

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

NEW HISTORY EXHIBIT:

1. Cornerstone Architects met with the committee to discuss their first draft of the floor plan. They will be submitting the final drawings we need for the grant before the June 1st deadline.
2. Once we get the schematic drawings for the new exhibit, the board members from First Federal Legacy Foundation would like to visit the museum to discuss the Museum's grant request. It would be nice to have Board representatives participate in this meeting.
3. The Besser Foundation proposal will also be drafted and submitted the first part of June.
4. GRANTS:
 - a. 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 7th at 6:30 p.m.
 - b. Judy, Janet, and I have been working on the MACC grant. Judy has drafted the budget for the grant. The only pieces we are waiting for to complete the application are supporting documents which includes Cornerstone Architects drawings and one letter of support. We have several letters of support if we do not get this last one.
 - c. CFNEM Impact Grant is not due until July 15th.
5. 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.

STAFFING NEEDS:

- The new fiscal year starts July 1st. We need to draft a new budget and take into consideration raises for staff.
- Besser Museum is still short staffed and has no one to cover Sundays. Currently, Matt, Sarah, and I are taking turns covering Sundays. However, I have a concern with continuing to be open on Sundays. Based on the data compiled for this fiscal year, the museum is losing money on being open on Sundays from 12pm – 4pm. The lack of visitation on a Sunday is excruciating if you are the one scheduled to work. Planetarium coordinator, Johnathan Winckowski, has been working Sundays for almost four years. **Please see the attached Excel worksheet containing museum admission for Sundays.** I propose Besser Museum be closed on Sundays. We reopened on Sundays at the request of a past board member who recalled days gone by when the Besser Museum was open on Sundays and people would visit after attending church. I am uncertain of the reason why the past museum Board closed the museum on Sundays. However, I would have to say that there are more options today for people to spend their time then there was several years ago, and we are not seeing the

visitation to make it profitable to stay open on Sundays. I would also ask the Board to consider the fact that the museum is losing money and putting undue stress on an already small, stressed staff force and vote to have the museum closed on Sundays.

BUILDING PROJECTS: Please refer to Matt's Facility Report for more details.

- Woods and Johnson will start the new chiller on May 18.
- R.S.Scott will do their final walk-through expectation to sign off the job on May 19.
- The Besser Museum will receive the final invoice of \$28,050.
- This final payment will use up the remaining funds held at CFNEM in the 50th 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 90% complete. The railings have been installed. The gates are being redesigned to fit better. The railings going down the stairwells are being constructed. They will be installed shortly.
 - b. The orb sculptures are still under construction. The glass pieces are being custom made. The project should take another 4 to 5 weeks before installation.
 - c. To date, the Besser Museum has paid MIW **\$24,248.66** from the Besser Foundation Grant. There is **\$5,751** remaining in the Besser Foundation Grant. The Besser Museum approved spending **\$15,000** from our savings to complete this project.
2. Meridian Construction: **\$167,000** project
 - a. Meridian was contracted to remove the windows/window wells, fix columns and eaves, and redo the front approach.
 - b. This work has not started yet. Delays were caused by weather. Now Todd Britton is waiting on the company that does the concrete demo.

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. The following is from the DNR Grant Handbook: **Purchases and contracts between \$5,000.01 and \$50,000:**
 - A Request for Quote (RFQ) must be developed. The RFQ ensures consistency in requesting information from vendors. The RFQ should be developed using industry standard units of measure and/or a price sheet.
 - The RFQ must be approved by DNR in MiGrants prior to posting. More detail on using MiGrants is below.
 - A minimum of three written quotes must be solicited. It is recommended that a minimum of 6-8 vendors be contacted in order to ensure that three quotes are received. Quotes can be solicited via fax, email, mail, or online. If three quotes cannot be obtained, a justification that includes the solicitation process used must be provided.

- The quotes must describe the good or service being purchased, deliverables, milestones, and the payments terms.
 - DNR must approve the choice of vendor in MiGrants prior to vendor notification of award.
 - The award must be made to the vendor that is qualified to do the work at the lowest price. If a vendor other than the lowest-priced option is chosen, a written justification must be provided and is subject to DNR approval.
2. Huron Engineering recently provided the Besser Museum with a proposal for \$18,275 for the engineering services needed **to prepare the design for the structure** over the Chinook along with the site work that needs to be done before building.
 - a. This information will be used to create a Request for Quote (RFQ) to submit to the DNR for approval. After approval, the museum will need to post the RFQ in the paper and online to secure up to three competitive bids for an engineer company to create the construction documents needed for the Request for Proposal (RFP).
 - b. The RFP needs to be submitted to the DNR for approval and afterwards posted online to secure a minimum of three bids **to build the structure**. RFP is for purchases and contracts over \$50,000. The structure is estimated to cost approximately \$155,500.
 3. Handicap accessible pathway to Fisheries Exhibit was installed by C.R. Yockey Excavating.
 - a. There is one more section that Matt and Nate are going to put in to complete the path.

Planetarium:

- **Science Saturdays:** Johnathan has developed a monthly Science Saturday program. He has invited the Library and Star Base who will be participating in these museum programs.
- **YouTube Videos:** Johnathan continues to produce short videos for the museum's YouTube channel and educational posts for the Planetarium Facebook page.
- **APS Summer Enrichment Program:** Johnathan will be hosting four summer enrichment programs for APS at \$630 per program. The total revenue will be \$2,520.
- **Summer Events:** Johnathan has a full schedule of astronomical viewing events planned for the summer.

Misc.

- Annual Business Meeting and election of new Board members. Dan Florip has submitted his application to be a Board member. The newsletter is going out next week to members. They will be asked to vote by proxy as the meeting will be held online June 21st.
- I will start working with Marie Williams to draft the budget for 2022-23.
- Log Cabin Day will take place Saturday, June 25. Some of the activities include:
 - Lauren from Hammond Bay Biological Station is bringing a sea lamprey.
 - Keith Knecht from Native Ways Traditional Arts, LLC will be a demonstrator.
 - The historical buildings will be open for visits.
- We are still waiting on delivery of The Town That Wouldn't Die.