



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MUSEUM BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, December 5, 2019
5:00 PM**

Members Present: Russ Dixon, Pat Hughes, Judith Keefer, Tina Krizanic, Marty Logue,
Caitlin Rosso

Members Absent: Dan Haugen

Student Members Present: Meredith Weddell

Administration: Museum Director Leslie Pielack

Guests: None

Ms. Krizanic called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

**Approval of the Minutes
Minutes of November 21, 2019**

MOTION: by Dixon, seconded by Logue:

To approve the minutes of November 21, 2019 as amended.

VOTE: Yeas, 6
Nays, 0

Unfinished Business

- A. Board members discussed updates and considered additional issues relating to a summer fundraising event that would follow a "Sip and Stroll" type format. Mr. Hughes will be in contact with the Art Deco Society of Detroit to gain insight on how their recent strolling event was so successful. Director Pielack noted that a representative from the Daxton Hotel (under construction) is interested in establishing a connection to the museum and the timing may work for our event as well. Event timing to avoid the Woodward Cruise and parking issues were also mentioned as concerns to be addressed in planning. Follow up from Jay Shell has confirmed that Birmingham Farms homeowners association will partner with the Friends of the museum to offer half-year memberships to their members, and the timing of adding this new audience may also help our event achieve greater success.

New Business

- A. Director Pielack suggested that the Pond Zone conceptual plan could be addressed in two phases, with the first being design of the barrier free parking space, seating at Willits and path across the lawn to the Rouge viewing area. Designing and

constructing this component of the project will provide immediate physical access from Willits and meet the ADA goals for the public access at the Willits level, will be of a feasible cost with positive public impact, and may qualify for some grant funding to construct. Any work on this phase would provide a foundation for further refinement around the pond as identified in the concept plan. Historical landscape architect Brian Devlin has indicated he would be available and willing to provide design services for this as a first phase of the Pond Zone.

- B. Director Pielack summarized the expected budget request for the 2020/2021 fiscal year. Operational expenses are expected to be essentially the same; consultant work will be needed for the ADA pathway work at Willits; and the Allen House window repair and restoration will be the major capital project funding request. Museum Board members agreed by consensus that the Heritage Zone project, which is about half funded by donations thus far, should be funded through donations and fundraising efforts. Mr. Dixon suggested that the board could review the Heritage Zone components to establish a priority list for funding. Board members agreed by consensus to place that item on the agenda for January. Director Pielack mentioned that she is working with the Finance Director to develop an option for visitors to the museum website to make online donations to projects or programs. This option would be able to be linked to the museum's Twitter and Facebook page. Ms. Krizanec emphasized the need to clarify that donations to the city would not be the equivalent of charitable donations. As the Friends do not have a way to accept online cash donations, the alternative of providing at the point of donation a link and information about the Friends as a 501c3 organization will give donors that option. The audience who would be interested in making smaller donations but not concerned about a charitable deduction would be most likely to use the city donation button, but efforts need to be made to ensure that larger donors who want the charitable deduction have easy access to the Friends.
- C. The Hunter House exhibit/tour was deferred to the end of the meeting.

Communication and Reports

Director Pielack provided additional detail to the Director Report. The museum now has a YouTube channel and two additional pages on the website for video shorts and video lectures. The Levinsons lecture continues to bring positive comments from the community. A steady uptick in Twitter followers has helped the museum reach further outside the community, and the What Were They Thinking video series has been popular. Ms. Pielack also updated board members that the Hunter House repair/restoration project was presented to the Historic District Commission this week and the commission was complimentary about the project and was supportive. The Oak200 project is moving forward well with a grant-funded initiative from Oakland University and the History Coalition to provide an interventional map and crowd-sourced community stories on an Oak200 web site. The web site would act as a hub to direct visitors to local Oakland bicentennial events as well as create a user-friendly introduction to local history. Historical organizations will use a template to provide their stories in a consistent way with the same elements and with primary source images. This will result in online content that can potentially continue to provide quality historical content into the future. Director Pielack is working with both groups to help facilitate the project.

Ms. Logue reminded board members that it is time to renew their Friends memberships. Ms. Krizanic thanked Director Pielack for her efforts to further museum programs and projects this past year.

There were no public comments.

New Business, con't

Board members visited the "A Peek at Christmas" exhibit at the Hunter House to get an advance "peek" at the displays and artifacts that will be part of public tours beginning December 6 for the entire month.

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 2 at the regular time of 5:00 PM.

Ms. Krizanic adjourned the meeting at 6:13 PM.