

Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan
Executive Director Report for Board of Trustees Meeting
January 2021 – February 2021

The Besser Museum continues to follow CDC health guidelines until further notice.

- The Besser Museum will be opened for self-guided tours from 10 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Visitor capacity continues to be limited to 25 people in the building at a time. Planetarium capacity is limited to a maximum of 15 people in the planetarium at a time.
- CDC guidelines are still in place: masks, social distancing, disinfecting.

ONGOING PROJECTS

FACILITY:

- **HVAC:** We received information from John Richards from Apollo Engineering for the mechanical design for the new chillers. Matt and I spoke with Susan Edwards from R.S. Scott about the HVAC project on February 11th. We will meet with Richards and Edwards next week to finalize the plan. Once the plan is finalized:
 - R.S. Scott will put the job out to bid to contractors.
 - The contractors will be invited to do a walk through the museum and ask questions about the scope of work in the plan.
 - The contractors will then have 4 weeks to submit their bids.
 - The bids will be opened, and the Museum will decide which contractor to award the bid to. The Museum will also make sure all the funding is in place to proceed.
 - The contractor awarded the bid will be responsible for all subcontractors, such as the electrical work needed, possibly concrete work needed to hold the big new chiller, the computer interface for the system, etc.
 - R.S. Scott will oversee the contractor.

HISTORIC VILLAGE:

- **Log Cabin project:** The contract with Robert Kenel LLC has been signed and a payment of \$31,000 was made for Kenel according to the contract to order the logs for the renovation. Kenel came to the museum on February 12th to mark all the logs that will be replaced.
- **The Museum submitted the paid invoice to the Alpena County Youth and Rec committee for reimbursement of \$25,000 from the grant. The museum will cover the other \$6,000 from funds from Giving Tuesday.**
 - **\$62,000 Phase 1 -**
 - **Funding Plan:**

- **Committed: \$56,710**
- **Pending: \$5,000**
- We received a **\$25,000** grant from Alpena County Youth and Rec.
- We received a **\$8,750** from the Alpena County Older Persons grant
- Besser Museum will use **\$10,000** towards the Log Cabin from 2019 Giving Tuesday. (Last year's Giving Tuesday campaign raised \$15,000)
- 2020 GIVING TUESDAY raised **\$11,210**.
- We requested \$2,500 from the CFNEM Youth council and received **\$1,750**.
- We submitted a **\$5,000** grant request to CFNEM for the January 2021 cycle.

GREAT LAKES FISHERIES HERITAGE EXHIBIT:

- **Chinook**
 - Jim Johnson has reached out to the new City Planner, Andrea Kares to invite her to the museum and tour the Great Lakes Exhibit. That meeting was postponed due to weather. Jim is requesting this exhibit be put into the City's Recreation Plan.
 - Jim is also seeking to be added to the Alpena County Recreation Plan and Alpena Township Recreation plan.
 - Funding is being sought for the Chinook exhibit. We are looking into DNR grant proposals along with Michigan Sea Grant Proposal. I spoke with a DNR representative about a grant opportunity that we could apply for in August or September of 2021.
 - Janet Young's work to capture Jim and Tuffy's personal histories working aboard the Chinook is ongoing.
 - I have yet to talk to Zack about the LaBlance family video project. I am trying to schedule a meeting to discuss the needs for this project. Zach Irving sent a quote of \$5,000 to complete the video.
- **Katherine V**
 - Tuffy and volunteers closed the Katherine V for the season.

ANISHINAABE EXHIBIT REVITALIZATION PROJECT (Native American Gallery)

- Consultant, Charlee Brissette began work on Phase 2 January 2021.
- The Anishinaabe Advisory Committee will start meeting February 23rd.
- Anne Belanger is still serving as committee chair. Marie Fielder and Mike Beaulac will also be serving on this committee.

ART: Work is ongoing

- 2021 Non-Juried Art Exhibit: New Beginnings opened February 13th and will run through April 3rd.
- Lori Keskimaki photography will be on exhibit through April 3rd.

- **Wilson Art Gallery Renovation:**
 - The modular walls from EmagiSpace are installed. There is still some work to be done to the walls, such as trim and paint.
 - We will be ordering and installing a new hanging system on the new walls.
 - We are now looking at options for new flooring.
 - I am talking with local artist, Brian Schorn about curating some exhibits, presenting some virtual art lectures, and overseeing the Advisory Council. The museum could arrange to pay him a stipend for his contracted services. We are still discussing how this arrangement could work.
 - I am working on drafting a contract for Brian and the art project.

ARTIFACT COLLECTIONS: Major work continues in the collection storage areas.

- **Reorganizing of Space for Collection Storage**
 - Matt is resuming work on the reorganizing of space in the collection area.
- **PastPerfect Data Software**
 - PastPerfect database. Volunteers have been continuing to enter the handwritten accession logs. This project is almost completed.
 - The Collection Volunteers and Committee continue to work on the backlog of artifacts that came during 2010 and 2019. This includes all the Temporary Custody items. Sarah is working on a program to hold Collection Committee meetings virtually so progress on the Temporary Custody items can continue.
 - Sarah is also working with volunteers to inventory and properly store the collection of rolled maps and documents. We will be ordering the materials needed to properly store these items.
 - Sarah and volunteers have properly stored the newspaper collection.
- **Temporary Custody donations**
 - The virtual meetings will address the temporary custody items.
 - This work will be ongoing as there is a backlog of Temporary Custody donations.

MISCELLENOUS:

- **Education Outreach:**
 - Both Johnathan and Amanda continue to produce virtual education programs that are reaching large audiences on our social media platforms. Amanda is also working with Katrina to put our non-juried exhibit and the People Choice contest online. This would include creating a virtual exhibit and a way for people to cast a vote via PayPal.
 - Katrina Brooks (Guest Services/Administrative Assistant) has updated the museum website. Katrina will now start working on revising our online store.

- SLK completed the audit. Much of that work took place virtually the last week of November and the first weeks of December. Someone from SLK will present virtually at the February meeting.
- An application for the Paycheck Protection Program Second Draw was submitted to mBank for \$46,525.
- The Besser Museum received a \$15,000 grant from the Small Business Survival Grant.