



Rochester Hills Minutes - Draft

Rochester Hills Museum Foundation

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*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, November 15, 2019

7:30 AM

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen
Farm - Van Hoosen Farmhouse

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Present 5 - Steven Fite, James Mallon, Stephanie Morita, Katharine Rogers and
Suzanne Wiggins
Absent 4 - Bryan Barnett, Vern Pixley, Heather Sellick and Joe Snyder

Others Present:

*Cathy Fitzpatrick, Museum Program Coordinator
Pat McKay, Museum Manager
Maria Willett (entered 7:38 a.m.)*

*Mayor Barnett entered at 7:38 a.m.
Joe Snyder entered at 8:00 a.m.*

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2019-0496](#) Approval of Minutes - Rochester Hills Museum Foundation Meeting - August 16,
2019

Attachments: [081619 Museum Foundation Draft Minutes.pdf](#)
[Minutes Resolution.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 5 - Fite, Mallon, Morita, Rogers and Wiggins

Absent 4 - Barnett, Pixley, Heather Sellick and Snyder

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation hereby approves the minutes of the meeting of August 16, 2019 as presented.

(Mayor Barnett entered at 7:38 a.m.)

(Joe Snyder entered at 8:00 a.m.)

Present 7 - Bryan Barnett, Steven Fite, James Mallon, Stephanie Morita, Katharine Rogers, Joe Snyder and Suzanne Wiggins

Absent 2 - Vern Pixley and Heather Sellick

MUSEUM UPDATE

- Shout outs for good news in 2020

Mr. McKay stated that the November meeting is an opportunity to thank the Museum Foundation Board members for their efforts and input in 2019. He noted that it is also an opportunity to highlight the progress made this year, and he listed the following:

Through the help of the Questers, roller shades were installed in the farmhouse to further protect against fading due to sun damage.

The schoolhouse siding project is complete, removing the vinyl and restoring the natural wood siding.

Genysis Credit Union has lent support and sponsorship to many Museum events.

The Garden Club steps forward every year to beautify the Museum grounds.

The Museum received a \$50,000 grant from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) for the Equipment Barn. This is a significant amount for a MCACA grant and is one of the highest awarded in Oakland County.

- Introduction of Cathy Fitzpatrick, Museum Program Coordinator

Mr. McKay introduced Cathy Fitzpatrick, noting that she began working with the Museum in September, replacing Michele Dunham who retired. She was selected from over 170 applicants for the position, and comes to the Museum from the Chippewa Nature Center in Midland where she was the Historian.

Museum Board Members welcomed Ms. Fitzpatrick.

- Young Leaders Circle

Mr. McKay noted that a representative from the Young Leaders Circle will attend the February 2020 meeting. He credited Maria Willett for her assistance in starting this young professionals group, and stated that they are eager to learn about the history and help support Museum events. He commented that hopefully they will attract an audience that the Museum does not see as frequently.

- Big Green Tractor Event

Mr. McKay commented that while this event was found to be much more challenging to pull off, it did raise \$1,500. He stated that he intends to make this an annual event. He expressed his thanks to the Young Leaders Circle for helping with the event. He mentioned that it was challenging for the Museum to put on an event that sold alcohol rather than just hosted the serving of it; and pointed out that the building is actually located within the City of Rochester's boundaries, requiring adherence to that city's rules and regulations regarding liquor licenses.

Mayor Barnett commented that while this is a fund raising event, it was also a friend-raising event, with approximately 70 percent of those attending being first-time visitors to the Museum. He stated that while events that produce more to the bottom line are desirable, the new relationship and interest spurred by attendees is also valuable.

- New Exhibits

Discussion centered on the Native American and earlier timeline exhibits. **Mr. McKay** noted that the Museum has a speaker coming in March who is a Native American from the Harbor Springs area who will provide some guidance on our exhibits. His presentation will discuss challenges that Native Americans still face. He noted that the Museum will be meeting with Cranbrook to borrow some of the mastodon bones that were found on Adams Road to display some of the area's earliest history.

Ms. Morita questioned whether there would be enough room in the silo area to incorporate that portion of the exhibits.

Mr. McKay responded that the exhibits would most likely extend beyond that area. He stated that there should be exhibit designs to present to the Board at the February meeting. He stressed that the goal is to make the timelines interactive with visitors to allow them to place their family's history and significant events among the Museum timelines.

DAIRY BARN

Mr. McKay pointed out that the temporary trailer has arrived, and he noted that exhibits will be moved over to the trailer next Friday. The kick-off meeting with the structural engineers and architect will be held this coming Tuesday, with a goal of being able to put the Equipment Barn out for bid at the same time as the Dairy Barn roof to hopefully net some economies of scale.

