architectural/exhibit master planning phase of the new Discover Northeast Michigan History exhibit.** **MOTION:** Judy Suszek made a motion to use Granum funds for the architectural/exhibit master planning phase of the new Discover Northeast Michigan History exhibit, supported by Gary Goren. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley Peterson  
Acting Board Secretary