

Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan
Executive Director Report for Board of Trustees Meeting
January 2017

1. Reaccreditation:

Collections Manager Position.

- a. Danyeel Dorr is no longer employed as the Collections Manager at the Besser Museum. The Collections Manager job description has been updated and vetted by Vicki Wright, CMU Museum Studies instructor, and a museum colleague from Mackinaw State Parks. The job description is ready to be posted on the MMA and AAM websites.
- b. When discussing our current situation with Ron Bloomfield, from CMU, he suggested a possible, highly qualified candidate that might be interested. We also discussed the possibility of the CMU Museum Studies program taking on the Besser Museum as a case study and placing interns at. Ron said that CMU would not place interns at an institution that did not have a qualified mentor. Ron also said that if we were to hire a CMU graduate, that individual would have access to academic/professional support from CMU instructors.

Creating Action Plan to Submit to AAM Reaccreditation Board.

- c. I contacted the AAM representative, and our deadline to submit a plan was extended to May 25th.
- d. Speaking with our AAM representative, I learned that the Besser Museum went through a Museum Assessment Program in 2007. They emailed me a copy of that report. (I am not sure why that was nowhere to be found in the building.) Phil Deloria received a copy, and after reviewing the document thought he could provide the museum with a menu of services that would help us develop a plan we can submit to the AAM reaccreditation board by the deadline. I am waiting to receive his new proposal.
- e. CMU Museum Studies Instructor, Ron Bloomfield and Director, Jay Martin, are scheduling a fieldtrip with their students to visit the Besser Museum either February 9th or 16th. They will tour and assess our situation. We may get some helpful information from that visit.
- f. The proposal to purchase Past Perfect Version 5 and the HOBO Data Loggers can be suspended until we hire a Collections Manager.

2. Facilities:

- a. Matt contacted Orkin Pest Control and the company toured the museum submitted a bid for services. (bid is attached to Board packet)
- b. Matt contacted AirNEnergy about the capabilities of our HVAC system monitoring temperature and humidity by zones. They submitted a proposal to audit for \$2,5000, however, they recommended what we need is a maintenance call, rather than an audit to make sure the system is operating correctly. We are waiting to hear what it would cost for a maintenance call.

3. **2017 -2018 Budget & Audit: SLK is working on our audit, they should be done this week.**
4. **Boldrey, Senchuk, Rouleau and Williams P.C. will be doing our accounting.**

They are sending over an accountant every Friday to work on the books in my office and instruct me on some basic Quick Books bookkeeping.
5. **Native American Exhibit Project:**
 - a. Good Design Group provided us a draft of the conceptual plan for the Native American exhibit.
 - b. Anne Belanger is working with Brian Belanger to develop a story line for Preliminary Interview Capture.
 - c. Research is ongoing for local stories.
6. **Art:**
 - a. **Painted Lady** in Rogers City is working on framing the Hoi Lebadang collection for exhibit in January 2018. The cost is approximately \$3,000. The Best Foot art exhibit netted \$1,631. Bob Smith requested the spendable funds from the Candace Smith endowment, in the amount of \$3,5000, be used for either the framing of the art, and/or, the new planetarium presentation. Vicki Wright is working on interpretive labels and will help us set the exhibit.
 - b. **Winter Blues: 2'x2'** non-juried art exhibit. We will start promoting this non-juried art exhibit at the opening reception on October 21st. The format will follow Best Foot, with \$20 per entry. The exhibit will open February 13th and run through April.
7. **Education:** Kat had a very successful season in December and is gearing up for the 2018 schedule. Please refer to Kat's monthly report for full details.
8. **Planetarium:**
 - a. Attendance in the planetarium has been very good. Please refer to Tad's monthly report for full details.
 - b. Our Technical Support contract expired and has not been renewed. We are now on an hourly fee.
 - c. A grant has been submitted to the CFNEM for \$3,500 to purchase a digital presentation for our Littlest Learners planetarium program. This program is geared to families of preK-2nd grade students. It will run on Saturdays at 12:00 p.m. Each seat will be \$3. Tad has already been building programs for Littlest Learners and marketing has been slowly rolling out as the programs are being built.

9. Exhibits:

- i. Hoi Lebadang will go up in the Wilson Gallery in January and run through September. Vicki Wright has been extremely helpful with the interpretative labels and setting the exhibit.
- ii. Winter Blues non-juried art exhibit will open Feb. 13th.
- iii. The Old Alpena exhibit will be displayed in the center gallery

10. Marketing:

- a. During the audit, it was discovered that there is \$5,297 in the temporary restricted fund for the past two or three years. That account has not been utilized and they auditor suggest we make a plan to spend down that inactive account. **I propose we use those funds to increase this year's marketing budget to promote the museum and the new planetarium into a wider market.**
- b. **Ongoing Website/Facebook/Email marketing**

11. Gift Store:

- a. New store products are always being researched.

12. Miscellaneous:

- a. Besser Museum was fortunate to have exhibit designer, Joe Hines with Project Arts & Ideas stop in for a visit. He gave us three hours of free consultation and pointed out several areas that could be improved in the front gallery. We implemented his ideas and painted the walls in the center gallery and in the receptionist area. We decluttered around the front entry and receptionist desk. We also purchased a new receptionist desk thanks to a generous donation from the Besser Company. Actually, the Besser Company purchased the desk for us. Joe Hines made several other observations about our exhibits and suggestions to enhance the visitors' experience. More work to be done.
- b. **Guest Services, Cindy Ranshaw**, is working on developing a new volunteer program/docent training program. We hope to launch this program early 2018.
- c. **Employee Handbook:** Still working on updating employee handbook. Should have a finalized copy ready for Board review this month.