

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
*Regular Meeting*  
Wednesday, January 17th – 7 pm

Monroe County Museum  
126 South Monroe Street  
Monroe, Michigan 48161

AGENDA

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1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Introductions
4. Election of Board Chair
5. Election of Vice-Chair
6. Election of Secretary
7. Approval of Agenda
8. Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting of December 13, 2023
9. Public Comment
10. Presentation
  - A. Rick Grassley from Genealogical Society of Monroe County about the launch of their recent digital newspaper project in part funded by the Historical Projects Fund
11. Committee Updates
  - A. Executive Committee
  - B. Awards Committee
  - C. Building Committee
  - D. Markers Committee
  - E. Projects Committee
12. New Business
  - A. MCMS Reports
13. Old Business
  - A. Meeting Work Session
14. Public Comment
15. Board Comments
16. Adjournment

***Next Meeting:***

TBD

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| 2024 MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM<br>BOARD OF TRUSTEES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 2024 COMMITTEES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| <p>Chair<br/>Brian Egen, District 6</p> <p>Vice Chair<br/>Jeremy Potter, District 1</p> <p>Secretary<br/>Michael Humphries, District 8</p> <p>Immediate Past Chair<br/>Hobby Nels</p> <p>Trustee Emeritus<br/>Richard Micka</p> <p>Trustee<br/>Thomas Heywood, District 2</p> <p>Trustee<br/>Mary Strevel, District 3</p> <p>Trustee<br/>L William Conner, District 4</p> <p>Trustee<br/>Michelle LaVoy, District 5</p> <p>Trustee<br/>Anne Noland, District 7</p> <p>Trustee<br/>Nick Guthrie, District 9</p> | <p>Executive Committee<br/>Chair: Brian Egen Members: Jeremy Potter, Michael Humphries, Hobby Nels, Andrew Clark, and JJ Przewozniak</p> <p>Awards Committee<br/>Chair: Michelle LaVoy Members:, Thomas Heywood, Mary Strevel, and Andrew Clark</p> <p>Markers Committee<br/>Chair: Jeremy Potter Members: Brian Egen, Nicholas Guthrie, Michael Humphries, Lynn Reaume, and Andrew Clark</p> <p>Projects Committee<br/>Chair: Michael Humphries Members: Bill Conner, Brian Egen, and Andrew Clark</p> |

#### Mission Statement of the Monroe County Museum System

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 MUSEUM SYSTEM  
BOARD of TRUSTEES  
MEETING MINUTES  
December 13th, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.  
at the Monroe County Museum, 126 South Monroe Street, Monroe

Present: Brian Egen, Chairman      Jeremy Potter, Vice-Chairman      Michael Humphries, Secretary  
Tom Heywood, Member      Michelle LaVoy Member      Richard Micka, Emeritus  
Hobby Nels, Past Chairman

Excused: William Conner, Member      Nick Guthrie, Member      Mary Strevel, Member

Museum Staff: Director Clark      J.J. Przewozniak, Deputy Director      Lynn Reaume, County Historian  
Guests: Jeanne Micka

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Egen. Roll was called and there was a quorum. It was noted that the District 7 seat is now vacant due to the resignation of Tony Trujillo.

Motion was made by H. Nels to approve the agenda, seconded by M. Humphries. It was decided that item 6.3 and 6.3.1 would be moved under item 10, and H. Nels agreed to the amendment. Passed.

Approval of Minutes of the October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Meeting: Motion made by J. Potter to approve, seconded by M. Humphries, and passed.

Public Comment: None

Committee Updates: Executive Chairmen Egen said they had not met.

Awards: A draft of the upcoming application was discussed, with a few minor changes. Motion was made by T. Heywood to accept the draft with changes, seconded by M. Humphries and passed. This will be used for 2024 applications.

Historical Markers: Chairman J. Potter noted the information in Director Clark's report- due for pick-up before the end of this year are the titles British Victory at Frenchtown, Sandy Creek Settlement, University of Michigan, Bridge School, Deleuil Blacksmith Shop, Boyd School and the 'War With The Happy Ending'. More posts are also being brought back from the foundry.

