



Rochester Hills

Minutes - Final

Rochester Hills Museum Foundation

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*Bryan Barnett, Julie Granthen, Steven Fite, 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 16, 2025

7:30 AM

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm
- Dairy Barn

CALL TO ORDER

*Suzanne Wiggins called the Rochester Hills Museum Foundation Board
Meeting to order at 7:31 a.m., Michigan Time.*

ROLL CALL

Present 6 - Heather Sellick, Suzanne Wiggins, Bryan Barnett, Steven Fite, Vern Pixley
and Julie Granthen

Absent 3 - Katharine Altherr-Rogers, Carol Morlan and Joe Snyder

Others present:

Patrick McKa, Museum Manager

Cathy Fitzpatrick, Program Coordinator

Erin Sudrovech, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2025-0232](#)

Approval of Minutes - Rochester Hills Museum Foundation - February 21, 2025

Attachments: [Minutes Final 2-21-25.pdf](#)
[Minutes Master 2-21-25.pdf](#)

**A motion was made by Fite, seconded by Sellick, that these minutes be Approved
as Presented. The motion carried by the following vote:**

Aye 6 - Sellick, Wiggins, Barnett, Fite, Pixley and Granthen

Absent 3 - Altherr-Rogers, Morlan and Snyder

MUSEUM OPERATIONS UPDATE - Patrick McKay

Maintenance and Repairs update

McKay discussed the 3 boardwalks across the mill race. The reconstruction project cost approximately \$200,000 and is just wrapping up. A new drinking fountain was also installed, it is handicap accessible and has a dog bowl. McKay discussed the audio-visual equipment, including two new screens, projectors, and microphones. They are also working on the lighting with Facilities. McKay mentioned the schoolhouse is slated for minor repairs and the elevator is potentially being replaced to keep it ADA accessible.

America 250 ideas for the Museum/City to consider

McKay discussed the celebration of America's history that will happen in 2026 nationally. We are looking for ideas for local celebrations. He mentioned an underground railroad exhibit that will be here in May and June of 2026. Discussion ensued.

Big Barn conceptual Plan update

McKay mentioned that the Big Barn is one of the last historical reconstruction pieces of the property. Museum staff has met with an architectural firm. He discussed how the addition of the barn would affect the flow of the property as well as the neighbors experience. Discussion ensued.

MUSEUM PROGRAM UPDATES - Cathy Fitzpatrick

Review of 2025 to date and upcoming summer programs

Fitzpatrick discussed the public programs. She mentioned a theatrical performance which received great feedback. They also hosted a Detroit Tigers presentation that was well received. A group of high school students is working on a program at the schoolhouse. She mentioned the farmers market tours as well. Fitzpatrick also discussed the addition of a camp for older kids in August. Granthen mentioned a partnership with the Avon Players to produce more theatrical programs. Discussion ensued.

Consideration of Museum programs and direction for 5-year plan

McKay discussed private rentals and how it pertains to the 5-year plan. Private events are taking up much of the staff time. Fitzpatrick mentioned many wedding receptions in August, and they require all staff days for things to run smoothly. In order to continue increasing the number of rentals, we need more staff for coverage. McKay discussed the prom photos, some high schools let them know in advance and others did not.

OLD BUSINESS

Museum Endowment Fund Appeal

McKay discussed the endowment fund, and the goal of getting the balance to one million dollars. We are making progress. We are up to \$820,000. Discussion ensued on the campaign slogan and timing to raise more funds.

There was a discussion about mass mailing as a fundraising strategy, either for a newsletter or endowment appeal. McKay mentioned we have the info on social media and the website as well as the newsletter that is sent to members in the mail. Fitzpatrick mentioned that we send electronic copies of the newsletters. Discussion ensued regarding ways we can get the word out and reach more people so we can hit the million-dollar mark.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion on timing of meetings. McKay mentioned the early morning meant people could go to work immediately after. Mayor Barnett mentioned conducting a google poll to determine the best time.

McKay also mentioned the archival items we have been working on. We replaced the wallpaper in one of the bedrooms, which was a lengthy process. McKay gave an updated on all our interns that have moved on and found jobs in the historical job world.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

NEXT MEETING DATE

August 15, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Suzanne Wiggins adjourned the meeting at 8:46 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Megan Stencil.

Minutes were approved as presented at the August 15, 2025 Regular Museum Foundation Board Meeting.

Suzanne Wiggins, Vice Chairperson