



# Rochester Hills Minutes - Draft

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## Rochester Hills Museum Foundation

*Bryan Barnett, Steven Fite, James Mallon, Stephanie Morita, Vern Pixley,  
Katharine Rogers, Keith Sawdon, Heather Sellick, 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:** *Because appreciation of the present is enhanced by understanding the past, the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm interprets, preserves and collects the history of the greater Rochester area for present and future generations.*

**Vision:** *The Museum is the primary site for learning about and preserving the history of the greater Rochester area in Oakland County, Michigan, as a representative of similar communities throughout Michigan.*

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Friday, May 20, 2016

7:30 AM

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen  
Farm - Dairy Barn

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### CALL TO ORDER

*Chairperson James Mallon called the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation meeting to order at 7:34 a.m. Michigan Time.*

### ROLL CALL

**Present** 8 - Steven Fite, James Mallon, Stephanie Morita, Katharine Rogers, Heather Sellick, Keith Sawdon, Bryan Barnett and Suzanne Wiggins

**Absent** 1 - Vern Pixley

### PUBLIC COMMENT

*None.*

### CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS

**Chairperson Mallon** noted the upcoming retirement of City Finance Director Keith Sawdon. He commented that the City and the Foundation has been fortunate to have his service these past years.

**Mr. Sawdon** stated that the Museum has always been important to him, and commented that it has been an honor to serve. He expressed interest in continued involvement with the Museum Foundation as a private citizen.

**Mayor Barnett** commented that Mr. Sawdon has done a fantastic job for the City, and is recognized as one of the best in his field. He stated that his retirement will leave a huge void. He mentioned that Mr. Sawdon guided the City through the establishment of a 501(c)3 for the Museum Foundation, creating an organization in concert with, yet separate from the City.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2016-0197 Approval of Minutes - Rochester Hills Museum Foundation Regular Meeting - February 19, 2016

Attachments: [021916 Museum Foundation draft minutes.pdf](#)  
[Resolution.pdf](#)

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

**Aye** 8 - Fite, Mallon, Morita, Rogers, Heather Sellick, Sawdon, Barnett and Wiggins

**Absent** 1 - Pixley

**Resolved**, that the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation approves the Minutes of their Regular Meeting of February 19, 2016 as presented.

## MUSEUM UPDATE

**Pat McKay** noted that the Museum has added seven new staff members since January, including an Event Coordinator, Archivist, and two new seasonal employees. The Facilities Division has also assigned a new staff member to the Museum, and a new custodial firm was contracted by the City to clean. He commented that the transition has brought much new energy to the Museum.

### Digitizing Newspapers:

**Mr. McKay** stated that Samantha Lawrence, the Museum's new Archivist, has worked extensively on the Newspaper Project. Through the efforts of Ms. Lawrence and a co-op student from Rochester High School, all of the Museum's newspapers from 1873 to 1949 are available online. Years 1949 to 1973 have yet to be digitized. He noted that the City was able to use funding left over at the end of the year throughout the departments to undertake this project.

### Equipment Barn Rebuild Project:

**Mr. McKay** noted that the next capital project for the Museum is the Equipment Barn. He explained that the Equipment Barn is one of the smaller buildings that was along Runyon Road. An upper level along Runyon will store equipment that is currently sitting outside including the backhoe and golf carts, and a lower level will be open to the public to display restored equipment that tells the story of the farm. He stated that when the City acquired the property, the building was in a distressed condition and in imminent danger of collapse, and had to be taken down. He mentioned that he believes that the City may fund a portion of its reconstruction as it will be used to house some of the City's assets. The Museum will undertake fund raising to build the lower display area. He commented that he hopes that Jackie Hoist, H2A Architects, will have some drawings, designs, and estimates available for the next Foundation Board meeting.

**Ken Elwert**, Director of Parks and Forestry, entered.

**Mayor Barnett** introduced Mr. Elwert, noting that he will be intricately involved in the Museum.

**Mr. Elwert** stated that he has been involved in the parks and recreation industry for about 20 years, most recently with Independence Township Parks and Recreation. He mentioned that he previously managed a historic mill and General Squire Memorial Park in Lapeer County, which is a significant historical property on the State Register. He stated that he is looking forward to working with Mr. McKay and his crew on continuing the Museum's efforts.

