



MONROE COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Regular Meeting



Wednesday, December 13, 2017 – 7:00 pm

Monroe County Museum - 126 South Monroe Street - Monroe, Michigan 48161

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order
- 2. Roll Call
- 3. Approval of Agenda
- 4. Approval of Minutes from November 8, 2017
- 5. Public Comment
- 6. Old Business
 - A. Long Range Planning (StEPS Program) Update
 - B. Committee Updates Assignments
 - Projects Committee
 - Marker Committee
 - Awards Committee
- 7. New Business
 - A. Monthly Museum Report
 - B. 2018 Meetings
- 8. Public Comment
- 9. Commissioners Comments
- 10. Adjournment

Next Meeting: January 10, 2018

MONROE COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSIONERS Chairman: Brian Egen, District 6 Vice-Chairman: Jeremy Potter, District 1 Secretary: Thomas Heywood, District 2 Commissioner: L William Conner, District 4 Commissioner: Nicholas Guthrie, District 9 Commissioner: Michael Humphries, District 8 Commissioner: Richard Micka, District 5 Commissioner: Mary Strevel, District 3 Commissioner: Tony Trujillo, District 7 Immediate Past President: Hobby Nels Commissioner Emeritus: Richard Sieb	COMMITTEES Executive Committee <i>H. Nels, J. Potter, T. Heywood, A. Clark, B. Egen</i> Projects Committee <i>W. Conner (c), M. Humphries, T. Trujillo, B. Egen (ex officio)</i> Marker Committee <i>J. Potter (c), N. Guthrie, M. Humphries, B. Egen (ex officio)</i> Awards Committee <i>M. Strevel (c), T. Trujillo, T. Heywood, B. Egen (ex officio)</i>
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Mission Statement of the Monroe County Museum

At the Monroe County Museum, we fuel and cultivate our visitors' curiosity through the exploration of Monroe County's rich and varied stories, joining together to unearth meaning and illuminate relevant connections between the past, present, and future.

MONROE COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

November 8, 2017 at 126 South Monroe Street, Monroe

Present: Brian Egen, Chairman Jeremy Potter, Vice-Chairman Tom Heywood, Secretary
William Conner, Member Nick Guthrie, Member Michael Humphries, Member
Richard Micka, Member Mary Strevel, Member Tony Trujillo, Member

Excused: Hobby Nels, Past Chairman Richard Sieb, Emeritus

Museum Staff: Andy Clark, Director Lynn Reaume, Curator of Programs
Guests: David Hoffman, County Commissioner Sue Donovan, Friends of Potter Cemetery
Pete Navarre of Monroe

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairman Egen. Roll call was taken. Motion was made to approve the meeting agenda by T. Heywood, seconded by R. Micka; passed.

Motion was made by W. Conner, seconded by N. Guthrie to approve the September 13, 2017 meeting minutes; passed.

Public Comment: Sue Donovan recalled the Potter Cemetery Rededication in September, which several Historical Commissioners attended, and Chairman Brian Egen spoke. Other dignitaries included politicians, military groups, and interested parties. Director Clark and the Red Shirt and JAWS programs were presented plaques signifying their assistance in the restoration of the cemetery over the years. The walnut wood came from one of the removed cemetery trees (the museum plaque was passed around the board.)

She also announced the dedication of the President James Monroe statue at the courthouse on Sunday, November 12 at 2:00 p.m.

Pete Navarre introduced himself and his rekindled interest in his family lineage, the Navarres. He outlined the discovery of the now named Navarre-Anderson Trading Post building, once owned by himself and Roger Russeau on an East Willow lot. Rented out, the building was discovered to be the old building when some of its clapboards blew off in a storm and the opening was investigated, and historians derived its history. Since retired, he has renewed his interest in the family name and has continued adding to the history.

Commissioner Hoffman also mentioned the Monroe statue.

Old Business: The StEPS Program Update: The board recalled the successful and enlightening “retreat” recently hosted by the Henry Ford, arranged by Chairman Egen. They toured “behind the scenes” and certain sites, and were introduced to best practices by members of the Henry Ford staff. Discussion involved how positive the experience was, and that another visit could continue engagement.

