

Frontier Culture Museum Board of Trustees
Executive Committee – Education Studio
Draft Minutes
May 22, 2024 10 a.m.

Members Attending:

John Avoli, Ron Capps, Ned Ruby, Peggy Sheets, Paul Vames

Members Absent:

Emmett Toms,

Guests Attending:

Staff Attending:

Butch Smiley, Lydia Volskis, Cliff Edwards, Andrew Richardson, Chase Chandler

I. Call to Order and Welcome

Mrs. Peggy Sheets

Board and Committee Chair Peggy Sheets called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. and welcomed attendees.

II. Approve March 2024 Minutes

Mrs. Sheets

The minutes of the February and March 2024 meetings were approved as distributed.

III. Agency Update

Mr. Butch Smiley

CEO and Executive Director Butch Smiley reviewed the year-to-date attendance report, noting that attendance has increased over the same time last year.

He said that he will meet with local historic buildings expert Robin Miller tomorrow to gain his perspective on the DeJarnette buildings. Mr. Avoli advised caution as the buildings are a liability to the Foundation, which owns them. Mrs. Sheets said that there should be a waiver form for anyone who is allowed to enter the space. Mr. Smiley said that he will also meet with Staunton Downtown Development Association Chair Allison Denby next week.

Mr. Smiley reported the birth of a new calf at the Museum, who has been named Lord Dunsmore.

Mrs. Sheets said that Mr. Smiley and staff have been working had on completing the ARMICS report.

IV. Gallery Status Report

Mr. Cliff Edwards

Deputy Director Cliff Edwards reported that preparations for construction of the new gallery building are going well, and the money is in the bank for the construction. DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality) now has 60 days to review the property report. General contractors Kjellstrom and Lee are obtaining bids from subcontractors and had a good pre-bid meeting. Mr. Edwards will submit the third review of plans, which will hopefully be the final submission.

He continued that several maintenance reserve projects are underway or have been completed this year, and final plans are upcoming for the gallery but also the Mill site (Early American Industries Site). Some maintenance reserve funds may likely be used to support the temporary gallery space. Mr. Ruby asked about the proposal for an expanded and renovated amphitheater near the Octagonal Barn. Mr. Edwards said that during construction, we will use the area to fill and store soil, and that after that construction is done, we will construct the new amphitheater.

Mr. Edwards said that the West African exhibit will be moved down the road closer to England, and we will explore the possibility of asking for capital money from the state to reconstruct it. Mr. Capps asked when the Dairy Barns will be demolished, and Mr. Edwards said that he expects that to happen in about a year. Mr. Avoli asked if there were any more salvageable items in the Dairy Barns and Mr. Edwards said not too much but there may be some left.

V. Foundation Report

Mr. John Dod

Mrs. Sheets gave the report on behalf of Mr. Dod. She showed the Committee examples of the Capital Campaign materials and noted that people may make pledges for up to five years in length. She said that a little over 1 million dollars has been pledged or received against a goal of \$5 million. In other Foundation news:

- The Foundation will host a fundraiser “Pig Pickin” at the Red Barn in Augusta County on August 29th with more details to come soon.
- The next Golf Tournament will be in the Spring of 2025 at Ironwood
- The Foundation received the third year of a grant from the Charles Fund
- The Foundation also received the third year of a grant from the Community Foundation for summer camp grants.
- Senator Emmett Hanger will join the Board of Directors as Foundation President on July 1.
- Three new Members of the Foundation’s Board of Directors were welcomed at the April 2024 meeting.

VI. Old Business

Mrs. Sheets

A. Executive Committee membership

Mrs. Sheets proposed that current Trustee and Clerk of the Augusta County Court Steve Landes be extended an invitation to join the Executive Committee. The Committee needs an extra member

with the departure of Mr. Sibert and Mr. Venable. The Committee agreed and Mrs. Sheets said she will contact Mr. Landes.

VII. New Business

Mrs. Sheets, Mr. Smiley

A. New Trustees biographical info

Mrs. Sheets reviewed the short biographical information included in the table packers for the new Trustees Members, both civilian and legislative.

Mr. Richardson and Mr. Chandler gave a brief report on credit card fees. Fees for the use of credit cards in the Visitors Center and Museum Store will increase and are now mandatory, beginning July 1. This is due to changes to the state's credit card processor, Elavon, Fees will be 2.3% of the total transaction and if the card is not present they will total 10% of the transaction. Museum staff will work to mitigate this and will likely pass some or all of the fee along to the customer. This will, however, save on some merchant fees. Mr. Ruby made a motion that the Committee acknowledge and accept the new arrangement. The motion was seconded by Mr. Capps, there was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Closed session (if needed)

Mrs. Sheets

No Closed session was needed.

IX. Next Meeting

Mrs. Sheets

The Committee will take a summer break for June and July, and the next meeting will be in late August. Mrs. Sheets will communicate the exact date and time, and if a need arises in the interim, she will call a special meeting.

X. Adjournment

Mrs. Sheets

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.