



Rochester Hills Minutes - Draft

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Rochester Hills Museum Foundation

*Bryan Barnett, Steven Fite, James Mallon, Stephanie Morita, Vern Pixley,
Katharine Rogers, Heather Sellick, Joe Snyder, Suzanne Wiggins;
Staff Advisor Pat McKay*

Foundation Mission: *The mission of the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation is to further the educational programs and purposes set forth by the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm.*

Museum Mission: *To enhance understanding of the past through interpreting, preserving and collecting the history of the greater Rochester area for present and future generations.*

Friday, August 18, 2017

7:30 AM

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen
Farm - Dairy Barn

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Mallon called the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation meeting to order at 7:32 a.m. Michigan Time.

ROLL CALL

Present 8 - Steven Fite, James Mallon, Stephanie Morita, Vern Pixley, Katharine Rogers, Heather Sellick, Joe Snyder and Suzanne Wiggins
Absent 1 - Bryan Barnett

Others Present:

*Michele Dunham, Museum Program Coordinator
Ken Elwert, Director of Parks and Forestry
Rebecca Fite
Pat McKay, Museum Manager
Jenna Raschke, Event Coordinator
Maria Willett, Special Assistant to the Mayor*

Mayor Barnett entered at 7:40 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2017-0362 Approval of Minutes - Rochester Hills Museum Foundation Regular Meeting - May 19, 2017

Attachments: [051917 Museum Foundation Board Meeting Minutes.pdf](#)
[Resolution \(Draft\).pdf](#)

A motion was made by Wiggins, seconded by Morita, that this matter be Approved as Presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 8 - Fite, Mallon, Morita, Pixley, Rogers, Heather Sellick, Snyder and Wiggins

Absent 1 - Barnett

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation approves the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 19, 2017 as presented.

Mayor Barnett entered at 7:40 a.m.

Present 9 - Bryan Barnett, Steven Fite, James Mallon, Stephanie Morita, Vern Pixley, Katharine Rogers, Heather Sellick, Joe Snyder and Suzanne Wiggins

MUSEUM UPDATE

Pat McKay, Museum Manager, reported that the roof was replaced on the Schoolhouse in May once the school groups were no longer using the building. He stated that the Museum is narrowing down the remaining capital projects that had been on the list since the building was acquired from the school system six years ago, and he explained that the vinyl siding will be removed. He noted that the building is on the National Register of Historic Places and artificial siding is frowned upon.

He reported that the Calf Barn floors were refinished with a Polyurea finish, which is much more durable than different polyurethane finishes. He noted that this will prevent stains from adhering to the concrete.

He noted that staffing level changes have included Jenna Raschke coming on-board full-time in July as Events Coordinator. Ms. Raschke had previously been part-time with the Museum for approximately a year. He stated that after the City changed its custodial contract, the Museum asked that it be able to hire its own custodian. He commented that while the process took a bit longer than anticipated, the new custodian begins next week. He explained that the previous contractors had no consistency, with nine individuals assigned to the Museum over the course of one year leading to concerns regarding giving out keys and building codes for unsupervised work. He added that having an employee handle custodial duties will allow more flexibility for work on weekends and for major events.

He explained that the part-time position held by Ms. Raschke will be filled by Labor Day weekend, giving the Museum a full staff for the first time in almost a year. He noted that college students helped out during the summer months.

He reported on the exhibit design project noting that Museum staff have their first meeting with the exhibit designer Flutter and Wow on September 13. He noted that the silo, store and lobby areas will be targeted for redesign along with ideas on how to reuse various spaces. Once the design is proposed, the funds needed for fabrication of the exhibits will be determined. He stated that it is hoped that drawings may be available by the Board's November meeting.

He stated that the Museum is open on Fridays and Saturdays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and commented that attendance is still feeling the positive effects from the PBS Movie.

Michele Dunham, Museum Program Coordinator, noted that the Museum's summer programs demonstrated a collaboration with other organizations in the community. She noted that the Tales and Trails Bike Ride partnered with the Rochester Hills Public Library and was attended by 180 riders.

Mr. McKay noted that Jenna Raschke, Suzanne Wiggins, Dr. Steven Fite and his wife Renee helped out at the event. He explained that attendees were divided up into groups of 20, and it had been a spectacular evening with volunteers repeating their story eight or so times. He expressed his thanks to the volunteers.