Committee Updates: Projects: W. Conner said the application forms have been carefully considered and copies were handed out to members (though a future electronic, corrected version will be sent to members.) Director Clark and W. Conner recounted some of the changes: applicant groups will be held more accountable & responsible in their applications; there are

higher expectations for the upcoming grant awards; matching funds in money or in-kind service for each application; and a cap of \$10,000 maximum award per grant cycle per applicant group. Any part of the application can be awarded or not as the board deems.

The grant program has had changes ever since its inception four years ago, but such changes should represent the evolution of the program and the board's good stewardship of the award money. The board should read through and consider the form and bring comments forward before the December commission meeting for board approval.

Discussion also involved the issue of having the applicant group giving a presentation to the board. Such a presentation could sway a bias (or not) and it was recommended that a representative could be present at a commission meeting and be available for board questions or information without the presentation; feeling was that the paperwork should explain, be thorough and stand on its own without a presentation. Applicants could be made aware of the commission meeting before such awards are given out.

On a tabled motion from the previous grant round concerning the lighting request from the Sawyer Homestead: W. Conner made a motion to remove the tabling of this request, seconded by J. Potter and passed. The request, which was tabled due to the need for information & research being provided to the commission, was now open for further action. It was established that the Sawyer Homestead had not provided the further information nor contact and so M. Humphries made the motion to deny the grant request and was seconded by J. Potter; the motion was passed, with one abstention.

Markers: J. Potter said the committee had met and have put a marker spreadsheet on Google docs and the members plan to meet and visit markers in Monroe soon. When the rating of the marker & post condition has been completed, the process to refurbish and establish new markers will continue.

Awards: M. Strevel explained that the guidelines and application are complete and the target date for release will be the first of the year 2018. The next step will involve media publicity about the awards and seeking nominations during the first months of the year. Commissioners & staff can nominate for awards, but not for current commissioners or staff. The awards program itself will have an evening of music, food and the program; it is important to have a public recognition of people who invest in our rich Monroe county history, and for the making a wide awareness of this program.

New Business: Reports: R. Micka questioned the use of "Woodlawn" cemetery in the Collections report. He also wanted to know more about the Miller/Hood Civil War/Custer collection, and mentioned he might have back his Spencer rifle on loan in the Custer exhibit since there was now another Spencer.

Lantern Tours: Director Clark updated and thanked the commissioners who participated and helped with the volunteer-heavy event. L. Reaume noted some information was included in the Attendance/Outreach report for October.

Second Public Comment: County Commissioner Hoffman remarked that he perceived good public response for the museum in general, and activities were great for the community.

Sue Donovan commented that she agreed with the history grant applicants not giving a presentation, but being present for board questions.

Commissioner Comments: T. Trujillo commented that being on the board has increased his awareness of the county.

T. Heywood thanked L. Reaume for now taking the meeting minutes.

J. Potter informed the board that the Backyard History group grant have had the signage and landscaping in place at Ida School. It was also determined that the Hall of Fame installation has been stalled at the county level. He also invited the board to the Monroe county ISD building on Thursday night at 7 p.m. for a program on “Uncommon Voices”- a history of early public schools in Monroe county in which he has participated.

N. Guthrie noted the standing-room only success of the recent “Edmund Fitzgerald” program.

After comments, motion was made by M. Humphries to adjourn the meeting, seconded by W. Conner, and the meeting was closed by the Chairman at 8:20 p.m.

Lynn W. Reaume
Acting recording secretary
9 November 2017

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Submitted by Andrew Clark, Museum Director, December 13, 2017

Maintenance

County maintenance staff repaired the steps at the back entrance.

Currently working with county maintenance on repairs to the windows of the Navarre-Morris building. They are also working on a sliding door for the table and chair storage area located near the back entrance; it will likely be installed prior to our next meeting.

End of year projects include a lighting upgrade in collections offices and second floor archival storage. Also working on having a sink, water line, and hot water heater installed to service the conference room.

The men's washroom will be getting some repairs in the very near future. We are also monitoring the issue of a potential leak from the second floor washrooms that may be causing damage to the ceiling of the south lobby. The source of the issue has not been completely isolated but we hope to have that figured out in the near future and make the appropriate repairs.

Currently working with Rob Gessner, a volunteer and spouse of Presenter Lisa Gessner, to upgrade our sound system, install a building wide public address system, and install speakers and microphones in the first and second floor program areas.

