



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MUSEUM BOARD AGENDA
556 W MAPLE
Thursday, December 5, 2019
5:00 PM**

***Mission Statement:** The Birmingham Museum will explore meaningful connections with our past, in order to enrich our community and enhance its character and sustainability. Our mission is to promote understanding of Birmingham's historical and cultural legacy through preservation and interpretation of its ongoing story.*

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Introduction of Guests**
- 4. Approval of the Minutes**
 - A. Minutes of November 21, 2019
- 5. Unfinished Business**
 - A. Joint Event with Friends-Summer 2020
- 6. New Business**
 - A. Pond Zone Plan
 - B. 2020/2021 Budget
 - C. A Peek at Christmas Past exhibit tour
- 7. Communication and Reports**
 - A. Director Report
 - B. Member comments
 - C. Public comments
- 8. Next Meeting: January 2020, Joint Meeting with Friends, TBD**
- 9. Adjournment**

NOTICE: Individuals with disabilities requiring accommodations for effective participation in this meeting should contact the city clerk's office at (248) 530-1880 (voice), or (248) 644-5115 (TDD) at least one day in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance. *APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MUSEUM BOARD MEETINGS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE AND ON THE CITY WEBSITE AT www.bhamgov.org.* City of Birmingham, 151 Martin, Birmingham, MI 48009; 248.530.1800. Persons with disabilities that may require assistance for effective participation in this public meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at the number (248) 530-1880, or (248) 644-5115 (for the hearing impaired) at least one day before the meeting to request help in mobility, visual, hearing, or other assistance. *Las personas con incapacidad que requieren algún tipo de ayuda para la participación en esta sesión pública deben ponerse en contacto con la oficina del escribano de la ciudad en el número (248) 530-1800 o al (248) 644-5115 (para las personas con incapacidad auditiva) por lo menos un día antes de la reunión para solicitar ayuda a la movilidad, visual, auditiva, o de otras asistencias.* (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).

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**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MUSEUM BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, November 21, 2019
5:30 PM**

Members Present: Russ Dixon, Dan Haugen, Pat Hughes, Judith Keefer, Tina Krizanic
(departed at 6:45), Marty Logue

Members Absent: Caitlin Rosso

Student Members Present: None

Administration: Museum Director Leslie Pielack

Guests: Jay Shell of the Museum Friends Board (Friends Board Members
Leslie Mio and George Getschman arrived at 6:30 PM for the
scheduled discussion of New Business B)

Ms. Krizanic called the meeting to order at 5:31 PM.

**Approval of the Minutes
Minutes of October 10, 2019**

MOTION: by Dixon, seconded by Keefer:

To approve the minutes of September 4, 2019 as amended.

VOTE: Yeas, 6
Nays, 0

Unfinished Business

A. Board members reviewed the final draft of the Hunter House Interpretive Plan. Mr. Dixon suggested some additional information be added to the historical background. Ms. Keefer remarked that she liked the layout with bold headings to make the document easier to read. Ms. Krizanic noted that she appreciated the inclusion of historic images.

MOTION: by Haugen, seconded by Keefer:

To approve the Hunter House Interpretive Plan as submitted and amended.

VOTE: Yeas, 6
Nays, 0

- B. Board members considered Museum Director Pielack's proposal to reconsider moving forward on raising funds and pursuing the construction of the Heritage Zone plan with the omission of the new museum sign/logo design. Instead, the structure for the signage can be built but the sign would be a temporary one that uses the existing design until the new museum logo can be mounted in its place. This will permit a renewed focus on the objective of making improvements that the public can use right away, and that fundraising efforts can target. The Board agreed by consensus with this direction and agreed to address this in more detail as part of ongoing meeting agendas.

New Business

- A. The Museum Board reviewed the proposed meeting schedule for 2020 and agreed the alternative July meeting date of July 9 rather than July 2 was preferable.

MOTION: by Dixon, seconded by Keefer:

To approve the 2020 Museum Board meeting schedule as proposed.

VOTE: Yeas, 6
Nays, 0

- B. The discussion of a joint event with the Museum Friends was deferred until the scheduled time of 6:30.

Communication and Reports

Director Pielack provided additional detail to the Director Report. The museum website has been modified to allow posting of the popular presentation videos and video shorts. In addition, the museum has a password protected open WiFi option for our visitors that will make utilization of tour apps more functional and effective. Mr. Haugen and Mr. Hughes reported on the opportunities and issues of developing a touring app for the Hunter House based on a recent discussion with museum staff. The need to approach this concept as a pilot project that would work with content the museum staff expect to develop anyway suggests a lower level of features initially (pending approval of funds by the Friends). There are various vendors who provide comparable apps, but the Encurate app has the easiest to apply features without a long-term contract if it doesn't work out. Director Pielack shared graphics and flyers relating to next year's exhibit and presentations, including a month-long special exhibit at the Hunter House, **"A Peek at Christmas Past: A Hunter House Look at the Holidays"** based on photos and materials in the collection relating to Christmas in Birmingham in the past. An incentive for Friends membership will include a complimentary set of reproduction vintage Christmas post cards in our collection. Based on visitor response, these could be sold in the future if there is a demand, as they are produced in house. The video series **"What Were They Thinking?"** is getting lots of positive attention. Members mentioned the possibility of future outreach that would involve cooking classes sponsored by area markets that may want to explore historic dishes and cooking methods. Director Pielack

also shared additional information about completing the above-ground and below-ground work at the Hunter House in the next construction season. Two separate RFPs will be developed and posted in December, with a timeline for bid review and contract proposal to the commission by mid to late March, with late April or May start of construction.

