

Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan  
Executive Director Report for Board of Trustees Meeting  
June 2022

**May/June Field Trips:**

1. The staff hosted schools from across Northern Michigan for end of the year field trips.
  - a. In total we had **674 students plus 130 adult chaperons = 804**
2. I handled all the field trips this year, writing the lesson plans and planning the visits, because we did not have an Education Coordinator on staff. I did hire Emily Black to assist with helping teach at different activity stations. Emily will be with us until the end of June. Sarah Honeycutt also helped with an activity station for most of the field trips. The museum also had several volunteers help when needed.

**NEW HISTORY EXHIBIT:**

1. Cornerstone Architects met the deadline needed to submit all the materials with the MCCA grant and the Besser Foundation request.
2. **GRANTS:**
  - a. I will present the grant proposal to the Besser Foundation when they meet at the museum on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.
  - b. The First Federal Legacy Foundation will review our proposal at their June meeting and possibly schedule a meeting at the museum for further discussion.
  - c. The Alpena County Youth and Rec and Alpena County Older Persons were submitted. The Besser Museum is scheduled to present the proposal to the Alpena County Youth Committee no July 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.
  - d. CFNEM Impact Grant is not due until July 15<sup>th</sup>.
3. **FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN MATERIALS:**
  - a. I have been working on the brochure with the editing help of several board members.
  - b. The Board needs to approve the Naming Opportunity levels proposed in the brochure.
    - i. In total, Naming Opportunities could raise \$1,465,000 of the 1.5 million
  - c. Naming Opportunity Policy: I have been doing research on developing a Naming Opportunity Policy, which the museum does not currently have. It is highly recommended agencies have a policy in place. One drafted, the Board will need to review and approve a Naming Opportunity Policy.
4. **EXHIBIT NARRATIVE:** There are several community partners contributing to the project.
  - a. John Caplis at AHS will be helping connect teachers and students to contribute.
  - b. Mary Dunkel at MSU extension also sits on the Alpena County Agricultural Board and will be helping connect the project to content experts in that farming.
  - c. Tim Kuehnlein is contributing to the project.
  - d. Elly Diamond is also contributing to the project helping with the hands-on science.
  - e. Judy Dawley and Sara Winter are also giving oversight to ensure it meets teachers needs for fieldtrips.
  - f. Angela Bruning is connecting the AMA/ESD Great Start instructors to the project to ensure we include 0–5-year-old developmentally appropriate content in the exhibit.
  - g. Besser Museum will continue to reach out to content experts during development.
  - h. Anishinaabe consultants.

## **BUILDING PROJECTS:**

### **HVAC, please refer to Matt's Facility Report for more details.**

- Woods and Johnson started the new chiller on May 18.
- There are few issues that are being worked. Currently the new chiller is not running properly.
- The Besser Museum will receive the final invoice of \$28,050 after everything is inspected and approval is given by R.S. Scott Engineering.
- This final payment will use up the remaining funds held at CFNEM in the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Capital Improvement Fund.

### **MUSEUM EXTERIOR:**

The Capital Improvement projects funded by the Besser Foundation approved \$194,000 Capital Improvement grant are underway.

1. Moran Iron Works: **\$45,000** project.
  - a. Back patio railings are complete.
  - b. The orb sculptures are installed. Omega Electric will be to give us an estimate to have them wired so that they light.
  - c. During the installation process, one of the large windows were damaged. Alpena Glass has ordered a new window, which will take up to two weeks to arrive. Moran Iron Works will cover the cost of the new window.
  - d. To date, the Besser Museum has paid MIW **\$37,286**. The Besser Foundation grant has covered **\$30,000**. Besser Museum has covered **\$7,286**. The Besser Museum will be responsible for the final payment of \$7,714 when the invoice arrives.
2. Meridian Construction: **\$167,000** project
  - a. Meridian will remove the windows/window wells, fix columns and eaves and flowerboxes, and redo the front approach.
  - b. Meridian gave us an estimate in **September 2021** of **\$163,625**. After getting the design for the front approach done and quotes from subcontractors a few weeks ago, and with supply increases, the quote in **June 2021** is **\$174,097**. Besser Foundation grant will cover \$167,000. The Besser Museum will need to cover the additional **\$7,097**. The additional \$7,097 will be paid from the museum's savings, which currently is at \$353,843.72.
  - c. The construction work is scheduled to begin July 11<sup>th</sup>.

### **GREAT LAKES FISHERIES HERITAGE EXHIBIT:**

1. **Chinook:** We were awarded **\$386,500** from the DNR Invasive Species Grant. The grant contract was finalized. The Committee will now proceed with drafting a Request for Quote for the structure to go over the Chinook.
  - a. First Step: The Request for Quotes (RFQ) was approved by the DNR and emailed to four engineering firms. We received two replies which will be submitted for review and approval by the DNR. Once approved, the museum can hire an engineer to do the site work and prepare building documents for the Chinook covering.
  - b. The chosen engineer firm will do the site work and create the Request for Proposals to go out to contractors. The RFP must first be reviewed and approved by the DNR.
  - c. Please refer to Tuffy's and Jim Johnson's reports for more updates.