**Mr. Sawdon** questioned whether the Equipment Barn will be historically accurate inside and out.

**Mr. McKay** explained that the building footprint is slightly in the road right-of-way. He stated that he has been in contact with the City of Rochester, and at this point this does not seem to be an issue as Runyon Road is lightly traveled. He noted that moving the footprint back out of the right-of-way would impact the current driveway. He mentioned that an alternate exit driveway is being looked at; however, consideration must be given to avoid headlights shining into nearby homes. He stated that the Museum will seek a more formal approval from the City of Rochester. He added that the exterior will look as accurate as possible. He noted that prior to taking down the original barn, architectural drawings were created of the building. He mentioned that there is a water line in front of the building; and it will be reviewed whether water will be needed inside the structure. He pointed out that if fire suppression is deemed necessary, at a minimum heat will be needed in the room where the water comes in.

**Ms. Morita** questioned how big the structure would be and if it would be sufficient for the Museum's needs.

**Mr. McKay** responded that it will be approximately 3,000 square feet for both floors. He noted that this was the original building size as the intention is to keep the original footprint.

**Mr. Elwert** commented that Ms. Hoist will be undertaking a space analysis considering the original footprint.

**Mr. McKay** stated that a review of whether the project can be phased is also being undertaken. He commented that sometimes it is better to complete a project all at once. He noted that more detailed information will be available at the August Foundation Board Meeting.

PBS Movie - "On Van Hoosen Farm":

**Mr. McKay** stated that he and Michele Dunham had the opportunity to meet with Oliver Thornton, the writer/producer of the PBS movie in production on the Farm. He noted that Mr. Thornton is a Professor at the University of Michigan

*in their Film and Television Program, and lives on Ludlow Street in Rochester. He explained that the video will be unveiled at the Museum on September 22, 2016. He pointed out that funding has come from Steve Taylor of Toledo, Ohio, descendant of the Taylor Family, the Bath Family Foundation, and the Broomfield Charitable Trust. He noted that the Bath Family is Sue Thomasson's family.*

Community Bicentennial in 2017:

**Mr. McKay** stated that the Museum has been asked to participate in the community's bicentennial. He noted that Rochester was settled in 1817, and the area will celebrate its 200th anniversary with a year-long list of activities.

He mentioned that the Museum will be starting some joint projects with Oakland County Parks, possibly some cemetery and barn tours. He noted that a book was dropped off yesterday which tells the story of major barns in Oakland County which will be available at the Museum. He stated that the Museum hosted the Michigan Barn Preservation Network for a program two years ago, when the Museum received Barn of the Year for the Calf Barn.

## DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Broomfield Center for Leadership Program Review:

**Vice Chair Suzanne Wiggins** noted that approximately 60 people attended the Broomfield Center for Leadership Program event last week, which featured Mary Kramer of Crain's Detroit Business. Twenty-nine attended the donor dinner preceding the lecture. She expressed her thanks to the Board Members and staff that were there to help recognize the Museum's closest friends and significant supporters.

She noted that the Development Committee will be once again asking to meet with Foundation Board Members individually to discuss their interest and participation to help the Museum go forward toward a plan to raise funds for the Equipment Barn and other projects.

**Mr. McKay** commented that the Museum is always looking for the next speaker for the Leadership Program. He noted that it is a lengthy process to secure a speaker. He noted that while the next program is planned for May, 2017, the date will be flexible to accommodate a potential speaker's availability.

**Mayor Barnett** questioned whether the Board has a specific plan to follow up with the individuals who attended the program and the donor dinner.

**Mr. McKay** responded that part of the registration process for the event included capturing names, addresses and email addresses of attendees. He added that attendees were given a packet of information as they left. He stated that the Development Committee will be given this information for future contact. He mentioned that any funds left over from the Calf Barn project will be earmarked for the Equipment Barn. He stated that the Mayor's Office sent out a sponsorship

packet which has generated a significant amount of funds toward the Garden Walk and Pumpkin Festival events.

**Mayor Barnett** questioned who is sponsoring the Museum's Wet and Wild Wednesdays, noting that approximately 1,500 parents and children typically attend.

**Mr. McKay** responded that Hollywood Market, Crittenton Hospital, Goldfish Swim School, State Farm and Genisys Credit Union are sponsoring events.

**Vice Chairperson Wiggins** commented that the Development Committee would like to involve the Board Members to make personal phone calls or email contacts with previous donors to express their appreciation for their attendance at events and support in the past.

Patriot Week:

**Mr. McKay** explained that Patriot Week is set for the week between September 11, commemorating the events of 9-11, and September 18, the date that the United States Constitution was signed in 1776. He stated that activities will be set up for Patriot Week that Board Members will be able to participate in, including a series of family-oriented lectures and programs.

**Vice Chairperson Wiggins** questioned whether the premiere of the PBS video might be incorporated as an event, and whether it would be free or would have a charge for admission.