EQUIPMENT BARN

Mr. McKay noted that approvals are required from the City of Rochester. He explained that Rochester's Planning Commission is a two-step process, with the Museum first meeting with them in September. The project will be discussed at a second meeting this coming week. Once approval is recommended, it will move to their Zoning Board of Appeals in December to approve a variance for construction in the right-of-way and for exceeding the height limitations of their ordinance.

Ms. Morita suggested that City Attorney Staran be consulted for the best way for the Museum's presentation to the Zoning Board of Appeals to approach proving practical difficulty for the record.

Mr. McKay stated that he had an updated budget for the Equipment Barn which notes that the funding is approximately \$24,000 short of what is needed. He commented that he hoped that the annual appeal would be able to make a dent in that amount. He mentioned that certain items could be eliminated to help bring cost down, such as the fire suppression or bringing water and sewer to the building. He noted a goal to move the dumpster would also be desirable both from a good-neighbor standpoint and moving it to a location more accessible for the trash hauler's truck during the day.

Mayor Barnett suggested that the appeal focus on how the fund raising momentum is almost complete. He stated that to stress the grant received and a desire to finish the fund raising work by year's end should be the focus of the team.

Mr. McKay also noted that Mr. Snyder would also like to see the Museum's share of the cost increase above 25 percent.

BROOMFIELD LEADERSHIP EVENT

Vice Chairperson Wiggins stated that the Board will be assembling a subcommittee to work on the difficulty of finding a speaker and arriving at an available date. She pointed out that the Foundation Board agreed to take on the responsibility of that program five years ago.

Mr. McKay noted that the subcommittee will consist himself and Dr. Fite, Dr. Sellick, Chairperson Mallon and Vice Chairperson Wiggins. He added that he had a file of names of individuals that could be contacted, and the committee should also discuss whether it would be a fund raising or friend-raising event with free or paid admission.

BRAINSTORMING AND DISCUSSION

Mr. McKay noted that the most recent version of the Preservation and Adaptive Reuse Plan is now five years old and many of the projects that were identified are complete, including acquiring the schoolhouse, completing the Calf Barn, and developing new exhibits.

Vice Chairperson Wiggins commented that she is eager and ready to move

on to the Big Barn and believes that the community would be very excited about the historical significance that it represents.

Ms. Morita commented that the price estimated in the plan at \$6 million could actually be closer to \$12 million now.

Mr. McKay responded that updating this document would provide an opportunity to rethink the priority of the project and get prices updated. He added that it would also provide an opportunity to review programming and the strategic plan for the Museum's operations. He invited the Museum Board Members to weigh in with their thoughts and ideas.

Vice Chairperson Wiggins noted that it could provide some fund raising options for large spaces and galleries with naming rights.

Ms. Morita noted that the City has a Naming Policy.

Mayor Barnett stated that the Naming Policy could address something like this. He mentioned that the City has other plans on the books for developing park areas and an organization or corporate sponsor with a passion for something could be accommodated. He noted that Innovation Hills provided the opportunity to lay a vision out that attracted interest, and suggested that the Museum could put its vision out there to get the community involved. He stated that the narrative could be developed as to why the community cannot thrive without the big barn in the future.

Dr. Fite questioned what capacity a large barn could have and whether there is demand for hosting 250 to 300 people.

Mr. McKay responded that there is. He commented that the Calf Barn can hold approximately 130 or 140 and has challenges for caterers as there is no food preparation area.

He stated that the plan update should be both from a preservation and strategic standpoint, reviewing operation and programming.

Ms. Morita questioned whether development of an updated plan should be included in the budgeting process.

Mr. Snyder stated that the Parks Master Plan update is included in the 2020 budget; however, it would not be specific to the Museum needs.

Mr. McKay noted that the Museum Staff could do a significant amount of the plan with updated numbers from H2A's involvement.

Ms. Morita suggested that additional projects be identified. She stated that while she has no doubt that the Museum Staff will contribute 90 percent of what goes into the plan, she would like to ensure that if outside help is desired that funding is available.

Vice Chairperson Wiggins noted that when the Foundation Board was first

created, a gift of \$10,000 was included in an account at the Community Foundation that has never been allocated to anything. She suggested that these funds could be used toward the development of a plan update.

Mr. McKay commented that if the Museum's vision is continuously conveyed to the public, the Museum will find people who will want to help. He stated that it is truly a community effort.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Volunteer appreciation event - moved from December 2019 to June 2020*
- Holiday decorations going up starting Saturday, November 23 - thanks to the Rochester Garden Club and various volunteers*
- Model Train exhibit - November 9-January 4*
- Friday nights in February - Film Festival*
- Friday nights in March - Cabin Fever Lecture Series*

NEXT MEETING DATE

- Friday, February 21, 2020, 7:30 a.m.

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 February 21, 2020 Regular Museum Foundation Board Meeting.

James Mallon, Chairperson