



Agenda
Museum Board Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 8, 2026 5:00 PM
556 W Maple Rd, Birmingham, Michigan

Mission Statement: The Birmingham Museum will explore meaningful connections with our past, in order to enrich our community and enhance its character and sustainability. Our mission is to promote understanding of Birmingham's historical and cultural legacy through preservation and interpretation of its ongoing story.

- 1. Roll Call**
- 2. Call to Order**
- 3. Approval of the Minutes**
 - A. Minutes of November 6, 2025
- 4. New Business**
 - A. 2026 America's 250th Special Birmingham Museum Events
 - B. Celebrate Birmingham Hometown Parade
- 5. Unfinished Business**
 - A. Museum Board "What's Your Story?"
- 6. Communication and Reports**
 - A. Director Report
 - B. Member Comments
 - C. Public Comments
- 7. Next Meeting**
 - A. No Meeting in February: Next Meeting is March 12, 2026
- 8. Adjournment**

NOTICE: Individuals with disabilities requiring accommodations for effective participation in this meeting should contact the city clerk's office at (248) 530-1880 (voice), or (248) 644-3405 (TDD) at least one day in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance. APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MUSEUM BOARD MEETINGS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE AND ON THE CITY WEBSITE AT www.bhamgov.org. City of Birmingham, 151 Martin, Birmingham, MI 48009; 248.530.1800. Persons with disabilities that may require assistance for effective participation in this public meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at the number (248) 530-1880, or (248) 644-5115 (for the hearing impaired) at least one day before the meeting to request help in mobility, visual, hearing, or other assistance.

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escribano de la ciudad en el número (248) 530-1800 o al (248) 644-3405 (para las personas con incapacidad auditiva) por lo menos un día antes de la reunión para solicitar ayuda a la movilidad, visual, auditiva, o de otras asistencias. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MUSEUM BOARD MEETING
556 W. Maple
Thursday, November 6, 2025
5:00 PM**

Members Present: Mike Ableson, Kamala Cummings, Alexandra Harris, Judith Keefer, Marty Logue, Kristy Barrett (Alternate)
Members Absent: Eva Kirkman, Robert Moll
Student Representative: Mercy Wisecup
Administration: Museum Director Leslie Pielack
Guests: None

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM by Ms. Logue.

Approval of the Minutes

Minutes of October 9, 2025

MOTION: by Keefer, seconded by Logue:

To approve the minutes of October 9, 2025.

VOTE: Yeas, 6
Nays, 0

New Business

Members agreed to move the candlelight tour experience of the Hunter House to take place after the other business has been considered and the meeting adjourned.

Unfinished Business

There were no updates to the oral history project, but Ms. Barrett noted that the subject she wants to interview has not been available but is expected to be interviewed soon.

Members reviewed the draft document for the **Birmingham Museum 2026-2028 Strategic Plan** in detail and discussed some layout and minor edits for the final document. With these final changes and board approval, it is anticipated that the document will be presented to the City Commission in December for implementation beginning in January. The board agreed to approve the document with the proposed changes and requested that copies of the final document be shared with them electronically prior to presentation to the commission

MOTION: by Ableson, seconded by Keefer:

To approve the final Birmingham Museum 2026-2028 Strategic Plan with proposed edits, and to present the plan to the City Commission for approval.

VOTE: Yeas, 6
Nays, 0

Communication and Reports

Director Pielack highlighted the Director Report. Interviews are underway to hire a new Museum Assistant and it is expected that a new staff person will be hired by Thanksgiving and will train during December when the Allen House is closed to the public. Museum staff are working toward the 2026 **Celebrate Birmingham History: It's Everywhere!** Citywide initiative. The first promotional event will occur during the tree lighting at the beginning of Wintr Mrkt. Museum staff will be on hand in the Wilkomen (Welcome) tent to offer literature and stickers and promote the museum's 2026 activities and exhibit. Each month in the Around Town newsletter, the museum will be featuring twelve people who made a significant impact on Birmingham throughout our history. Finally, the museum board discussed actively participating in the Celebrate Birmingham parade in May, and will take up the matter in January for further discussion and planning.

Member Comments

None.

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 8, 2026, at 5:00 PM.

Ms. Logue adjourned the meeting at 6:24 PM.

