

**Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 19, 2019 @ 4:30 p.m.**

Present: Claudia Chapman, Clarence Cross, Jim Johnson, Michelle Miller, Gregg Resnick, Diane Speer, Judy Suszek, Anne Belanger, John Caplis, Ann Diamond, Janet Young and Heida Haaxma

Excused Absent: Executive Director Christine Witulski, Jim Conboy, Mike Ableidinger

Absent: Don MacMaster and Kristen Sharpe

Guests: Auditor Jim Kraenzlein and Accountant Marie Williams

Meeting called to order at 4:30 p.m. with a quorum present

Auditor's Report:

Auditor Jim Kraenzlein presented the board with the museum's financial statements for the years ended June 30, 2018 and 2017. He reported the statements as a clean audit, noting that the museum's net assets ended up in 2018 from the previous year. Kraenzlein also discussed new accounting pronouncements and how they will result in a new look for the museum's financial statements in the future. He also talked with the board about the need for a capital asset policy and recommended that such a policy start with a \$2,500 threshold as a guide for museum management to track assets.

Motion to Adopt Capital Assets Policy:

Based on the recommendation from Auditor Jim Kraenzlein, Gregg Resnick made a motion to adopt a capital management policy with a \$2,500 threshold. Seconded by John Caplis. Motion carried.

Motion to Approve Auditor's Report:

Judy Suszek made a motion to accept the Auditor's Report. Seconded by Gregg Resnick. Motion carried.

Minutes of January 2019 Meeting:

Tuffy Cross made a motion to approve the January 2019 board minutes with a date correction. Seconded by Claudia Chapman. Motion carried.

Introduction of New Board Member:

Outgoing Treasurer Judy Suszek introduced newly appointed board member Heidi Haaxma, who has agreed to serve as treasurer now through June 2019, when an election of board members will take place. Haaxma shared about her excitement to serve on the Board and how her company, OsborneKline, encourages community involvement in non-profits on the part of its employees.

Motion to Appoint New Treasurer:

Gregg Resnick made a motion to appoint Heidi Haaxma as Board Treasurer. Seconded by Janet Young. Motion carried.

Ad Hoc Committees:

Collections Committee: Nothing to Report

Governance Committee: Nothing to Report

Great Lakes Fisheries Heritage Exhibit: Jim Johnson reported that he still is awaiting word on the \$200,000 grant filed with GLFT. Based on initial feedback, he said the granting agency prefers to fund educational programs as opposed to construction projects. He said the committee will be meeting with the Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan to explore other funding possibilities. Tuffy Cross reported on a recent interview conducted with Native American commercial fisherman Albert LaBlance as well as his attendance at a Fish Producers Convention in Traverse City, where he presented on the Katherine V. Cross said those at the convention were impressed with the work that has been done on the Kat V Exhibit. Cross also discussed a video that will be shot in the summer for the museum by Zach Irving. The video will record the commercial fishing experiences of Albert LaBlance and his family. Johnson said this is an important opportunity to capture the history of one of the last gill net fishing families. While expressing support for the video project, the board opted to wait until next month to give formal approval for expenses related to the project.

Native American Committee: Nothing to Report

Passage of Ron Winter:

Ann Diamond made note of the recent death of Ron Winter, who had restored the Alpena Flyer at great personal expense and then loaned it to the museum for display purposes. With his passage, final status of the car is uncertain at this time, she said.

Facilities Report:

Jim Johnson gave a mini-Facilities Report, making note of a new alarm panel that General Manager Matt Klimzcak hopes to install in conjunction with changes the museum is making in regard to accreditation efforts. He said it is expected to cost less than \$2,000 and that the matter is expected to be on the agenda for March.

Executive Session:

The Board moved into executive session to discuss the recent evaluation of Executive Director Chris Witulski. Board members gave her high marks and shared many positive comments regarding the job she has done for the museum over her last five years as executive director. All are impressed with her skills, her incredible dedication, her networking abilities and her many accomplishments. Ann Diamond suggested holding a strategic planning session as a board retreat as a way to support Witulski. Also suggested were leadership training opportunities, again as a show of support.

Motion to Present a Bonus:

Based on the extremely positive evaluation of Executive Director Chris Witulski, Jim Johnson made a motion to present her with a \$2,000 bonus along with a letter of commendation. Supported by Ann Diamond. Motion carried.

Adjournment:

Claudia Chapman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m. Seconded by Gregg Resnick. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Speer, Board Secretary