

**Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 19, 2024 @ 4:30 p.m.**

Our mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit authentic articles and artifacts of art, history, and science to inspire curiosity for all ages, foster community pride, and cultivate personal legacy.

Board Members: President, Gary Goren, **Vice President,** Mike Beaulac (virtual), **Secretary,** Ashley Peterson (virtual), **Treasurer,** Sue Stender (virtual), Michelle Miller, Claudia Chapman, Tuffy Cross, Jon Gougeon, Janet Young, and Brian Bartosh (virtual), Jim Johnson
Absent: Julie Austin (excused), Sara Winter (excused), Dan Florip (excused)

1) Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:38 pm.

2) Review October 15, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes for approval (action item)

A motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Janet Young seconded by Jon Gougeon. All in favor. Motion carried.

3) TREASURER'S REPORT: (Sue Stender)

a. Treasurer's report on October 2024 financials. The treasurer's report was filed as submitted.

4) Reports to the Board:

a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Full report submitted and can be found on the museum's website.

- 1) Besser hosted the film crew for "Wild Faith Christmas" two weeks ago. No compensation to the Museum and staff put many hours into this. This is the second film hosted in the last two years. Not sure if this is a sustainable thing to do.
- 2) There will be lots of overtime worked during installations of the new Exhibit. Some 12-hour days and weekend work will be required. The overtime costs should be covered by the project funds so long as we remain within budget (which seems to be the case at present) and may be paid as "work performance bonuses" based upon the number of overtime hours worked. Discussion of overtime versus "bonuses" ensued. Bonus pay works better than comp time off or time-and-a-half pay for all workers, whether salary or hourly pay grades. Compensatory time is an option but is not practical for a staff that is overtaxed with work just about every month.
 - a) Johnson moved that the Exec Director be authorized to pay "bonuses", based on time-and-a-half overtime and a 40-hour work week, during the period of exhibit construction. Claudia Chapman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.
- 3) The Museum will be closed to the public November 24th, 2024, through January 18, 2025.
- 4) Besser Museum is working with the State of Michigan Historical Society to host the State History Conference in Alpena in 2025.
- 5) The museum has two vacancies (Nate Teachout's and Tina Schult's positions) and is strategizing how to go forward. The Exec. Dir. is trying to reimagine the front-desk position because there is a variety of duties that position must be capable of doing. Also looking at how to interview for such positions that require high levels of emotional maturity for working so closely with the public.
 - a) Thinking of moving the desk position to full-time and Chris assuming the work of the education specialist.
 - b) No plans for hiring anyone until the DNEM project is complete.
- 6) The 2022-2023 fiscal year audit was completed and reviewed by the executive committee and posted online.

5) HOC COMMITTEES:

- a. **GOVERNANCE REPORT:** (Dan Florip absent, no report)
- b. **GREAT LAKES FISHERIES HERITAGE EXHIBIT:** The boats were prepared for winter. Jeff Diemond (retired captain of *Chinook*) assisted Tuffy Cross in stowing gear for winter.
 1. **Chinook Project:** (Jim Johnson report) – continued to work with Good Design on the interpretive design. John Metcalf is seeking bids from Omega and Fossil Inc. for signage. Will need to file for a no-cost extension for the Invasive Species grant, which expires this spring.
 2. **Katherine V:** (Tuffy Cross report). Jeff Diemond helped Tuffy winterize the *Katherine V*.
- c. **DISCOVER NORTHEAST MICHIGAN HISTORY:** (Mike Beaulac)
 1. Carpet finished.
 2. Chris and Matt painted the walls.
 3. Preparations for mounting birch bark and dugout canoe.
 4. Graphics and texts for reader rails moving along. Split Rock and Omega working together with Chris in getting print-ready proofs completed. Realistically, it will take longer than we had hoped for Omega to finish the graphics and texts, which could mean a delay in the timeline of maybe 2 weeks. Quality of the work is excellent.
 5. So far, budget and expenditure are tracking ok. The Alpena Flier reader rail will require additional funding because it is not part of the DNEM project.
- d. **COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE:** (Claudia Chapman):
 1. Janet Young reported that Sarah Honeycutt had gone to Richard Cooks home to look at the many items Richard's family had preserved. Sarah picked out items the Museum could use.
 2. The committee presented in their November report 15 items donated by the Richard Cook family for the Board's consideration for accession to the permanent collection at the museum. A motion to accept the items was made by Claudia Chapman and seconded Janet Young. All in favor. Motion passed.
 3. The Committee presented two duplicate negatives from the Trelfa collection, in poor condition, for disposal (trash). Also, one birch bark canoe, and one dugout canoe for transfer to other institutions (lack of space for storing them) and two totem poles, recommended for deaccession and transfer back to the family of the carver. Amy Albert will be asked to help in placing these items with other museums or appropriate families.
 4. Janet moved these items be deceased as recommended by the Committee; Claudia Chapman seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

5) Old Business:

- a. The Donor Sneak Peek Reception has been scheduled for Thursday, January 16th.
- b. The website marketing committee is still at work.
- c. Looking at the Grand Opening of the DNEM Exhibit, and perhaps the Fisheries Exhibit as well, in June 2025. Need to have the web page up to speed for that event.

6) New Business:

- a. The January meeting will be when we select officers for the Board.
- b. Giving Tuesday is December 3. Gary is hoping "Planet Walk" will be one of the projects included.

No board meeting in December!

7) Adjourn: Janet Young moved, Mike Beaulac seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley Peterson, Secretary