



Rochester Hills

Minutes

Rochester Hills Museum Foundation

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*Bryan Barnett, Steven Fite, James Mallon, Carol Morlan, Vern Pixley,
Katharine Altherr-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, May 6, 2022

7:30 AM

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen
Farm - Dairy Barn

CALL TO ORDER

*Chairperson James Mallon called the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation
Board meeting to order at 7:38 a.m., Michigan Time.*

ROLL CALL

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

Others Present:

*Pat McKay, Museum Manager
Maria Willett, Chief Assistant to the Mayor*

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2022-0063](#) Approval of Minutes - Rochester Hills Museum Foundation Regular Meeting -
November 19, 2021

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

Aye 9 - Barnett, Fite, Mallon, Morlan, Pixley, Rogers, Heather Sellick, Snyder and
Wiggins

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation hereby approves the Meeting
Minutes of November 19, 2021 as presented.

[2022-0234](#) Approval of Minutes - Rochester Hills Museum Foundation - February 25, 2022 -
No Quorum

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

Aye 9 - Barnett, Fite, Mallon, Morlan, Pixley, Rogers, Heather Sellick, Snyder and Wiggins

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation approves the Minutes of the Meeting of February 25, 2022 as presented. There was no quorum.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

2022-0064 Nomination and Election of Chairperson for 2022

A motion was made by Wiggins, seconded by Pixley, that James Mallon be Appointed Chairperson. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 9 - Barnett, Fite, Mallon, Morlan, Pixley, Rogers, Heather Sellick, Snyder and Wiggins

Resolved, that James Mallon is Chairperson for the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation for 2022.

2022-0065 Nomination and Election of Vice Chairperson for 2022

A motion was made by Sellick, seconded by Rogers, that Suzanne Wiggins be Appointed Vice Chairperson. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 9 - Barnett, Fite, Mallon, Morlan, Pixley, Rogers, Heather Sellick, Snyder and Wiggins

Resolved, that Suzanne Wiggins is Vice Chairperson for the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation for 2022.

2022-0066 Nomination and Election of Secretary for 2022

A motion was made by Wiggins, seconded by Pixley, that Katharine Rogers be Appointed Secretary. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 9 - Barnett, Fite, Mallon, Morlan, Pixley, Rogers, Heather Sellick, Snyder and Wiggins

Resolved, that Katharine Rogers is Secretary for the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation for 2022.

History Minute Updates from the Museum Archives - Pat McKay

Pat McKay stated that he thought it was good to review once in a while the purpose of the Foundation Board, and stated that it is a means for the Museum to get a resident's input into the Museum's operations, and is a means to supplement the public funds needed to operate the museum and create public/private partnerships. He commented that he believes that the Museum has leveraged funds very well over the last couple of decades and has been able to make fantastic improvements to the Museum facilities.

He commented that he had three favorite images to display, noting that the first was after the completion of the roof project when everything was back in place,

and was a signal that the major construction that has consumed the Museum for the past several years was completed. He mentioned that next Friday the Museum will be participating in the state history preservation conference in Holly, and he and architect Jackie Hoist will be doing a presentation on how they strove to preserve the Dairy Barn building in the middle of a pandemic.

The second picture, was of school girls at the Stoney Creek Schoolhouse. This image reminded Pat that Kathie Rogers went to school years ago at the schoolhouse, and he commented that it was a picture of pure joy. He mentioned that the public schools had not been at the schoolhouse for three years because of the pandemic. He reported that almost every Friday now there is a private school group at the school in addition to homeschool groups that have come out as well.

A photo of Archivist Samantha Lawrence's wedding was displayed, and he noted that June 1 of last year was when larger programs could resume with up to 100 people. Samantha's wedding on June 5 was the first large event back at the Museum in 2021.

He noted that Bloomer Park is 100 years old this year, and he commented that a donor had purchased a photo album off of eBay with some pictures in it that said Bloomer Park. When questioned whether this might be Rochester Hills' Bloomer Park, the seller responded that there were photos of a ski jump, and another of an aqueduct over a river; and Mr. McKay knew they were Rochester Hills. He commented that in 1922, people were doing much of the same things as they do in the parks today. He noted that not much remains of the aqueduct, which once carried the Clinton-Kalamazoo Canal over the top of the Clinton River. He mentioned that an application for a State Historic Marker is pending with the State, which he explained was a 10 to 12 month process for approval and generating the marker. He commented that they were hoping for October to coincide with the 100-years mark.

ROCHESTER HILLS MUSEUM AT VAN HOUSEN FARM 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

2022-0067

Acceptance of the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Housen Farm 2021 Annual Report

Mr. McKay noted that the Annual Report is a part of the requirement of the Deed of Gift of the Van Housen Farmhouse and the Red House from Michigan State University in 1979 and 1996. It must be operated as a historical site and must be operated by the City of Rochester Hills. He added that the report is a good reminder of all of the good things that go on at the Museum throughout the year.