Ms. Dunham reported that the Barn Dance, a collaboration with the Rochester Downtown Development Authority, was cancelled due to low ticket sales. Another event, A Walk in Time, was a collaboration between the Museum and the Rochester Avon Historical Society and was well-received with good attendance. The Farm to Table event, a collaboration with the Rochester Garden Club, is sold out. This event will be held in the Calf Barn and will feature the Chef from the Chapman House.

She noted that she attended the Michigan Historic Preservation Network award ceremony which recognized the PBS Movie. She commented that during this trip she was able to obtain one of the Oriental rugs that Bertha and Sarah Van Hoosen purchased in the 1920s. The rug had been in the possession of Alice Serrell's family and is now on display in the Farmhouse.

She explained that the Museum applied for an award from the American Association for State and Local History for the PBS Movie; however, the application was denied because the DVD did not have closed captioning. She noted that Mr. McKay worked with Oliver Thornton and PBS and secured a captioned version.

Mr. McKay commented that the Museum is adamant about ensuring ADA-compliance; however, closed captioning had not been considered previously. He noted that the version that plays at the Museum will be closed captioned. He stated that this has raised awareness for the future.

Vice Chairperson Wiggins questioned whether the Museum could resubmit for the award next year.

Mr. McKay responded that he would look into that possibility.

He stated that Ms. Raschke was in attendance to report on the Calf Barn usage. He commented that it was unfortunate that the Barn Dance fund raiser was cancelled, as the Museum hoped to secure approximately \$15,000 from this event toward the Equipment Barn. He noted that not only was the event cancelled, the Museum had a loss of revenue as it was not booked for a wedding on a prime day.

Ms. Raschke reported that community and private event numbers are up. She noted that the Museum is not just known as a wedding venue; it is also a place where individuals celebrate memorial luncheons, birthday parties and anniversaries. She explained that the Museum seeks to find a balance as some events are not as profitable as others. She added that options are being explored relative to exclusive caterers and furniture vendors.

Mr. McKay commented that the Museum is approximately four years into running a facility that has become very popular. He noted that some individuals like the idea that they can select their own caterers, while others prefer to have everything set. He commented that it could be possible to make a small percentage on rentals and catering. He stated that the Museum is looking to bump some of the less profitable events from Saturday nights to Sunday to leave the Saturday events for the more profitable weddings.

Vice President Morita questioned the difference in the fee structure between a wedding and another event.

Mr. McKay responded that a wedding requires more staffing and more work.

Vice President Morita suggested that the Saturday night fee structure be the same no matter what type of event was booked. She noted that the Saturday rental could be structured for not less than six or seven hours, which would encourage events for lesser times to book on Sunday afternoon.

Mr. McKay noted that a fee schedule review is upcoming; however, any changes would not go into effect for approximately a year as current bookings would be grandfathered at each rate. He commented that the sooner the fees are changed, the sooner the Museum will begin recognizing more revenue. He stated that the Museum is trying to be fair and inclusive and run a good business model.

Additional discussion included the possibility of discounting rental rates during slow times such as winter or early spring.

Mr. McKay commented that when the facility first opened the City went out for a preferred caterer bid; however, it had been determined that the Museum should have more of a track record of the number of events held prior to making that selection.

Vice Chairperson Wiggins mentioned that many of the major rental facilities have a list of several caterers and rebid their list every few years.

After additional discussion regarding preferred caterers, **Mayor Barnett** noted that the City is trying to find a balance to optimally maximize revenues while still introducing the facility to the community as a relevant place to hold an event. He stated that in terms of overall events, the numbers are still up. He commented that everything is being run well and moving in the right direction.

Mr. McKay mentioned several community events held there for organizations that have supported the Museum over the years. He commented that during these events, staff members ask for time to present a five minute promotion for the Museum to explain that it is not just a barn to hold special events.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Vice Chairperson Wiggins noted that the Development Committee has only met once or twice recently due to summer vacations and schedule conflicts.

Mr. McKay reported that discussions regarding the equipment barn included conversation with the son of long-time farm manager Morris Place, who grew up on the farm and knows the details and can help tell more of the story of those who worked there.

