

**Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 20, 2018 @ 4:30 p.m.**

Present: Mike Ableidinger, Claudia Chapman, Jim Conboy, Clarence Cross, Ann Diamond, Jim Johnson, Michelle Miller, Gregg Resnick, Diane Speer, Judy Suszek and Janet Young also Executive Director Christine Witulski

Absent: Anne Belanger, John Caplis, Don MacMaster, and Kristen Sharpe

Guests: Marie Williams PCA and Maggie Malone, Collections Manager

Meeting Called to Order at 4:30 p.m. and quorum noted

Minutes: Gregg Resnick moved to accept the October Minutes with the correction that Claudia Chapman was excused, supported by Janet Young. All Ayes. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Janet Williams, PCA reviewed the new accounting system she has been working on with ED Witulski. The Museum is using QuickBooks--the program is limited but they were able to update the accounting codes to match the 990 form which is required by law each January. The expenditures and revenue will now be broken down into classes which correspond to line items on the 990 and Cultural Data Project Accounting, which is required for State grants. She and ED Witulski gave a very detailed description of how they intend to track the budget along with restricted and non-restricted funds. This is a starting point and the process will be massaged as time progresses. Both Ms. Williams and ED Witulski answered questions posed. Treasurer Suszek shared the 2018-2019 proposed budget, which has been on hold until the new accounting system was in place. Judy Suszek made a motion to accept the budget as presented, supported by Tuffy Cross. All ayes. Motion carried.

New Business:

- **Shirley Ritzler Art Exhibit and Fundraiser Proposal:** Shirley Ritzler is a local artist from the 80's--who has taken different elements from local homes and developed paper cutting art. The family has granted the Museum permission to use these art works for five years. ED Witulski asked for up to \$4,000 to produce prints of her work and have them framed for a permanent Museum collection. Note cards and prints will also be made for the Museum store. Jim Conboy made a motion to spend up to \$4,000 on the Shirley Ritzler Project, supported by Claudia Chapman. All ayes. Motion carried.
- **Off-Season Planetarium Pricing Proposal:** Due to slower off-season sales and new information of the economic state of Alpena and its surrounding region, it has come to light that the price for planetarium tickets should be adjusted during the non-tourism season. After much discussion, Diane Speer made a motion to go with ED Witulski's Idea One: Offer a flat-rate discount on all planetarium tickets, reducing the price from \$5 to \$3 during the non-tourism season. Gregg Resnick supported the motion. All ayes. Motion carried.
- After much discussion, Jim Johnson made a motion to eliminate the Curator of Anthropology position, supported by Gregg Resnick. All ayes. Motion carried.

Director's Report:

- Executive Director Christine Witulski submitted her report in writing, which is filed with the Minutes. ED Witulski highlighted the following from the report:
 - a. **Upcoming Events:** Season of Lights, November 17; Besser Museum Jingle Bell Run, November 23; Giving Tuesday, November 27; and AAM Progress Report, December 14.

Standing Committee Reports:

Governance: ED Witulski reported that for 2019 Anne Belanger will be Board President and Jim Conboy will be First Vice-President. She will continue to seek a Treasurer and Secretary.

Ad Hoc Committee Reports:

Collections Committee: Claudia Chapman turned over to Maggie Malone to recap the status of the large taxidermic animal collection that the Cranbrook Institute of Science had accepted in 2012 from Dr. Elias H. Kassab for educational use/purposes. This collection was given to the Museum but the title was never fully transferred--Cranbrook did not have the paperwork completed on their end. Maggie wrote up a Deed of Gift agreement which has been sent to Cranbrook; they collection may be on a long term loan at JJ's Restaurant (Jon Benson). The original intent of the donation was for an educational collection and Mr. Benson will continue that work. There was never an intent on the Museum Board's part to house this as a permanent collection.

Katherine V: ED Witulski reported that for \$1,500 Zack Irving will do a one-hour interview with Clarence Cross. It will incorporate components for a self-guided tour with three-minute segments. Tuffy reported that the shed is 95% enclosed and battery-operated, under-counter lights have been installed around mannequins and in the engine room. The shed was bid at \$10,000 and for \$3,000 and over 600 volunteer hours it has been nearly completed. Extra volunteers have been trained and Amanda Kucharek, Education Director, will work with groups on educational activities.

Chinook: Jim Johnson reported that he attended the Great Lakes Fisheries meeting on November 8, 2018 and is continuing work on the Great Lakes Fisheries Grant Proposal and is waiting for a few items from R. S. Scott; once received, he can complete the budget spreadsheet. Suzanne Knight-Lewis will help incorporate the fisheries data into a curriculum for students.

Planetarium: see New Business for non-tourism price adjustment

Native American Exhibit: ED Witulski reported that she is still doing research, making connections and building relationships.

Old Business: Approve Collections Management Policies: tabled until January, Jim Conboy will review

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Next Board Meeting will be Tuesday, January 15, 2019, at 4:30 p.m.

Submitted by Michelle Miller, Secretary