Discussed

MUSEUM UPDATE

Mr. McKay noted that the Museum tried for years to host a leadership lecture

series, where a speaker is brought in, to inspire leadership in Rochester Hills; however, attracting and confirming speakers was always difficult. On May 19, this will be a new event, and he noted that Thomas Jefferson used to host dinners with great conversation. He mentioned that Chief Financial has volunteered to cover some of the costs for the Jeffersonian Dinner. He noted that most of the Museum programs enjoy great success, and this program is new so Board attendance and promotion is highly encouraged.

Mayor Barnett commented that this is a great idea and the City and the Board should try to focus on getting the word out. He mentioned that Rochester's prom is that evening. Discussion ensued regarding visits to the Museum grounds by high school prom attendees for photos. It was mentioned that this opportunity could be used as a fund raiser for the Museum and the school. He commented that it was presented to the various high school student councils.

Mayor Barnett suggested that Jason Dale could do a quick video story about the Jeffersonian Dinner that might entice residents to want to attend. He asked the Board members to consider attending and invite two to four people to attend with them.

Dr. Selleck questioned what the percentage of the ticket was to cover costs.

Mr. McKay responded that costs were just for the meal and he was not positive of the amount. He stated that he thought the Museum would be able to make approximately \$50 per person. He noted that Chief Financial Credit Union is helping the Museum out with the event, and he mentioned that one of the members of the Young Leaders Circle is associated with Chief Financial.

Next year the Museum will be celebrating its bicentennial of Stoney Creek Village and he displayed a number of historical photographs.

He noted the philanthropy that the Museum has enjoyed and showed a slide depicting current funds. He pointed out that membership is a big part of ongoing fund raising; and he explained that with the construction that has been completed, many of the Museum's funds had been depleted. Reviewing them now, they are rebounding, and he noted that the membership program brings in approximately \$30,000 each year. He mentioned an archival publication that is done once a year that highlights much of the research that the volunteers have worked on. He noted that donated funds from this publication are deposited in our collections fund, and with some matching funds and grants is earmarked for the cleaning of a mural that is on the wall over the fireplace in the farmhouse.

Ms. Rogers questioned what the cost estimate is to clean the mural.

Mr. McKay responded that it is approximately \$6,000. He noted that the Museum has had relatively good luck with receiving grants from the Questers organization and commented that there are a couple of grants currently pending. He mentioned that they recently had a grant to preserve a tapestry that had been hanging and was damaged by sunlight.

He commented that the 2021 annual appeal had been successful at the end of

the year, with \$38,000 coming in within 30 days.

Dr. Sellick questioned whether donors earmark what funds they want their donations to go into.

Mr. McKay responded not always, but they could. If not earmarked, the donations go into the operations fund where they can be broadly used.

Dr. Sellick questioned whether there is a separate category when there is a specific campaign for a project, such as the Calf Barn.

Mr. McKay responded that there is, and once completed that fund is eliminated and the remaining funds are moved. He explained that there was a fund for the exhibits, one for the Calf Barn and one for the Equipment Barn. He noted that the endowment fund has an unallocated portion, and he mentioned that there is a separate endowment fund just for the schoolhouse. He commented that any gifts received from PTAs at the elementary schools are typically directed to the schoolhouse to have funds available for various repairs.

He explained some of the other funds and their purpose. Funds cover speakers and their travel, and publications. He explained that when programs receive sponsorship by organizations such as Genisys or Chief Financial Credit Union, those funds get transferred back to the City to cover the costs incurred.

Dr. Sellick questioned whether a discussion could be held at a later time regarding the targeted goals for the various categories and fund balance.

Mr. McKay responded that funds are needed going forward to operate the buildings as well. He added that the Museum is currently going through the STEPS self-evaluation and will be bringing some of the information back. He noted that an endowment fund campaign was initiated a few years ago in response to the Museum's goals.

Mayor Barnett noted that he always wants to see a goal set, and commented that what the Museum has accomplished in the last 24 months and the role that this organization has played in it has been fantastic. He pointed out that goals need to be refined; and he suggested that the Board spend some time at some point discussing what a tangible reachable goal for an endowment would be. He noted that the five-year Parks Master Plan update is being launched that will help provide guidance.

He questioned who receives the annual appeal and asked if it was just sent to members. He commented that it was remarkable that \$38,000 was raised, and stated that raising that membership number could increase the appeal's success. He stated that growing the membership and translating that into something tangible could be very profitable to do.

Vice Chairperson Wiggins stated that the staff does such a good job and commented that there are ways that encourage growing the membership numbers.

