

**Frontier Culture Museum Board of Trustees**  
**Executive Committee – Administration Building Conference Room**  
**Draft Minutes**  
**March 20, 2019 9 a.m.**

**Members Attending**

Cliff Garstang, Emmett Hanger, Pamela Fox, Peggy Sheets, Paul Vames. Kenneth Venable

**Members Absent**

Richard Bell, William Sibert

**Staff Attending**

Megan H. Newman, Executive Director, Eric Bryan, Director of Operations, Lydia Volskis, Senior Administrative Coordinator and HR, Kelly Price, Fiscal Technician, David Puckett, Curator of Collections, Andrew Richardson, Director of Education, Joe Herget, Director of Marketing, Justin Reiter, Foundation Executive Director

**Call to Order and Welcome**

Peggy Sheets called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

**Approval of February 2019 Minutes**

The minutes of the February 19, 2019 meeting were approved as presented.

**Agency Report**

Dr. Newman reported that the recently approved draft state budget includes some support for the Crossing Gallery planning, on-site security, and funds to increase the hourly wage for part-time staff. The State budget will be finalized after the April state legislative veto session and when it is signed by Governor Northam, and the funds will be made available to the FCMV in the next fiscal year which begins on July 1, 2019.

She said that work on the Mill project is proceeding with final drawings under review in Richmond.

The structures at the three semi-permanent exhibits at the Museum are currently closed to visitors until repairs are made. These structures have suffered under difficult weather conditions this winter

and were not originally designed for large group visitation. She reviewed a newly prepared organizational chart. The open Director of Interpretation position application period has closed and she will soon review the candidates and begin scheduling interviews.

## **Foundation Report**

Mr. Reiter reported on behalf of the Foundation that the recent Foundation fundraiser McAvoli's Pub raised over \$19,000 to support Museum education programs. The Annual Fund is progressing and has raised about \$90,000 of its goal; he reported good success with the Facebook campaign to support Annual Fund giving.

Several people remarked on recent changes in tax laws causing some donors to begin "every other year" giving; Dr. Fox agreed and said that her school, Mary Baldwin University, has also begun recruiting two and four year pledges to match up with the new laws.

In other Foundation news:

- The Foundation recently received a Virginia Foundation for the Humanities grant for \$1,200 to offset some of the speaker stipends for the Spring Lecture Series.
- The Heritage Golf Classic reboot is being planned for the Fall as a fundraiser, and the Foundation is considering sponsoring a progressive dinner next year on the Museum site.
- The Foundation will sponsor a fiddle concert and lecture on May 4 as a fundraiser to support the Museum's historic music program.
- Mr. Reiter has secured a sponsor for the band at the annual Beach Party in August.
- The next Foundation newsletter preparation is underway.
- Foundation grants to schools for this school year are slowing, as schools finalize their end of the year field trips.
- He reported that there is some interest by an organization to lease the building at 216 Frontier Drive.
- The Joint Operating Committee of the agency and Foundation has asked for a large clear map of all of the Museum, Foundation and commercial properties; Mr. Reiter will work to prepare the map.
- Dr. Newman reported that the Museum will again host a number of college interns during the Spring semester and summer, and will host twenty-three VMI cadets for a four-day volunteer project in April.

## **A. Education and Interpretation**

Director of Education Andrew Richardson reported that about 400 students visited in February but were counted in March due to billing and payment delay. The Museum has hosted 19, 432 students so far this fiscal year (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019). From March 1 through the end of June there are 11, 697 school field trip and outreach reservations with some still calling to make plans. He noted that we lost about 1,000 students from two school divisions recently, one group due to poor behavior by students leading to the school authorities cancelling their field trip and the other to transportation issues with school busses. We offered the schools an outreach program instead but they were not able to accept due to time compression involving upcoming SOL testing.

He continued that we have a new category for tracking attendance at community outreach program such as the Store staff's recent trip to the Maple Festival to sell fudge.

Spring Home School Day is set for next Friday March 29<sup>th</sup>, there are a few pre-registrations, and more are expected as potential attendees check the weather forecast for that day. The trackball event is still set for March 30, but will be cancelled if there is no local interest. Summer Camp registration is underway and looks strong. The Museum may host about eight hundred Boy Scouts the evening of July 21, as they will be traveling through the region on their way to a national Scout Jamboree in West Virginia. They will be here from approximately 5-8 p.m. and need a space to eat a picnic supper and would like a basic tour. We will need to adjust some staff schedules that day to stay later in the evening.

## **B. Finance**

Mr. Bryan gave the budget report in Mrs. Schoonover's absence. He thanked Mrs. Price for her assistance while Mrs. Schoonover is out on medical leave. He said that the reports are generated from Cardinal, the state's accounting system. He reviewed the Statement of Appropriations, Allotments, Expenditures and Revenues for all funds. He noted that some of the previous numbers which had appeared to be skewed have been corrected. He said that while the Museum's funds are tight and discretionary spending has been suspended, as we emerge from Winter and begin the last quarter of the fiscal year, strong revenue is expected in the final months of the fiscal year (April, May, June) due to strong school visitation and tourism. About \$70,000 from the Sheetz lease funds have been added to general operating funds. Mr. Bryan has also sought advice from the Department of Planning and Budget as needed during Mrs. Schoonover's absence. The revenue decline is a normal operating fluctuation for the Museum in the late Winter and early Spring. The Museum will not hire full or part-time staff until the new fiscal year begins, and will keep close track of wage hours. Mr. Bryan will also present his report at the April meeting. He noted that Maintenance Reserve Funds are a different category and cannot be spent on other areas. Mrs. Sheets also thanked Mrs. Price for her help during Mrs. Schoonover's absence.