2026 Exhibit: "Celebrating Birmingham's History: It's Everywhere!" – Four dimensions:

1. *A Birmingham Family's 250 years of Service: The Peabodys*, from the Revolutionary War to the 20th century
2. *Our Indigenous Heritage: The Living Art of Anishinaabe Basketry*, collaborative exhibit of contemporary Anishinaabe basket arts and heritage
3. *A Look at Birmingham life through the eyes of Martha Blakeslee*, Blakeslee's diary and scrapbooks reveal her unique experience of living in Birmingham in the context of larger history during the 19th century
4. *How We Know History*, exploring how history is recorded and the inherent bias even in primary source documents. Focus on the *Observer-Eccentric* newspaper and Whitehead and Mitchell's bias in the content; exploring how the *Eccentric* was "Facebook" in the 19th century; offering hands-on opportunity for transcribing longhand samples from our collection of documents.

Offsite Exhibit; "They Changed Birmingham," - City Hall central corridor near elevator

- Monthly poster series to correspond with monthly *Around Town* newsletter. Each month's featured person from Birmingham history will have a poster summarizing their story that will be posted the beginning of each month through 2026. (In order of appearance)
 - Elijah Willits (1796-1868)
 - Elijah Fish (1794-1861)
 - George (1825-1901) & Eliza Taylor (c1832-1902)
 - George Mitchell (1854-1929) & Almeron Whitehead (1851-1926)
 - Martha Baldwin (1842-1913)
 - Warren D. Clizbe (1858-1926)
 - Charles (1882-1951) & Ruth Shain (1884-1980)
 - Harry Allen (1882-1957)
 - Marshall Fredericks (1908-1998)
 - Florence Willet (1915-2002)
 - Barry Kramer (1943-1981)
 - Max Horton (1921-2013)

Lecture Series, Our Indigenous Heritage, Winter-Spring 2026

- Thursday January 8, 7 PM- (Baldwin Public Library) "*Indigenous Oakland County: Myth and Reality*," Dr. Catherine Cangany
- Thursday February 12, 7 PM- (Baldwin Public Library) "*Indigenous and White Settler Encounters in Oakland County History*," Donna Casaceli
- Thursday March 12, 7 PM- (Baldwin Public Library) "*How the WPA helped Michigan's Traditional Anishinaabe Basket Arts Survive the Depression*," Leslie Edwards
- Wednesday, April 8, 6 PM- (Southfield Public Library) "*The Living Art of Anishinaabe Quillwork*," Yvonne Walker Keshick and Odeimon Walker-Keshick
- Thursday, April 9, 10 AM to 4 PM- (Birmingham Museum) "Experiencing Anishinaabe Quillwork" all-day workshop with Yvonne Walker Keshick and Odeimon Walker-Keshick

2026 America's 250th Birmingham Museum Special Events

Collaborative Projects in 2026

- **Leelanau Historical Society & Michigan State University, Southfield Historical Society** (All year); Exhibit loan and curatorial collaborations, quilled birch bark and black ash splint baskets; (SHS-Kelly Church black ash splint basket)
- **Baldwin Public Library** (March); Pre-school story time at Hunter House with history theme,
- **Southfield Historical Society**, (April); Grant application and project collaboration with two-day "The Living Art of Anishinaabe Quillwork" programs
- **Birmingham Shopping District** (April); "Spring Stroll" children's tour and scavenger hunt at Hunter House
- **Daughters of the American Revolution** (May); Memorial Day Program theme-"The Peabody Family's 250 Years of Military Service;" (Museum open 1-4)
- **Birmingham Shopping District** (May-Oct); Birmingham Farmer's Market "Celebrating our History" displays
- **Daughters of the American Revolution** (July 8); Public reading of the Declaration of Independence at Greenwood Cemetery and DAR rededication of Revolutionary War veteran John Daniels' grave plaque
- **Birmingham Shopping District** (September); "Art Walk" event - Special program at museum, "*The Living Art of Anishinaabe Traditional Basket Arts*"
- **Daughters of the American Revolution** (Wed., Nov. 11); Veteran's Day Event at City Hall

Other 2026 Birmingham Museum Projects and Partnerships:

- Saturday, May 9; Friends of the Birmingham Museum, "Star-spangled Greenwood Cemetery Tour-#1"
- Sunday, May 17, 1 PM; "Celebrate Birmingham Hometown Parade"
- Friday, June 19; (time TBD) Museum Special Juneteenth Program at Greenwood, "Birmingham's Black Heritage in the Taylor, Farmer, and Jackson Families"
- Summer, 2026; Updated/release of historic walking/biking tours (with online tours on BSD website)
 - Historic districts highlights (residential) (new)
 - Downtown architecture
 - Neighborhoods (new)
 - Wallace Frost homes (new)
- Saturday, September 19; Friends of the Birmingham Museum, "Star-spangled Greenwood Cemetery Tour-#2"



DATE: January 8, 2026
TO: Museum Board
FROM: Leslie Pielack, Museum Director
SUBJECT: Director Report

Budget Updates for 2026-27 - Capital Improvement Requests

- John West Hunter Park Project—We are still waiting for EGLE to issue a permit so we can continue with the next phase of the park improvements.
 - When we get the green light, we will go out for a RFP to prepare the boardwalk across the pond edge, stone retaining walls, and pathway around the south side of the pond (Phase 3) as a 25-26 project. We have about \$50K in Community Development Block Grant funds to apply to the final project, and expect the total project cost to be in the 100K range.
 - Phase 4 has been requested for 26-27, at an estimated cost of about \$110K. We have about \$25K of CDBG grant funds that can be applied to it.
- Excavation/repair of Allen House porch concrete slab—We have an assessment of the porch conditions and recommendations about a scope of work to prepare a RFP, but the expected cost of up to \$50,000 will place the project into the 26-27 budget.

Other Improvements -HVAC

- A/C condenser for Hunter House—the expected cost of a new condenser for approx. \$7,000 is included in the budget request for 26-27.

City's 2026/America's 250th Calendar of Events

- Wintr Markt – staff were present at tree lighting and the museum launched its cookbook project. The crowds were somewhat reduced by the bitter cold evening.
- Cookbook Project – has been launched on Engage Birmingham and also on our webpage (see attached).
- “They Changed Birmingham” – In addition to the monthly article in the Around Town, companion posters will be placed in City Hall each month through the year near the Clerks/Treasurer’s office.
 - **January: Elijah Willits-** founding family who helped build Birmingham, remained in the village, donated school lot where museum is located, early subdivision
 - **February: Elijah Fish-** established early anti-slavery movement, brought national lecturers to Birmingham to educate citizens, founded Presbyterian church, UGRR designation at cemetery

2026 Exhibit: “Celebrating Birmingham’s History: It’s Everywhere!” exhibit components:

- *A Birmingham Family’s 250 years of Service: The Peabodys*, from the Revolutionary War to the 20th century
- *Our Indigenous Heritage: The Living Art of Anishinaabe Basketry*
Collaborative exhibit of contemporary Anishnaabe basket arts and heritage
- *A Look at Birmingham life through the eyes of Martha Blakeslee*, Blakeslee’s diary and scrapbooks reveal her unique experience of living in Birmingham in the context of larger history during the 19th century

- *How We Know History*, exploring how history is recorded and the inherent bias even in primary source documents. Focus on the *Observer-Eccentric* newspaper and Whitehead and Mitchell's bias in the content; exploring how the *Eccentric* was "Facebook" in the 19th century; offering hands-on opportunity for transcribing longhand samples from our collection of documents.

Our Indigenous Heritage Lecture Series, Winter-Spring 2026

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Collaborations in 2026

- All year; Exhibit loan and curatorial collaborations- **Leelanau Historical Society** (quilled birch bark and black ash splint baskets); **Michigan State University** (quilled birch bark and black ash splint baskets-named makers)
- March; Pre-school story time with history theme, collaborating with **Baldwin Public Library**
- April; Grant application and project collaboration with **Southfield Historical Society**, Living Art of Anishinaabe Quillwork programs
- April; **Birmingham Shopping District** Spring Stroll children's tour and scavenger hunt at Hunter House
- May; Memorial Day Program with **DAR** featuring "The Peabody Family's 250 Years of Military Service"-Museum open 1-4
- July; Public reading of the Declaration of Independence with **DAR** at Greenwood Cemetery with DAR rededication of John Daniels' grave plaque
- September; **Birmingham Shopping District** Art Walk-Special program at museum, "*The Living Art of Anishinaabe Traditional Basket Arts*"
- Wednesday, Nov. 11 (time TBD); Veteran's Day Event at City Hall (**DAR**-led)

Other 2026 Projects:

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Celebrate Birmingham history

With a recipe!