The following ideas were thrown out for discussion regarding membership:

- *Eventbrite captures everyone's email when they register for an event. Jenna Raschke is in charge of following up for attendees who are not members.*
- *Homeowners Associations could be contacted.*
- *Membership should be encouraged for every resident of the Winkler Mill and Stoney Creek Historic Districts. A direct mailing could target those homes. It was noted that the Planning Department recently forwarded a list of all addresses within the district.*
- *Gift giving of memberships for holidays should be encouraged, as people are not wanting as many tangible gifts to collect.*
- *Car decals are popular that display favorite islands or locations, and perhaps the Museum could develop one that could be given out that might promote the Museum and keep growing the membership numbers.*
- *A suggestion that the membership renewal form include a second box for adding extra funds toward Museum Operations. The membership letter should be reviewed to see if there were more options that could be incorporated.*

Mr. Pixley asked if the funds are just being reinvested.

Mr. McKay responded that in the past there was an identified goal of the various projects, but right now they are being reinvested. He commented that he will be happy to provide fund totals at each meeting. He noted that the Museum is at approximately 405 members, with a goal of 10 percent annual increase. He commented that the business memberships are going well.

MUSEUM BOARD MEMBERS DISCUSSION

Dr. Sellick stated that she wanted to discuss the archivist position. She noted that back in 2009 there was a full-time archivist and additional time was needed because of the volumes of materials that had been received. She commented that she knows that the budget for 2023 is coming up and she questioned the status of the position and whether a fund raiser might help get that position up to a full-time.

Mr. McKay stated that currently the archivist works 28 hours. He pointed out that there is currently a partnership with the City of Rochester and they provide the City \$10,000 each year, \$7,800 is used toward the wages and the remaining \$2,200 is used toward supplies. With that partnership, came all of Rochester's archives. He commented that right now the Museum has about a ten-year backlog in cataloging. He added that the Broomfield archives are currently in a storage locker and have not been transferred over. He noted that the plans this year are to take possession of these archives.

Vice Chairperson Wiggins noted that at Ms. Morita's last meeting, she suggested that the Museum request funds for a full-time archivist. She noted that Mr. Elwert had indicated that the Parks Plan would include the Museum as well and would bring the Plan back to the board for discussion before it is finalized.

Mr. McKay noted that the Parks Master Plan also includes staffing review and recommendation and how to adequately staff the parks.

Mayor Barnett asked Mr. Snyder to comment on going from a 28 hour person to a full-time person.

Mr. Snyder explained how wages and benefits affect the total cost of an employee. He added that he was hesitant to suggest funding the position through fund raising as that would have to continue in order to keep a position going. He commented that he would rather raise funds for other things and have the City fund the position.

Dr. Sellick stated that two full-time positions are what is actually needed; however, if the City were to be able to come up with funding for 1-1/2, she would suggest that perhaps one could contract someone in to make up the difference.

Mayor Barnett noted that at the end of the day the decisions come back to himself and to Council. He noted that in 2009, it was one of the worst recessions that resulted in cutting approximately 25 percent of the City staff. He stated that the Parks Department over the past two years has exploded, and noted that the introduction of Innovation Hills has brought a huge demand. He added that in the past year or two the City has had much difficulty in hiring people. He noted that the Parks Master Plan would conclude in early September, but the budget is presented in the first meeting in August. The archivist position will have consideration along with the remaining needs of the Parks Department. If this position is a priority for this group then it should be conveyed to the Council.

Vice Chairperson Wiggins stated that the Foundation Board's priorities should reflect Mr. McKay's priorities. She noted that one of the problems with staffing cutbacks is it is hard to get back to a previous staffing level as those remaining in their positions are typically doing okay. She commented that it is a testament to Mr. McKay who does a lot with a little.

Mr. McKay noted that a part time interpreter has been hired to help with the Museum's programs. He commented that the Museum is hosting 100 students a day.

Mayor Barnett noted that with any budget, it is a discussion of priorities. He stated that any time City Council can see that a group is activated and can raise some monies, or has a grant to cover any portion of something, they go to the top of the list.

Mr. Pixley questioned whether having an archivist can lead to the Museum being able to provide more open hours.

Mr. McKay responded that the archivist typically does not work during weekends. He explained that the archivist would help during the week as staff is out doing programming.

Discussion ensued whether the position could go initially from part time to full

time, supplemented by a contract position paid for by fund raising. It was mentioned that the City strives to pay a ten percent premium over other communities to attract and keep quality employees.

Mayor Barnett stated that as the budget is being prepared they will try to come up with some opportunities and suggestions.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

NEXT MEETING DATE

August 19, 2022

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chairperson Mallon adjourned the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Mary Jo Pachla.

Minutes were approved as presented at the _____ 2022 Regular Rochester Hills Museum Foundation Board Meeting.

James Mallon, Chairperson