



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

Members Present: Mike Ableson, Kristy Barrett (Alternate) Bev Erickson (left at 6:06 PM), Pat Hughes, Eva Kirkman Marty Logue  
Members Absent: Alexandra Harris, Judith Keefer  
Administration: Museum Director Leslie Pielack  
Guests: Rebekah Craft, Library Director; Nick Dupuis, Planning Director (left at 5:45 PM); Jenny Roush, Historic District Study Committee

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 PM by Chairperson Logue.

**Approval of the Minutes  
Minutes of January 2, 2025**

**MOTION:** by Ableson, seconded by Logue:

To approve the minutes of January 2, 2025.

**VOTE:** Yeas, 6  
Nays, 0

**New Business**

Mr. Dupuis and Ms. Craft each shared some of the initiatives within their departments that would potentially benefit from a collaborative approach with the museum and could be considered in discussions about the museum's strategic plan going forward.

- Mr. Dupuis emphasized the City's Historic Preservation Master Plan, which is in process and will be presented to the public for feedback in the next few months. The museum will be included in stakeholder meetings for specific feedback.
- He stated that the museum has a role to play in the education component and in reviews and research on historic resources that are part of the HPMP.
- He also mentioned the Sustainability Plan in regards to museum facilities sustainability and balance with efficient use of resources.
- Finally, he mentioned the City's 2040 Plan and its focus on preserving neighborhood character and the support the museum can give those efforts.

Library Director Craft mentioned that now that their building renovations are complete, they are turning their attention to programming and outreach, and she suggested several ways the museum can work with the library to accomplish mutual goals:

- She mentioned a special event tour of Wallace Frost homes ending at the library's new atrium would potentially raise funds and awareness of the historic preservation plan, local historic resources, and the museum

- She would like to see the museum’s lecture series go from 6 per year to monthly (except December)
- Reinstating the BCTV video recording of the lectures rather than Zoom recordings
- Working with the museum on programming for younger children, especially underrepresented populations, such as Story Time in the Hunter House and coordinated programs of hands on activities with museum objects and/or specialty tours behind the scenes
- The Library building will be turning 100 in 2027 and the library would like to work with the museum to help with the history and celebration of the anniversary
- A project to digitize the Eccentric and make it available online (perhaps at the museum’s website) would be of great interest to Baldwin patrons and the community in general. The project is very labor intensive and contract costs to have it done are extremely expensive. The library is purchasing a special scanner and would like to collaborate with the museum to work through available Eccentric issues on a prioritized basis to digitize and make them searchable and then provide public access.

Parks Manager Carrie Laird was unable to be present but sent her remarks via email (see attached). In general, she commented on the intersection of the Parks plan for the Rouge Trail system and the benefits of working with the museum to coordinate those projects. She also is supportive of plans to use QR codes and non-intrusive interpretation to help visitors learn about and enjoy the Rouge Trail and parks history.

Members commented on the advantages of collaborating with other City departments and learning more about their projects and objectives, and as it is one of our stated Strategic Plan priorities, these efforts coincide with our anticipated direction. Digitization is a key way that the museum can help tell Birmingham’s story, especially with regard to the Eccentric newspaper and our community’s high level of interest in its content. The Aging in Place Action Plan is important for our community in many ways and would be important for future collaboration projects and programs.

### **Unfinished Business**

Board members reviewed the proposed guidelines for the ‘What’s Your Story?’ Oral History Project. The consensus was that the intent was not to try to direct the narrative of the person being recorded, but to help them tell the story they want to tell so it can be recorded and preserved. Suggestions about active listening and conversation starters were discussed. The board agreed that a more in-depth discussion would be important and that it should be revisited on the March agenda.

Members reviewed the strategic planning priorities for final wording and agreed on the following:

- 1. Observe professional standards, ethics, and best practices for long-term preservation and care of the museum collection in the public trust.**
- 2. Use the museum and its collection to encourage greater equity and inclusion and to humanize history for the benefit of the community.**

**3. Establish and strengthen collaborative relationships in the community to implement the museum's mission.**

**MOTION:** by Hughes, seconded by Barrett:

To approve the strategic plan priorities for the museum as stated.

**VOTE:** Yeas, 5  
Nays, 0

Members will continue the discussion of working goals, objectives and tasks for the strategic plan at the March meeting.

**Communication and Reports**

Director's report: Ms. Logue commented that she appreciated that a new fence is planned in the next few weeks. Mr. Ableson expressed his regret that a wood fence cannot be effectively maintained at our site, but indicated the proposed vinyl fence is a necessary compromise.

**Member Comments**

Ms. Barrett expressed her interest in having guests from various city departments at Museum Board meetings to discuss what is happening in their departments.

**Public Comments**

Ms. Roush enjoyed participating in the meeting and mentioned that another way to collaborate might be through volunteer programs.

**The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 6, 2025, at 5:00 PM.**

Ms. Logue adjourned the meeting at 6:32 PM.