

**Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 23, 2019**

Present: Claudia Chapman, Clarence Cross, Jim Johnson, Michelle Miller, Diane Speer, Judy Suszek, Anne Belanger, John Caplis, Janet Young, Kristen Sharpe, Mike Ableidinger and Director Christine Witulski

Excused Absent: Gregg Resnick, Jim Conboy, Ann Diamond and Heidi Haaxma

Absent: Don MacMaster

Meeting called to order at 4:30 p.m. by President Anne Belanger

Agenda change: President Anne Belanger noted that discussion of the 2021 Strategic Plan and Goals would be delayed until the following month and instead the board would discuss a proposal to amend the Collections Management Policy.

Minutes: Jim Johnson moved to accept the March 2019 Minutes, supported by Judy Suszek. All ayes. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Director Christine Witulski noted that the museum still is working with Accountant Marie Williams to finalize the best method to present the monthly financial statement to the board.

New Business:

Proposal to Amend Collections Management Policy: Director Christine Witulski explained the need for amending the current policy to allow for the proper distribution of the museum's animal collection received seven years ago from Cranbrook. The collection never fit within the museum's mission guidelines and the space taken up by the collection needs to be better utilized in keeping with recommendations of the American Museum Association made during the recent reaccreditation process. Jon Benson of JJ's Steak and Pizza House has expressed interest in acquiring the animals to use as an exhibit that would benefit school children and also be recognized as an outreach of the Besser Museum. However, the Collections Management Policy adopted in 2017 by the board did not allow for the transferral of this type of non-permanent educational collection according to proper museum guidelines. Witulski presented a proposed amendment in writing to the board. The board opted to clarify one point in the proposal to read: "Gift the non-permanent collection to another museum, public institution or other entity at the board's discretion, ensuring the recipient shares and advances the Besser Museum's educational mission." This change was made to safeguard the proper transferral of the animal collection as well as others that might come up in the future.

Motion to Amend Collections Management Policy: Jim Johnson made a motion to accept the proposal to Amend the Collections Management Policy for permanent and non-permanent items as amended. Supported by John Caplis. All ayes. Motion carried.

Motion to Approve Gifting of Cranbrook Animal Collection: Claudia Chapman made a motion to approve the gifting of the Cranbrook Animal Collection as a partnership with Jon Benson/JJ's Steak & Pizza House. Seconded by Janet Young. All ayes. Motion carried.

Director's Report:

Motion to use \$2,000 from Harry Johnson Endowment Fund for Log Cabin Day: Upon recommendation by Director Christine Witulski, John Caplis made a motion to approve using \$2,000 from the Harry Johnson Endowment Fund for Log Cabin Day on June 29. Supported by Kristen Sharpe. All ayes. Motion carried.

Motion to replace Besser Museum flags: Upon recommendation by Director Christine Witulski, Jim Johnson made a motion authorizing the expenditure of up to \$1,000 out of the museum's old Capital Campaign fund to replace the faded Besser Museum flags. Supported by Judy Suszek. All ayes. Motion carried.

Best Art Gallery Nomination: Director Christine Witulski mentioned that the Besser Museum had been nominated as the Best Art Gallery for 2109 in the Alpena News Best of the Best promotion.

Standing Committee Reports:

Collections Committee: Claudia Chapman reported on students from the CMU Museum Studies Program who recently toured the museum's collections storage area as well as the entire museum. She said they had many questions and came up with some good suggestions.

Native American Exhibit Committee: President Anne Belanger reported that genealogist Matt McCormack is moving along with research on the Native American families in the area and getting closer to identifying stories that can be told as part of the revised exhibit.

Great Lakes Fisheries Exhibit Committee: Clarence "Tuffy" Cross shared that he had just opened the Kat V and that he had just published his second book related to the local commercial fishing industry. The book will be available for sale at the museum.

HR Committee: John Caplis said the committee wants to get Director Christine Witulski's input on expanding any paid personal leave time and whether there are funds to do so.

Old Business: The board was reminded of the opening of the Apollo 11 Exhibit and Reaccreditation Celebration on May 4 from 3-5 p.m.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m. The next meeting is Tuesday, May 21

Respectfully submitted, Diane Speer