### **Planetarium:**

1. **Project Problems:** One of the projects has quit working. Johnathan contacted tech support. It may be a fan. Spitz is checking to see if they have a fan or can get parts for the fan. They did say that if they projector must be replaced, they have a refurbished projector that will cost \$12,000 and come with a 90-day warranty. I asked Johnathan to check into a longer warranty. We are still waiting for more information. Matt and Johnathan took the good projector and placed it at the back of the planetarium so we can still run programs on half the dome that people face. We are charging \$3 a show due to the issues.

### **Mics:**

1. I am working with Marie Williams to draft the budget for 2022-23. We are setting up a new way to track special projects separate from our operational budget.
2. Log Cabin Day will take place Saturday, June 25. Some of the activities include:
  - a. Lauren from Hammond Bay Biological Station is bringing a sea lamprey.
  - b. Keith Knecht from Native Ways Traditional Arts, LLC will be a demonstrator.
  - c. The historical buildings will be open for visits.
3. We are still waiting on delivery of The Town That Wouldn't Die.
4. Please refer the Facility Manager's report for details on other facility projects.

### **End of the Year Highlights July 2021 – June 2022**

1. The Museum experienced record-breaking attendance in July 2021.
2. **Log Cabin Restoration Project:**
  - a. Bob Kennel completed the Log Cabin restoration on November 8.
  - b. Nate painted the interior and put a sealant on the floor.
  - c. Sarah has furnished the cabin with educational artifacts.
3. **Great Lakes Fisheries Exhibit:**
  - a. Yockey Excavating landscaped the area between the Katherine V and Chinook to prepare the site for the new connecting dock and future building over the Chinook.
  - b. Tuffy and his volunteer crew built the dock connecting the Kat V and the Chinook.
  - c. Yockey came back and created a handicap accessible path from the Chinook to the sidewalk by the church, and from the sidewalk by the fossil park to the dock leading to the boats.
  - d. Jim Johnson finished painting the Chinook. The covering came off so people could access it for field trips, and the upcoming Log Cabin Day event.
  - e. Progress on building a shelter over the Chinook is in the first phase: We received RFQ's for the engineering work. We now must submit the RFQ's to the DNR for review and approval.
4. **New Summer and Winter Hours of Operation were adopted.**
  - a. The museum will be closed on Sundays
  - b. Summer Hours, June - August: Monday – Saturday
    - i. The museum will be opened to the public 10AM – 5PM
  - c. Winter Hours, September – May : The museum is closed to public on Tuesdays
    - i. The museum will be opened to the public 10AM – 4PM

**5. Season of Light Membership Drive:**

- a. We decided the annual Season of Light Gala would be for Museum Members Only. This increased our membership revenue. We gained 69 new members and had several members increase their level. Overall revenue from memberships for Nov/Dec 2022 was \$8,425, an increase of \$4040 from 2021.

**6. Granum Endowment Fund at CFNEM:**

- a. Receiving \$1.1 million from the Granum's for history exhibits changed our vision for the renovation of the Native American Gallery.
- b. Cornerstone Architects created the schematic floor plan based on our outline for eleven thematic sections in the 3000 square feet.
- c. Judy Suszek and Janet Young worked with me to draft grant proposals. Grants were sent to the following:
  - i. Michigan Council for Arts and Culture Capital Improvement Program
  - ii. Alpena County Youth and Recreation Grant
  - iii. Alpena County Older Persons Grant
  - iv. First Federal Legacy Foundation
  - v. Besser Foundation
- d. I am continuing to work with private donors interested in the project.
- e. Campaign materials are being developed for the project.
- f. A special fund was established at CFNEM for the exhibit project.
- g. Work on the Anishinaabe exhibit with consultants continues.
- h. Work with local content experts for other areas of the exhibit is ongoing.
- i. The expected start date for demoing the gallery is January 2023.
- j. The expected date the new gallery will be completed is in December 2024.

**7. Interior Building Improvements:**

- a. Work is ongoing to improve the collection storage rooms. We must wait until the windows are removed and window wells are complete before setting up the shelving and getting the artifacts transferred to their new home.
- b. The rearranging of the collection storage rooms is connected to renovating the Native American gallery. The storage area behind the display cases will be moved to one of the artifact storage areas that is being relocated into a new space.

**8. The Town That Wouldn't Die:**

- 1. This project was funded by the Park Museum Fund in July 2021.
- 2. The books arrived and were a misprint. They were sent back. Due to supply-chain issues, Ed Klimczak recommended that we keep 200 of the misprinted books to sell. These books will be a limited edition, possibly collection item. Ed made a donation to the museum to cover the cost of the misprinted books.
- 3. We have not received the misprinted books yet.
- 4. No date on when the reprinted copies will arrive due to supply chain issues.