He mentioned that the Fire Chief from Rochester has expressed an interest in finding a place to store an antique 1920s-era pumper fire truck that Rochester owns.

Vice President Morita questioned whether the farm originally had a fire truck, and what the reason would be for the Museum to store one.

Mr. McKay responded that the Museum strives to be a community history museum. He noted that it was discussed that the only way that the Museum might be able to consider storing it is if there was a financial arrangement in place to help fund the building.

Vice President Morita pointed out that the Museum does not take historic homes from other places in the city for display as they were not a part of the original property.

Mr. McKay responded that only one meeting was held to discuss whether it might be possible. He pointed out that the basement display level will have a fairly low ceiling. He added that there is a fine line between interpreting the Van Hoosen Farm and being a community history museum.

Extensive discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of possible storage of Rochester's fire truck. It was noted that Rochester was asked to present a proposal, and no imminent decision had been made.

Mayor Barnett commented that the Administration has been somewhat challenged by the architect's numbers for the Equipment Barn, which came in approximately \$100,000 higher than initially expected. He explained that the Administration has found many community partners in its development of Innovation Hills Park and suggested that the Board connect its mission with people who share its passion.

Mr. McKay noted that not only does the Equipment Barn replicate another building on its site, it allows the Museum to empty other buildings that are currently used for storage and move those contents so our historic buildings can be used for display.

He commented that the public fund raising phase has not yet begun for the Barn, and he noted that he would like to see an announcement of the public fund raising phase by the end of the year.

BROOMFIELD CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

***Mr. McKay** discussed the efforts toward securing a speaker for the Broomfield Center for Leadership program. He mentioned several individuals contacted who responded that they would not be able to participate. He noted that Maria Willett had an idea for a possible speaker.*

***Ms. Willett** suggested that Paul Glantz, CEO of Emagine Entertainment and the Emagine Theaters be considered as he is well-recognized as an entrepreneur and would have some great visuals to present.*

***Mayor Barnett** stated that Mr. Glantz was named Michigan Entrepreneur of the Year a couple of years ago and has a cult-like following among a demographic that the Museum does not normally see. He noted Mr. Glantz's strong social media following. He stated that he is a very close friend of the City and strong supporter and had been critical in the Museum's ability to host its PBS Movie Premiere at the Rochester Emagine Theater. He commented that Mr. Glantz is a significant leader in the community, and is someone who could bring in a slightly different crowd and a unique draw.*

***Dr. Sellick** commented that she thought this was an excellent idea as engaging the younger population is imperative for the Museum's future.*

***Mr. McKay** stated that the program needs to stay loyal to promoting leadership. He commented that he thought that Mr. Glantz would be an exceptional choice.*

***Mayor Barnett** stated that if the Board is interested in moving forward, it could consider having the event at the Theater, and could make it more attractive with free popcorn and pop. He noted that the Museum makes the experience positive for its moviegoers and this could invoke a positive experience for attendees.*

He mentioned that he had attended Crittenton Hospital's 50th Anniversary Celebration and noted that photographs of the initial groundbreaking for the hospital highlighted Board Member Kathy Rogers' father and Congressman Broomfield.

***Mr. McKay** commented that the Museum provided the archival material for the celebration. He noted that it is amazing what philanthropy has done in the community, and mentioned Crittenton Hospital, Oakland University, and Avon Players, as cornerstones of the community based on philanthropic gifts.*

He noted that the September/October newsletter would be going out soon, and if a date for the Broomfield Center for Leadership program could be set he would let the Board members know. He mentioned that in the past the program presented an opportunity for a donor dinner prior to the event and commented that perhaps something could be scheduled separately if not feasible to have a dinner prior to a program at the Emagine Theater.

Mr. McKay noted that Museum staff have been thinking ahead regarding the Broomfield archives and when they might be made available to the Museum. He explained that he and Museum Archivist Samantha Lawrence met with Oakland University to review their handling of Mike Rogers' congressional collection. He noted that Ms. Lawrence has been working toward being able to absorb archive materials into the Museum's storage spaces. He commented that the Museum is being overwhelmed with archival items as it has been approached by the City of Rochester to store items along with the Rochester Hills Public Library's consideration of eliminating its local history room. He stated that the Museum would not be able to store these additional archives without any compensation. He mentioned the possibility of a shared position with the other entities to fund a full-time archivist, noting that Ms. Lawrence's position is 24 hours per week.