**Mr. McKay** responded that the video unveiling will be held on the Thursday after Patriot Week. He commented that a fee might be established as a fund raiser for the Equipment Barn. He stressed that the video will be a wonderful production and will tell the farm's story nation-wide.

**Vice Chairperson Wiggins** noted that she would be sending an email to the Board Members as dates are established for meetings with them.

## FOUNDATION SHORT/LONG TERM GOALS AND BRAINSTORMING

**Mr. McKay** stated that this is an opportunity to hear ideas from the Foundation Board on how the Museum is doing and what direction the Board would like to see it take.

**Vice Chairperson Wiggins** noted that between this meeting and the August meeting, the Development Committee will be scheduling to meet with individual Board Members; and she welcomed ideas from the members on what should be included for discussion in these individual meetings. She questioned how the Board Members viewed Ms. Kramer's talk for the Leadership Program.

**Ms. Morita** commented that she wished that Ms. Kramer had given more insight into her life experiences as a woman, a publisher, and a leader.

**Chairperson Mallon** commented that he would have liked to hear more about the City of Detroit dealings; however, he thought perhaps she could not comment on certain things.

**Mr. McKay** stated that her presentation was videotaped and will be broadcast on the City's cable channel.

**Vice Chairperson Wiggins** suggested that links to the video presentation be available on the Museum's website pages, including the Broomfield page.

**Mayor Barnett** noted that the attendees should be viewed as a target audience in looking forward for future speakers.

**Mr. McKay** noted that events such as the Broomfield Leadership Program show that the Museum is more than just a children's museum. He stated that the lecture series balances the children's events and ensure that adults will come back and be engaged.

**Mr. Fite** questioned whether Survey Monkey could be used to evaluate feedback on the program.

**Mr. McKay** responded that this could be done.

## ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**Mayor Barnett** stated that the City's Arbor Day celebration enjoyed excellent weather, as a tree was planted on Museum grounds in honor of Sue Thomasson. He commented that her family was in attendance. He credited Maria Willett who was heavily involved in that event.

He mentioned that as he was leaving the Arbor Day event, a family who recently moved to Rochester Hills from New Jersey sought him out to ask questions about the Museum and its history. He commented that they expressed that they had fallen in love with the farm, and he credited the Museum team for the care they have given to the property.

**Mr. McKay** noted that the upcoming weekend will be one of the busiest of the entire spring, with a wedding and a reception, the Frogs and Toads event, and a Stoney Creek Model Railroad Club educational event. He mentioned that several schools are holding their proms, and he noted that almost 1,100 people visit the grounds for prom pictures on one night.

He stated that the Garden Club held their annual clean-up party, with 35 members working for six hours to get the grounds ready for the summer season. He commented that the hours expended by these volunteers translate to thousands of dollars of effort going into the gardens and grounds, freeing up staff to do other things.

**Mayor Barnett** noted that it is through the Foundation Board's support and efforts that the Museum can create an experience for those visiting it. He expressed his thank you for the Board's efforts along with the Museum's donors to make the Museum a year-round destination.

**Michele Dunham** mentioned an attendee of a wedding last weekend who it was found was a descendent of the first person buried in the Cemetery, Michael Van Wagoner.

**Mr. McKay** commented that the attendee stated that he knew where the original burial plot was, even though the original stone has disappeared and the Museum's cemetery records do not have the original location. He also noted that this ancestor is a relative of Murray Van Wagoner, Governor of Michigan. He stated that the Museum is anxious to secure any materials he might share.

He noted that the Museum is doing very well with its children's programs and school tours. He pointed out that Hart Middle School students were out again this year to test the waters of the Clinton River Watershed. The program has been ongoing annually for 30 years and provides a look at the environmental side of the property. He mentioned that a huge turning point in school programs occurred when the Rochester Community School District turned the Schoolhouse over to the Museum in 2010.

He stated that students from Van Hoosen Middle School are researching potential candidates for the Museum's Hall of Fame. Two individuals suggested include George Zamka, space shuttle pilot, and Gladys McKinney, who was recently inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. He commented that a Patriot Week event might be utilized to induct this year's individuals.

He mentioned that several interns will be working with Museum staff over the summer.

## NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Museum Foundation Board meeting is set for Friday, August 19, 2016 - 7:30 a.m.

## Upcoming Museum Programs

- May 21 - Fascinating Frogs and Toads
- May 15, 28, June 19, 23, July 31, August 6, 28 - Rochester Grangers Vintage Base Ball Home Matches

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chairperson Mallon adjourned the meeting at 8:35 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Mary Jo Pachla.

Minutes were approved as presented/amended at the \_\_\_\_\_ [year] Regular Rochester Hills Museum Foundation Meeting.

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James Mallon, Chairperson