

**Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan  
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, September 21, 2021 at 4:30 pm**

**Board Members Present:** Claudia Chapman, Jim Conboy, Clarence Cross, Jim Johnson, Michelle Miller, Diane Speer, Judy Suszek, Janet Young, Mike Ableidinger, Sue Stender, Marie Fielder.

**Others Present:** Executive Director Chris Witulski

**Absent:** Jean Thomas, Gary Goren (excused), Mike Beaulac and Ashley Wilmot

**Call to Order:** President Michelle Miller called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m.

**Minutes:** Judy Suszek moved to accept the minutes of the August 2021 meeting. Janet Young supported. All in favor. Motion carried.

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

**Reports to the Board:**

1. **Director's Report:** ED Chris Witulski submitted a written Director's Report to the board accessible online at the museum's website. She made note of Fall Harvest Day on Oct. 2 with Education Coordinator Amanda Kucharek currently developing the event. She said delivery of the HVAC equipment is delayed until November, but Matt has been preparing the area where the new chiller will be installed. She is still awaiting bids from Meridian Construction on exterior renovations to be done in three phases. Witulski also told the board the Log Cabin restoration project is moving forward with a completion deadline estimated at the end of October. She discussed steps being taken to fix the museum's pendulum, which still is operational. An opening reception for Season of Light is set for Nov. 20. Witulski proposed making the reception a member appreciation event and having the board help serve. The board agreed with the proposal. Lastly, she told the board this year's Giving Tuesday revenue will be targeted toward digital equipment needed in Collections.

**Ad Hoc Committees:**

1. **Governance:** No new business.
2. **Great Lakes Fisheries Heritage Exhibit:** Jim Johnson noted that he met recently with S&A reps and Matt to work on a bid for a steel building for the Chinook. Jim also is at work drafting part of the Invasive Species Grant. The grant is due in early December. He commended Mike Beaulac for his assistance. Tuffy Cross said he and his crew are awaiting delivery of lumber for the dock, and that they have been giving a few tours of the Kat V.
3. **Anishinaabe Exhibit:** Marie Fielder noted that a meeting was held recently with Native American officials that was productive. They discussed how the exhibit should proceed. ED Chris Witulski said questions came up regarding concerns over possible repatriation of sacred objects.
4. **Fine Art Committee:** No new business.
5. **Collections Committee:** The committee recommended accession of 5 items into the museum's permanent collection. Jim Johnson made a motion to accept the items as

presented into the collections, supported by Janet Young. All in favor. Motion carried. The 5 items are as follows:

- a. South Vietnam Flag, flown in Vietnam during the Vietnam War
- b. John Milroy's WWII uniform, including pants, shirt, vest, two hats, two belts, one tie and five aprons.
- c. Photo of catboats lined up in the Thunder Bay River, ca. 1940
- d. Photo of a boat in the Alpena Boat Harbor with Spicer's Boat Works in the background, ca. 1940s
- e. Alfred Foster's WWII Navy Sailor uniform, including wool top, bottoms and patch

**Old Business:**

**Planet/History Walk:** Gary Goren is gathering information on this project  
**"The Town That Wouldn't Die":** This project is close to being finished

**New Business:**

**Future Board Meeting Dates:** President Michelle Miller discussed holding no meetings in October or December. The next meeting would then be on Nov. 16. The board agreed with her proposal.

**Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Speer  
Board Secretary