

**Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan Board of Trustees**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, February 21, 2023**  
**4:30 p.m.**

*Our mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit authentic articles and artifacts of art, history, and science to inspire curiosity for all ages, foster community pride, and cultivate personal legacy.*

**Board Members:**

**Present:** President Gary Goren, Jim Johnson, Clarence Cross, Judy Suszek, Janet Young, Treasurer Sue Stender, Claudia Chapman, Julie Austin, Sara Winter, Vice President Mike Beaulac, and Jim Conboy (virtual), Michelle Miller (virtual)

**Others Present:** Executive Director Chris Witulski

**Absent:** Dan Florip, Ashley Wilmot

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:40 pm by President Gary Goren

**2. Special guest presentation** by professional website designer Isaac Boda. Isaac shared what steps can be taken to improve the museum's website.

**3. Review January 17, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes for approval (action item).**

Board minutes for January 17, 2023, were reviewed. Motion to approve minutes by Mike Beaulac with support from Janet Young. All in favor, Motion carried.

**4. Treasurer's Report**

- a. A Treasurer's report on January 2023 financials was presented by Sue Stender and filed as presented.

**5. Reports to the Board**

- a. **Director's Report:** A full report was submitted and is accessible online at the museum website.

- i. CPA Marie Williams is preparing an new accounting policy for the Board's consideration based on best practices for museums. This new policy will capitalize exhibits. She plans to present this new policy at the March meeting.

- b. **Ad Hoc Committee:**

- i. **Governance Report:** Judy Suszek will be stepping down after the March meeting. Judy is relocating to Traverse City. Judy asked for other Board members to volunteer to serve on the Governance Committee. Judy is also seeking new board members to take her place on the Board.

- ii. **Great Lakes Fisheries Heritage Exhibit:**

- 1. Chinook Project: Jim Johnson report

- a. Huron Engineering has completed the drawings for the new structure for the Chinook. The drawings will be submitted to the DNR for approval. After which, Huron Engineering will seek construction bids for the project.

- 2. Katherine V: No report

- iii. **Discover Northeast Michigan History Exhibit:**

1. Mike Beaulac: Split Rock Studios has submitted a contract for the project on Tuesday, February 21, 2023. The Board is asked to review the contract and prepare for an electronic vote on Monday, February 27 whether or not to award the contract to Split Rock.
  2. Janet Young and Chris Witulski are pursuing two different Michigan Humanities Grant opportunity. The deadline is March 23. Part of the grant will be used to publish Janet’s research on the Anishinaabe of Northeast Michigan.
    - a. Motion to apply for the Michigan Humanities Grant opportunities by Claudia Chapman with support from Mike Beaulac. All in favor. Motion carried.
- iv. **Fine Art Committee:** No report
- v. **Collections Committee:**
1. Claudia Chapman – Artifact accession proposal.
    - a. Judy Suszek moved to accept the items presented with support from Tuffy Cross. All in favor. Motion carried.
  2. Claudia Chapman – Artifact deaccession proposal.
    - a. Jim Johnson moved to accept the items for deaccession presented with support from Sara Winter. All in favor. Motion carried.
- 6. Old Business:**
- a. Meridian Exterior Projects are waiting for spring for completion.
  - b. Woods & Johnson HVAC project is waiting for spring for completion.
  - c. ADA automatic door opens have been installed. Project complete.
  - d. Planet/History Walk Project. The City was not awarded the grant. Plans to submit for a Youth and Recreation grant are underway.
- 7. New Business:**
- a. Website: The Board agreed to request a proposal from Isaac Boda and seek additional bids from other website design companies.
  - b. Revise Strategic Plan. The Board was asked to review the current 201-2021 Strategic Plan and make suggestions for revisions if necessary or vote to extend the plan through 2024 as is. Discussion and vote will be at the March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.
- 8. Adjourn:**
- The meeting was adjourned at 6:07 pm. The next meeting is March 21, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christine Witulski  
Executive Director