



Rochester Hills Minutes

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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 21, 2020

7:30 AM

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen
Farm - Dairy Barn

CALL TO ORDER

*Vice Chairperson Suzanne Wiggins called the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation
Board meeting to order at 7:34 a.m. via Zoom teleconference.*

ROLL CALL

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

Absent 1 - Steven Fite

Others Present:

*Patrick McKay, Museum Manager
Cathy Fitzpatrick, Museum Program Coordinator
Maria Willett, Chief Assistant to the Mayor
Olivia Olson, Rochester Hills Museum Young Leaders Circle*

*Vice Chairperson Wiggins noted that Dr. Fite provided prior notice that he would be
unable to attend the meeting.*

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2020-0319 Approval of Minutes - Rochester Hills Museum Foundation Meeting - February
21, 2020

Attachments: [022120 Draft Museum Foundation Minutes.pdf](#)
[Resolution.pdf](#)

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

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

Absent 1 - Fite

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation Board approves the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 21, 2020 as presented.

Rochester Hills Museum Young Foundation Professionals Presentation

Pat McKay stated that in an effort to ensure that the many different populations and interests in the community are addressed, Maria Willett brought the idea of engaging a Young Professionals group to support the Museum. He noted that the group has been involved for approximately one year now and have been working with staff representatives Cathy Fitzpatrick and Samantha Lawrence.

Olivia Olson, representative for the Young Leaders Circle, stated that her group consists of young people in their 20s, 30s and 40s who love the Museum and want to give back to the community with their involvement. She commented that thanks to Ms. Willett's hard work the organization membership consists of enthusiastic individuals from differing backgrounds, including government, libraries, students, and the business sector. The group sees that its role is to support the museum by sharing ideas about programming and services that might appeal to their age group, and using social networks to spread the word about what the Museum is doing. She explained that while this age group is very busy with much going on in their lives, they can also be a very isolated group eager to make connections with others in the community, especially during these difficult times.

She stated that a testament to how eager people in the age group in the community are to participate in community events was the Big Green Tractor Beer Fest last fall, which was so successful that a second annual event has been planned.

She noted that much of the programming that the group had in mind for the spring had to be postponed due to COVID-19. She mentioned that the group found health and wellness programming to be of interest, and she commented that a painting program was developed that came out of one of the meeting discussions.

Ms. Fitzpatrick noted that the Museum is working with the Paint Creek Center for the Arts (PCCA) on a program which will have easels spread throughout the Museum grounds. The program, a unique partnership between the PCCA and the Museum, is set up for minimum contact this fall.

Mr. McKay commented that the group participated in a bike tour that, thanks to Vern Pixley who rode along with the group, shed some light on a different side of history that many did not know existed. He stated that he was impressed with the membership that the group has including representation from Oakland Township's municipal offices, Oakland University, and the Rochester Hills Public Library.

Ms. Willett explained that the group strove to recruit representatives who could bring various connections to the Museum. She noted that someone did not have to be an expert in the museum to be involved in the group. She commented that Ms. Olson was selected because she was found to be interested in reading *Petticoat Surgeon*, which is a unique passion for someone in the age group.

MUSEUM UPDATE

Dairy Barn and Equipment Barn Construction Updates:

Mr. McKay provided the Museum Update, noting that Council approved \$3.5 million to support the Museum, including \$2.4 million for the roof replacement for the Dairy Barn and \$1 million for the Equipment Barn rebuild. He expressed his thanks to Mayor Barnett, City Council, and especially Ms. Morita for their assistance in gaining Council's support. He mentioned that plans are still going through the City of Rochester's site approval process, and the goal is to still start construction this fall.

He pointed out that the exhibits are all in storage, and the Native American exhibit component will not arrive until the Dairy Barn is done. He stated that Cranbrook Science Museum is willing to not only loan the Museum the mastodon bones, but also several of their display cases. He commented that there will be new exhibits in all three buildings, the Equipment Barn, the Milk House and the Bull Barn, and he noted that the lower level of the Equipment Barn will feature exhibits that will highlight a popular topic right now, STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. He stated that the goal will be to make history relevant to today.

He discussed funding, noting that as a part of the approval of the \$3.5 million, the Museum noted that it will be putting up \$250,000 in private funding. He mentioned that currently the funds are approximately \$15,000 short, and he noted that programs all summer long will be focused on raising these funds.

Vice Chairperson Wiggins expressed her thanks to the Mayor and to Ms. Morita for their help and support in making sure that these funds were approved. She commented that once the project is complete, the community will be even more engaged and happy with what is going on at the Museum.

Mayor Barnett stated that it is very easy and helpful to tell the Museum's story to City Council and he thanked Ms. Morita for her leadership there. He commented that when the Museum has a team behind it such as this Board, the energy of the Young Leaders Group, and the past successes it has had in fund raising, it is a doable goal to raise the last \$15,000-\$20,000 to get things finished.

Museum Operations:

Mr. McKay stated that he would be presenting a powerpoint highlighting how the

Museum has been adapting since February. He noted that staff have remained in the building since February and March as things were shutting down to ensure that the buildings were safe. He explained that approximately 90 different educational programs had been cancelled, those that did continue had crowd size restricted, and indoor events were cancelled.

