

**Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 4:30 p.m.**

Board Members Present: Jim Conboy, Clarence Cross, Michelle Miller, Diane Speer, Judy Suszek, Janet Young, Gary Goren and Mike Beaulac

Others Present: Executive Director Chris Witulski

Absent: Claudia Chapman (excused), Jim Johnson (excused), Mike Ableidinger (excused), Sue Stender (excused), Marie Fielder, Jean Thomas, and Ashley Wilmot (excused)

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

Minutes: Janet Young moved to accept the minutes of the June 15, 2021, meeting with two corrections on an item concerning the reprinting of "The Town That Wouldn't Die." Tuffy Cross supported. All in favor. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Proposed Budget: Based on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, Executive Director Chris Witulski gave an in-depth presentation of the proposed budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. Judy Suszek made a motion to approve the budget. Mike Beaulac supported. All in favor. Motion carried. The 2021-2022 budget was filed as presented and is available online at the museum's website.

Treasurer's Report: The monthly Treasurer's Report was given and filed as presented. It is available online at the museum's website.

\$1,000 Donation: A resolution to accept a \$1,000 gift from the Theodore M. Utchen Trust was made by Janet Young. Mike Beaulac supported. All in favor. Motion carried. The resolution in its entirety was signed as required and a copy filed.

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 shared that the museum is now fully open; however, planetarium shows are limited to 30 with an additional show added at the end of the day as necessary. She also talked about the high volume of summer attendance at the museum. She reported that Katrina Brooks resigned her position as Guest Services Specialist to move back to Texas and that Lillian Broad was hired part-time for the summer. The online version of Log Cabin Day was well-received this year, and discussions are now being held regarding Fall Harvest Day. Witulski reported that Todd Britton from Meridian Construction came to the museum July 12 to examine the exterior of the museum and will be preparing bids for needed work. She said the Log Cabin restoration project was delayed due to health issues on the part of the contractor and COVID restrictions.

Ad Hoc Committees:

1. **Governance:** Judy Suszek said she was happy to welcome new Board Member Ashley Wilmot.
2. **Great Lakes Fisheries Heritage Exhibit:** Tuffy Cross reported work was finished on the Kat V handicap walkway with quite a few days spent on landscaping by his volunteer crew. He said it looks fantastic. C.R. Yockey did excavation work at the GL Fisheries Heritage Exhibit site on

July 13-14. ED Chris Witulski reported that the museum is looking to receive funds from the Great Lakes Fisheries Trust to cover the expenses to build and install a dock and ramp for the Chinook exhibit. The museum also still is working to submit a proposal to the DNR Invasive Species Grant Program for the infrastructure for the Chinook exhibit.

3. **Native American Exhibit:** ED Chris Witulski shared that progress continues on this exhibit. She traveled July 9-10 with consultant Charlee Brisette to visit Anishinaabe exhibits in Sault Ste. Marie, St. Ignace and Mackinac Island. They met with an exhibit designer and museum executive director at the Ojibway Museum in St. Ignace. The next meeting of the exhibit Advisory Committee is scheduled for Aug. 29.
4. **Fine Art Committee:** Nothing to report.
5. **Collections Committee:** Janet Young presented the following items for accession by the board:
 - a. Riverside Literature Series Book, belonged to Jesse Besser, 1899
 - b. Riverside Literature Series Book, belonged to Jesse Besser, 1898
 - c. U.S. military zippo lighter with insignia engraved on it
 - d. U.S. military Korean War memorabilia lighter
 - e. Kaywoodie disposable filter pipe
 - f. Military ID, Robert L. Haley, Jr.
 - g. Two military ID tags, Irvin E. Jacobs
 - h. Six military patches belonging to Irvin E. Jacobs, Korean War
 - i. Military notebook used by Irvin E. Jacobs
 - j. Insurance form for Irvin E. Jacobs issued by Alpena Savings Bank
 - k. Dept. of the Army certificate of appreciation to Irvin E. Jacobs, 1964
 - l. Certificate of retirement from the Armed Forces to Irvin E. Jacobs, 1964
 - m. Dept. of Army certificate of commendation medal to Irvin E. Jacobs, 1961-1964

Gary Goren made a motion to accession all the items proposed into the museum's collections. Seconded by Jim Conboy. All in favor. Motion carried.

Old Business:

The Town That Wouldn't Die: ED Chris Witulski reported that Jim Park approved the use of funding for the reprinting of The Town That Wouldn't Die. Allegra Printing indicated it will take approximately 3 months. Gary Goren drafted an introduction letter from the Board of Trustees that will be printed in-house and inserted into the books.

New Business:

Executive Session: The board broke for an executive session to review the executive director's salary.

New Hours of Operation: ED Chris Witulski presented a proposed schedule of summer hours and winter hours. The winter hours include the museum being closed on Tuesdays, but with the staff still working. Tuffy Cross made a motion to accept the proposed schedule as presented. Mike Beaulac supported. All in favor. Motion carried.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Speer
Board Secretary