## **C. Marketing**

Director of Marketing Joe Herget reviewed the private events attendance and revenue summary, and the visitation report. The chart depicts over three years of growth followed by a decline this year. He pointed out that the majority of the lower visitation days happened when bad weather occurred on large festival days such as Fourth of July.

He reviewed seven-year growth trends for the Museum's attendance and said that there has been about 6% annual compound growth. Dr. Fox asked if we are able to calculate how many dollars are lost for every 1% decrease in visitation. Mr. Herget responded that it is difficult as we have so many different types of visitors such as seniors, schoolkids, tourists and others.

Mr. Herget reviewed the annual pass program and made a pricing recommendation for presentation to the Board at the April meeting. He also gave an overview of upcoming events such as the Spring Lecture Series. Mr. Vames complimented the nice-looking ad in this week's "Go" section of the newspaper.

Mr. Herget also said that the Museum will be collaborating with Bojangles in the upcoming year for fundraisers and other projects. The other new businesses, McDonalds and Chik-filet, will also likely collaborate with the Museum soon as well.

Mr. Garstang said he had noticed a nice article on Staunton in the recent AAA magazine, and that the article featured the Museum. Dr. Newman also noted that the Museum has received coverage in other travel association magazines as well.

Senator Hanger asked if Maintenance Reserve Funds have been correctly entered and updated in the budget reports to avoid general operating funds seeming to be depleted. Mr. Bryan said he has spoken with the Museum's Department of Planning and Budget (DPB) analyst Janet Vogelsang, and that she said that if there are any incorrectly keyed entries, the Department of Accounts can assist us in catching up and correcting them. During Mrs. Schoonover's absence, the Museum will rely on assistance from the Department of Accounts to keep the transactions current.

## **Old Business**

### **Review of agenda for April Trustees meeting**

Mrs. Sheets shared the draft agenda for the upcoming Trustees meeting. Dr. Fox made a motion that the agenda be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Garstang, there was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Status of Shared Services MOU with Foundation**

Mrs. Sheets reviewed the draft of the shared services Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Foundation and said that she has not yet received input from the real estate division of the Office of the Attorney General. The Committee calculated the rent based on similar local square

footages pricing. Mr. Vames asked if the group will approve the draft today; Mrs. Sheets said that that would be best. Mr. Garstang made a motion that the Executive Committee approve the draft and bring it to the Board in April for final approval. Mr. Venable seconded the motion, there was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Garstang said that he was pleased that the MOU is simple and straightforward.

### **C. Update CISA event**

Mr. Venable reported that he has not had recent communications with the CISA organizers, and that he will contact Dr. Anakwenze soon to learn if he will attend the Board meeting in April. Mr. Venable hopes to convene a meeting of principal CISA planners during the Board meeting week or weekend. The group has a contract for use of the pavilion and have been asked to direct any other questions about their event to Dr. Newman. Mr. Vames asked if the damage to the West African site is weather related. Dr. Newman responded that it is, as well as due to age. Facilities Manager Cliff Edwards will assess the possibility of Museum staff conducting repairs and determine if professional assistance is required.

### **New Business**

#### **A. Ratification Items for April Trustees**

David Puckett reported that he is the coordinator of the Museum's reaccreditation process and that he has prepared several updates to existing internal documents which require Board approval. The documents are the MOU between the State and Foundation, The Institutional Code of Ethics, the Collections Management Policy and the agency Emergency Response Plan (which includes the COOP – Continuation of Operations Plan). These four documents along with the Museum mission statement, comprise the five core documents the accreditors will review. He said that the Museum must submit a self-study document in November and that we will host a review visit sometime next Spring. Dr. Newman said that the state mandates that agencies have an emergency plan and provides a template – this is independent of the accreditation process. We have had a disaster response plan but not of the scale of the new emergency response plan.

Mr. Puckett continued that in the updated Collections Management Policy and Code of Ethics it is required (under American Association of Museum's standards) that it be clearly stated that funds from deaccessioned and sold items from the collection be returned to the collections fund for the purchase of items related to the Museum's mission. He noted that several other state Museums have clauses in the Code of Virginia that allow them to use a portion of such funds for the care and conservation of collections items.

Mr. Vames made a motion that the Executive Committee appoint a small subcommittee to review the updated documents for re-accreditation, hold a brief meeting before the Trustees meeting, and then make recommendations to the Board. The motion was seconded by Dr. Fox, there was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Garstang complimented the staff for their work in assembling and completing these documents. Dr. Newman said that staff are still working on information on the rentals program and will present it to the Executive Committee at the May meeting.

## **Closed Session**

At 10:10 a.m. Mr. Garstang said:

*I move that the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia enter closed session for:*

Discussion concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business' or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community, pursuant to the exemption in Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A)(5), and related to the potential sale or lease of real property conveyed by the Museum to the American Frontier Culture Foundation.

And

Discussion of the performance of specific employees, pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(a)(1), pertaining to investigation and resolution of personnel concerns

The motion was seconded by Mr. Venable, there was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

All staff left the room at 10:10 a.m.

At 11:10 a.m. Mr. Garstang said:

I move that the Committee enter open session.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Venable, there was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously. Each Member affirmed verbally that no other matters had been discussed.

Mrs. Sheets said that she had been working on Board appointments, and that there is a new staff member in the Secretary of the Commonwealth's office for this area. Ms. Volskis will make contact with that person soon to introduce herself and update the office on the Museum's hopes for Board appointees. There will likely be a couple of Members who seek reappointment and a couple who choose to rotate off the Board.

## **Next Meeting Date**

Wednesday May 15 at 9 a.m. in the administration building conference room.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.