Ms. Logue reported on the positive experience of attending the Martha Baldwin induction ceremony, also attended by Mr. Haugen and several representatives from the city commission, library, and Baldwin Park boards. It was very well done and appreciated by all in attendance.

There were no public comments.

New Business

B. The Museum Board and Friends Board discussed ways of working together to support the Friends' fundraising efforts. The Heritage Zone objective was agreed upon as a concrete project that can be used to structure attempts at raising funds. Connecting with community resources was also discussed. In particular, Mr. Shell and the boards discussed working with his neighborhood association, of which he is President, to offer a complimentary 6-month membership in the Friends with their annual neighborhood association renewal in May. Association members could opt out, but otherwise would receive a special membership card to visit the museum. and a copy of the Heritage newsletter The Friends would be able to add their names to the regular renewal in December and potentially get renewing members. This pilot project would help the Friends in planning how to meet the needs of new members and possibly expanding this effort into other neighborhood associations. Mr. Gestschman suggested that having materials and handouts about historic resources would be helpful during cemetery tours. Further discussion included a strolling event that could be held to bring visitors and attention to the museum during the summer construction process along Maple Road. The event could consist of several merchant sites in downtown that can be tied in to our theme of celebrating women and Birmingham history, e.g., woman-owned businesses, buildings associated with historic women, and perhaps even wine or food developed by women business owners or chefs. Director Pielack has asked to be included on the agenda of the Birmingham Shopping District marketing committee in January to seek their support with this concept. Mr. Hughes recently participated in a similar event held in Detroit and will reach out to their planning team to get pointers or suggestions. An important component would be starting at the museum and handling all ticket revenue here. A final concept was mentioned regarding a separate event that could be held at the Big Rock in their Terrace Room, an affordable room in a historic building that could be an advantage for a fundraiser.

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

Ms. Krizanic adjourned the meeting at 7:40 PM.

DATE: December 5, 2019
TO: Museum Board
FROM: Leslie Pielack, Museum Director
SUBJECT: Director Report

YouTube Channel and Online Videos— The museum now has its own YouTube channel, which makes it much easier to share videos across social media platforms. Videos are now also available in a section on the regular museum website: one for lecture videos and one for video shorts.

Video Series—the third of three **‘What Were They Thinking? Food Edition’** will feature Victorian-era puddings traditionally served at holiday time. Plum pudding, Figgy pudding, and St. Nicholas pudding are the three options. The ingredients are not necessarily what you think! Be sure to vote for your preference and all will be revealed at the taste test, scheduled to air December 20.

Collection—We received two 1920s prints that used to hang in Pierce Elementary and exemplify the prevailing ideas for educating young children. One is a print with a Native American in the wilderness, another is a lithograph of a nursery rhyme. Both are in good condition.

Holiday Exhibit—**A Peek at Christmas Past: A Hunter House Look at the Holidays**—promotion around town, online and at the Wintr Markt; exhibit tour.

2020 Exhibit—**‘Beyond Suffrage: 200 Years of Empowering Birmingham Women’**—updates

Hunter House Project—Update from HDC meeting 12/4.

Hunter House Interpretive Plan—now available online on our website.

Oak200—The **History Coalition of Oakland County** is an informal group composed of historical societies, local history libraries, and small museums that meet on a monthly basis to share resources and collaborate to promote our histories. **Oak200** is the brand for Oakland County’s celebration of its bicentennial, which it has identified as March 28, 2020 (200 years since the formal organization of the county and its government). The initiative has recently decided to focus on Oakland County’s history through its local stories of the people who settled and helped build the county. An effort has begun through Oakland University to develop a web site hub that would be the “Go To” site online to find out what is going on in the county for the bicentennial but also to learn more about local history and the community historical societies that hold collections and exhibit/display them in a museum or library. Grad students are working on developing narratives and setting up the web site so local historians can also upload stories about their history. I am working with the students and also the History Coalition to streamline the process, identify local resources, and present the crowd-sourced content in a consistent and meaningful way. An important element is the citation and use of primary source material, which will strengthen the content. The final website will have the potential to expand in the future, ideally becoming the primary starting point for any research into Oakland County’s history. It will hopefully have a mapping tool that will permit visitors to explore the county’s history by hovering over a community and following links to historic sites, museums, and archives.