Land Transfer

There is no additional information at this time regarding the transfer of the historical society property at the Territorial Park to the County of Monroe.

Personnel Update

Presenter Kendra Anspaugh is switching from regular part-time to temp/on-call later this month in order to pursue other opportunities. Emily Phillips will be returning after the first of the year in her capacity as Visitor Services to assist with operations at the front desk.

Upcoming Closures

The museum will be closed during the upcoming weeks for the following days:

Sunday, December 24th through Tuesday, December 26th.

Sunday, December 31st and Monday, January 1st.

The Hodge Podge

Thanks to Lynn and the programs staff for once again making our annual Christmas Tree Festival possible and filling every weekend in December with holiday activities. Hopefully, for next year's festival the talking Christmas tree will once again return. (This is something I have mentioned for several years wanting to bring back but I have failed to do so and only usually remember after Christmas Tree Festival has started.)

Over the past number of weeks I have worked with museum staff to clean out and rearrange a number storage areas on all levels of the building. A tremendous amount of work remains, however, we managed to make a great deal of progress and have hopefully redesigned storage to be a bit more logical.

I have enjoyed working with the historical commission over the past year and look forward to a productive 2018.

Collections Report November 2017

From November 1-November 17, the Collections Division had 15 visitors, 13 phone calls, and 10 emails. Research topics included:

- Obituaries
- Navarre genealogy
- Farr genealogy
- Vandervoort/Vanderwelt genealogy
- Elmer Potter objects
- Centennial farms
- Maggie Custer Calhoun
- Young Ladies' Seminary
- Peter Navarre
- Sieb genealogy

Exhibits: Exhibits Specialist Gerry Wykes is currently researching an exhibit about an 1839 counterfeit case involving Alanson Parkes and Phineas Spalding.

Collections: Collections Specialist Nick Speth is continuing to process obituary requests and updating the index. He will in charge of the Research Room while I am gone from November 18-December 1st.

Accessions:

The Collections Committee agreed to accession the following objects:

No new accessions

Caitlyn Riehle
Curator of Collections
November 2017

PROGRAMS Report for November, 2017

TOURS: One tour was cancelled due to transportation problems.

27th: Homeschoolers met for a Native American program (6).

28th: Waterloo class of Cheryl Bindus (36) visited for the Native American program.

29th: The same Waterloo class (36) visited for the Early French Settler program.

30th: Offsite at the Monroe Senior Center I gave the "William Bolles' Harbor" program (90).

KITS: Primary Indian kit #1 to Homeschoolers. The War of 1812 kit to Monroe Middle School.

EVENTS: Downtown First Friday was a "Taste of Monroe" (50) and lead Lisa Gessner had staff demonstrating foods, local music (taped) and smells (ginko fruit) from Monroe. We had maple sugar, parched corn, heirloom apples from Keeney orchard and (kinda) beignets from Monica's bakery.

4th: Kendra Anspaugh spoke at the GSMC meeting on DNA (60).

PROGRAMS: 2nd: The Edmund Fitzgerald topic was a huge hit (140).

SENIOR VISITS: 15th: Lisa Gessner was at Wellspring of Monroe (22) with an early history of Monroe program.

16th: Lisa was at the Alice-Lorraine Center (16.)

MISC: 14th: Former historical commissioner Larry See is trying to start a 4-H youth genealogy group (2).

29th: Lisa Gessner hosted Pack 538 of Ida for a scout flag program (15).

8th: Rachel Reaume & I set up a display at the I-75 Welcome Center for the Monroe 200 Objects exhibit. We then took it down on the 29th and replaced it with the December Christmas Tree Festival display. Thousands see it, but we can't tell if it generates visitation.

16th+ Lisa, Rachel & I set about decorating the front lobby, south lobby Victorian village cases, main gallery and Newton Victorian Room for December. Christmas trees & wreaths started to come in to the end of the month- a list was compiled and a master map made. There are no verified sponsors of the awards, but voting begins on December 1st.

18th: The downtown tree lighting was postponed but the crafts were offered anyway (10).

We have been trying to have Programs staff meetings. I inkle wove a long sash for our burgundy Santa robe (a good creative outlet!) and spent a lot of time of preparing for Christmas.

Lynn W. Reaume, Curator of Programs

1 December 2017