Ms. Dunham noted that the Museum will be participating in Museum Day Live through the Smithsonian on September 23. Museums throughout the United States will be open on that Saturday to focus on archives.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Elwert requested the Board revisit the discussion regarding the possibility of storing Rochester's antique fire truck and provide opinions and input as to whether it would be appropriate.

Mr. McKay noted that the truck would be open for public viewing.

Dr. Sellick expressed concern that the Museum already has a need for more space and questioned whether it would interfere with other items the Museum might want to display. She questioned whether it would be a permanent arrangement.

Mr. McKay responded that the agreement could be structured so that it would be reviewed every ten years or so. Perhaps at that time, Rochester might be able to store its own truck.

Mr. Pixley commented that while it might be worth looking into, he would agree that the timeframe be limited for review on a recurring basis in the event that the Museum's needs might change.

Dr. Fite suggested that if the space is available it might be a great idea with a ten-year lease with compensation.

Vice President Morita commented that she did not believe that Council would lend support for a \$500,000 expenditure that would house an asset for the City of Rochester.

Mr. McKay mentioned that the Museum has a program in October during Fire Prevention Month on the history of fire protection in the regional community. The program will feature eight current and previous fire chiefs from Avon Township,

Rochester Hills and Oakland Township. He pointed out that at one time one department served the entire community and the antique truck served Avon Township.

Vice President Morita stated that if Rochester would volunteer to put a substantial sum toward the Equipment Barn it might be more acceptable to Council; however, this would not be likely if Rochester Hills was funding the full construction beyond the donations.

Vice Chairperson Wiggins pointed out that the Strategic Plan for the Museum includes restoring the farm back to its original glory. She stated that the discussion should focus on the original intent of the building and the City's utilization of the upper section of the building with open air display down below.

Ms. Rogers stated that this is similar to the furniture on display in the Farmhouse. She commented that if it is was not there originally, it would not be wanted. She suggested that it could possibly be a temporary display for a year or two with some monetary contribution.

Mr. McKay commented that there are those who have tractor collections as well that could be on display. He pointed out that the display area would not be climate-controlled and would be considered cold storage.

Dr. Sellick stated that while it is a delicate situation, she believes it to be very important to have discussions with Rochester as the Museum was a part of the whole area. She commented that it is important to have involvement and hopefully financial support from the other community.

Chairperson Mallon noted that part of the Museum property is within the boundaries of Rochester.

Mr. McKay responded that the whole barn is within Rochester's boundaries as it was a part of the annexation of 1974.

Upcoming Museum Events

Mr. McKay noted upcoming Museum events, including:

- Monday-Thursday, August 21-24 - Writers' Camp - sold out.
- Tuesday, August 22 - 9:30 a.m. - Farm to Table - about 75 people are expected.
- Wednesday, August 23 - 7:00 p.m. - Music in the Garden
- Saturday, September 10 - 1:00 p.m. - Rochester Grangers v. Northville Eclipse
- Tuesday, September 26 - 7:00 p.m. - SMART TOWNS - Railroad Depots in the Gilded Age
- Saturday, October 14 - 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Stone Wall Pumpkin Festival
- Tuesday-Thursday, October 17-19 - Two presentations at Michigan Museum's Association meeting in Lansing
- Thursday, November 19 - Veterans' Day Event - WWI Lecture

He noted that the Museum will be open in the month of December on Saturdays and Sundays for the train exhibit. He announced that the newsletter should be out within the next two weeks. He mentioned that it is hoped to have an update on the Flutter and Wow exhibit design for the November meeting, along with more information on the Equipment Barn.

He commented that the Board has risen to the challenge for the Calf Barn and needs to do what it can to secure more private funding for the Equipment Barn. He stated that it is another piece of the puzzle.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- Friday, November 17, 2017 - 7:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chairperson Mallon adjourned the meeting at 8:47 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Mary Jo Pachla.

Minutes were approved as presented/amended at the November 17, 2017 Regular Museum Foundation Board Meeting.

James Mallon, Chairperson