THE BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM
556 W. MAPLE
BIRMINGHAM 48009
248-530-1928
museum@bhamgov.org



Celebrating Our History: It's Everywhere!

Family Memories

THE BIRMINGHAM
COOK BOOK

Published November, 1926

A Crowd-sourced
online cookbook project



Celebrate America's 250th Anniversary
Share a Favorite Recipe!!

Celebrate Birmingham history

with a recipe

unique

crowd sourced

Share a family favourite

online form

print form



556 W. MAPLE/BIRMINGHAM
ONLINE FORM TO PRINT:
www.bhamgov.or/250years

free online
Birmingham Family Memories
Cookbook
available in 2026!

an updated local treasure of family memories!!



A hundred years ago, residents of the sleepy Village of Birmingham sent their recipes for a commemorative local cookbook. Birmingham may have changed, but we still use our cherished recipes, and old-style family meals are popular once again. America's 250th anniversary in 2026 is an ideal time to celebrate our past. History is everywhere, even in your kitchen recipe box! Help us compile a new online cookbook of Birmingham's "family memories" recipes by submitting one or more of your family favorites! It can be modern or a recipe used for generations. The Birmingham Museum will create a free permanent flipbook during 2026 using submitted and historic local recipes on our website. It's easy to contribute! Just fill out our online form or scan the QR code and follow instructions to submit your recipe.

App
Select t
ples. Pare,
small, thir
to give 1
redients
cakes and add apple
redients. Add the
ents to the dry and
plain batter cakes.
butter and sprinkle
when served a pre-
pared mixture of 3
and 1 part cinnamon

Remember with recipes!!



Cooking never goes out of style!

Pepper Hash Aunt Alice
mangoes
} chop or grind
over milk water
ed stand 5 min.
again with hot
air - drain water.
egar or use 1/2 cup
15 min



Celebrate America's 250th Anniversary by Sharing a Favorite Recipe!!



Recipe Name:

Submitted by: _____

Recipe

A hundred years ago, residents of the sleepy Village of Birmingham sent their recipes for a commemorative local cookbook. Birmingham may have changed, but we still use our cherished recipes, and old-style family meals are popular once again. America's 250th anniversary in 2026 is an ideal time to celebrate our past. History is everywhere, even in your kitchen recipe box! Help us compile a new online cookbook of Birmingham's "family memories" recipes by submitting one or more of your family favorites! It can be modern or a recipe used for generations. The Birmingham Museum will create a free permanent flipbook during 2026 using submitted and historic local recipes on our website. It's easy to contribute! Just fill out our form (use back if more room is needed).

Story behind Recipe ((Optional))

Mail to: The Birmingham Museum
556 W. Maple Road
Birmingham, MI 48009

Email: LPielack@bhamgov.org



The City of Birmingham is gearing up for our annual Celebrate Birmingham event – and you're invited!

Celebrate Birmingham Hometown Parade on Sunday, May 17, 2026 at 1:00 pm, rain or shine, followed by a family oriented Party in Shain Park until 4pm.

You have three opportunities to participate in the 2026 Celebrate Birmingham Hometown Parade and Party in Shain Park:

1. Be a Participant

- Walk proudly with your organization in the parade
- Host a table and showcase your group at the Party in Shain Park

2. Be a Sponsor

- Support the parade with a financial or in-kind donation
- Receive recognition for your contribution

3. As a Volunteer

- Donate about two hours of your time on Parade Day

Register Online: www.bhamgov.org/parade

Your email address will be used to send important updates as the parade date approaches.

- Sponsor registration deadline: April 23, 2026
- Participant registration deadline: May 1, 2026
- Volunteer registration deadline: May 13, 2026

Spread the Word!

Please feel free to invite all groups with which you are associated to join in the parade celebration!

Questions please contact Mya Brown, Deputy Clerk at clerksoffice@bhamgov.org or (248) 530-1880.

151 Martin Street • P.O. Box 3001 • Birmingham, MI 48012-3001

(248) 530-1880 • clerksoffice@bhamgov.org • www.bhamgov.org/parade