He listed programs that were introduced this summer:

- Stream Science. Staff members were on-site interacting and answering questions.
- Tuesdays in the Garden. Undertaken in partnership with the Rochester Garden Club.
- Walking Tours included Stoney Creek Cemetery, Stoney Creek Village, Stoney Creek School House, and Landscape tours.
- Pedal the Past, in collaboration with the Rochester Hills Public Library.
- Bike Tours of Downtown Rochester
- Wet and Wild Wednesdays were held with advance tickets only, limiting participants to 80 people total. With staff, keeping the total to 100.
- Activities that maintained partnership with various groups including the Clinton River Watershed Council.

He announced several fall events:

- Walking and Bike tours will continue, with times adjusted to account for the shortened days.
- Zoom lectures will include the SMART Town lecture series, highlighting the Michigan Thumb Fires, and the Summer of 1816.
- Apple programs will be featured.
- A Hiking Tour of Bloomer Park History
- Art programs in conjunction with the PCCA.
- The Second Annual Big Green Tractor Beer Festival, with a shout-out to Dr. Heather Sellick for starting that Festival last year. Rain or shine, this will be an outdoor event.
- Composting workshop with the Rochester Garden Club.
- Brown Bag lunch lectures with the Rochester-Avon Historical Society will be on Zoom.
- Stone Wall Pumpkin Festival, becomes a two-day event with advance registration and certain timeslots. It will feature a scarecrow event, supported by the Rochester Downtown Development Authority.
- After School Programs, set for Tuesdays and Thursdays include the Red House, Schoolhouse, and Van Hoosen Farmhouse. Parents can create their own field trips.
- The Museum will host four Micro Weddings for groups under 15 this fall. He noted that the Museum can still have up to 100 people on the grounds.
- National Archives Month will be recognized in October.
- The Annual issue of Found in Collection will be issued.
- Daguerreotype to Digital, features personal scanning sessions.
- The Museum will discuss emergency preparedness and disaster planning - two staff members have been to Midland to help with flooding at their museums that happened in May.

He commented that the Museum is still debating November and December activities, and has until October 1 to determine what it can do regarding the

annual Train exhibit.

Ms. Morita questioned whether 100 people can still be hosted in a tent.

Mr. McKay stated that the Museum has not been doing tent events, as it would be difficult to maintain a six-foot social distance in the event of rain. He commented that events have been using the Gazebo thus far, and luckily there has been good weather. He mentioned that previously-scheduled events that had been cancelled have received full refunds if desired; however, he noted that most have rescheduled to a later date and still want to use our site.

Dr. Sellick stated that she thinks the programming has been top-notch considering everything that has been going on, and credited Mr. McKay and his staff.

Vice Chairperson Wiggins concurred.

Mayor Barnett commented that leadership is doing exactly what it is supposed to do, in doing the best it can under the circumstances and provide value to the residents and supporters. He pointed out that the City of Rochester has stepped up their financial commitment to the Museum understanding the partnership that is available to provide benefit to the entire region. He mentioned that people in the community have flocked to the Rochester Hills Parks system, and in the first month of the COVID outbreak, parks usage was up 350 percent, and up 40 percent annualized over the entire year.

Mr. McKay noted that programs and offerings will strive to engage everyone. He mentioned additional partnerships include a pilot program to place signs with an archival image and QR code that have already been placed downtown and will be installed at the Village of Rochester Hills.

Dr. Sellick questioned whether photographer registrations have increased.

Mr. McKay responded that the registration numbers are about the same. He noted that it is difficult to catch each photographer during off hours; however, staff will try to come down in the evenings to catch those who come after hours. He mentioned that photographer registrations average approximately \$10,000 each year.

Museum Institutional Plan:

Mr. McKay noted that with all of the changes going on currently, staff have been working on a new five-year Institutional Plan for the Museum for 2020-2025. He commented that the goal was to send a draft plan to the Board hopefully by November. He stated that there are a lot of moving pieces involved in developing the plan, from exhibit planning, to partnerships.

Vice Chairperson Wiggins commented that at the last quarterly meeting, Mr. McKay asked questions about what should go in the plan, and one of the subjects that came out of the discussion was that an endowment is needed to support and sustain these new and wonderful buildings. She commented that

while the goal over the next few months should be to raise the \$15,000 needed for the Equipment Barn project, a November topic should include discussion on the development of an endowment fund to support the buildings.

***Mr. McKay** commented that every successful organization is financially sound, and ultimately an endowment fund would be the greatest legacy we could all leave to support the Museum. He noted that this will be addressed in the institutional plan.*

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

UPCOMING EVENTS

***Mr. McKay** reported that the September-October Newsletter is almost complete and will hopefully be on doorsteps by September 1.*

NEXT MEETING DATE

Friday, November 20, 2020, 7:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, it was moved by Ms. Morita, and seconded by Mr. Pixley, to adjourn the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation Board Meeting at 8:24 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Mary Jo Pachla.

Minutes were approved as presented November 20, 2020 Rochester Hills Museum Foundation Meeting.

Suzanne Wiggins, Vice Chairperson