



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MUSEUM BOARD MEETING
556 W. Maple
Thursday, September 5, 2024
5:00 PM**

Members Present: Mike Abelson, Kristy Barrett (Alternate), Alexandra Harris,
Eva Kirkman, Marty Logue, Pat Hughes, Judith Keefer
Members Absent: Bev Erickson
Administration: Museum Director Leslie Pielack

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

**Approval of the Minutes
Minutes of July 11, 2024**

MOTION: by Logue, seconded by Hughes:

To approve the minutes of July 11, 2024.

VOTE: Yeas, 7
Nays, 0

New Business

In addressing the board's strategic planning task, members were in agreement about the following process, which could take approximately a year:

- 1) Continuing to review general concepts in the next one or two meetings
- 2) Examining our current plan and retaining, eliminating, or modifying our overall goals
- 3) Developing objectives from those goals
- 4) Communicating these goals and objectives and seeking input from the public at large, our patrons, and from focus groups
- 5) Incorporating feedback into a document and
- 6) Presenting the final strategic plan to the city commission for their acceptance.

The board discussed some of the concepts raised by the readings provided by Director Pielack. The intent of the readings is to help orient the board to what is going on in the museum field in general, and the idea is to stimulate discussion as well as help differentiate and define our museum's identity and purpose. Regarding ethics, Director Pielack clarified that there are two sets of ethical rules and standards for Museum Board members; the City of Birmingham's Ethics Ordinance is primary, but there also are museum-related ethical standards (e.g., based on the idea of holding the museum's collection and archives in the public trust) that apply to what we do as a museum. Regarding changes in the museum field since 2008, a number of predictions made about the increasing role of digital content and importance of museums as a way to meet social needs have held true, especially regarding helping people connect and find meaning. Regarding the matter of values, members discussed the importance of being a museum

for the whole community, the concept of being responsible to our history, and the phrase 'humanizing history' was affirmed as a way of characterizing museum priorities. Members also indicated they preferred language such as 'inclusion' and 'belonging' as we move forward toward restating our strategic goals. Members suggested that it would be helpful to review metrics and data as part of the process, which Director Pielack indicated would be most useful as we review goals and objectives specifically. The timeframe for the strategic plan and specific objectives, tasks, and methodologies will be best determined when the board finalizes its goals, as our community's needs may change rapidly and may require a shorter time span or more flexibility in implementing the plan. Ms. Kirkman has some materials she would like to share with the board relating to the upcoming discussion.

Communication and Reports

Director Pielack gave a verbal report regarding upcoming (planned) replacement of two of the Allen House HVAC units with more efficient units, awaiting final review of the engineering issues relating to the Pond Zone design (Phases 3 and 4) to develop a RFP, hopefully this fall, and several special tours of the museum. The exhibit has been delayed by a combination of unavoidable issues, but progress is being made. The museum will be starting its regular monthly lecture series at the library beginning September 12 on themes relating to various aspects of the transportation exhibit.

Member Comments

Ms. Logue announced that the Friends will be holding their annual cemetery tour on September 19. The Friends conduct two cemetery tours annually, and the fall tour is the Pioneers-focused tour, and a part of their fundraising efforts.

Public Comments

None.

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 3, 2024, at 5:00 PM.

Ms. Logue adjourned the meeting at 6:23 PM.