Historical Projects: Chairman M. Humphries had shared the draft application for grants, which also has some changes from the previous edition. Discussion followed and then a motion was made by T. Heywood to approve the draft application with the discussed minor changes. It seconded by J. Potter and passed unanimously.

Summary of amounts approved by the board in 2023 totaling \$61,026.00

- City of Monroe for Sawyer House windows \$20,000.
- GSMC used for digital microfilm conversion \$3,146.
- Labor Museum for various maintenance \$20,000.
- Dundee Old Mill for the roof \$14,760.
- Potter Cemetery (Ash Twp.) various maintenance \$3,120.

New Business:

Reports: Motion was made by T. Heywood, seconded by M. Humphries to accept the reports as published; passed.

There was discussion regarding the Director's Report of construction along North Custer Road to the Raisinville Road bridge area. More will be known next year as the season unfolds.

2024 Meeting Schedule: It was unanimously agreed that the Trustee meeting will continue to be scheduled on the second Wednesday of each month.

Old Business:

Work Session: Chairman Egen asked for feedback on the work session in October. It was remarked to have been productive and positive. Vice-Chair J. Potter suggested that a topic in the Strategic Plan be discussed at each meeting to keep those goals in mind. He has the work session priority rankings and will share. January may include discussion on the consolidation similar rankings.

Public Comment #2: None

Board Comments: There was some talk about possible plans for the 2024 eclipse, as mentioned in the Director's report.

Chairman Egen requested from the Director the budget for 2023, with also the planned budget for 2024.

Building Committee: a closed executive session was called by the Chairman and the trustees removed to the second floor for discussion on the building topic. Staff remained on the first floor. The trustees later rejoined staff on the main floor and continued the closed session.

After discussion and questions, M. Humphries made a motion to resume the open session of the meeting; this was seconded by M. LaVoy and passed unanimously.

A motion was made for adjournment by J. Potter, seconded by M. Humphries and the meeting was closed at 10:02 p.m.

The next Trustee meeting will be the on Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup> 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Lynn W. Reaume  
Acting recording secretary  
14 December 2023

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM  
Director's Report  
Submitted by Andrew Clark, Director  
Wednesday, January 17th, 2024

Organizational Operations

County Museum: Hours of operation are Sunday to Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm.

County Archives: Research is by appointment and via phone, mail, and email.

Territorial Park: Closed for the season. Will reopen Memorial Day Weekend 2024.

Vietnam Veterans Museum: Closed for the season. Will reopen Memorial Day Weekend 2024.

St Antoine's Historic Site: Grounds are open year round.

Upcoming Closures

The Monroe County Museum System will be closed Monday, February 19th for the observation of Presidents' Day.

Maintenance and Operations

*Museum and Archives*

Nothing of great significance to report. Kudos to the various staff members who have taken care of snow removal and salting around the museum during the recent snowfall.

*Territorial Park*

Buildings closed for the winter.

*Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum*

Buildings closed for the winter.

*St Antoine's Historic Site Memorial*

Nothing to report.

Exhibits

Staff dispatched Christmas in a quick and efficient manner.

2024 Territorial Park Trail Project

No updates from Mannik-Smith.

2024 Eclipse

Committee meetings have been postponed.

Awards Program

Awards should be finished and available for pickup within the next few days.

2024 application has been posted and distributed to county organizations.

Building Program

In late December, I had a meeting with county administration. In their view new construction would better suit the needs of the museum system (build what we need

rather than retrofit) and we should consider making use of the parking area for an addition.

County property between the health department and high school on Herr Road could be a suitable location for a supplemental storage facility. Ultimately, there is a desire to see the Third Street site redeveloped.

These building projects could be completed with the aid of county financing.

#### Markers Program

*British Victory at Frenchtown, Sandy Creek Settlement, University of Michigan, 1838, Bridge School: First Public School in Michigan, Deloeuil Blacksmith Shop, Boyd School, and "War" with a Happy Ending* were all picked up just before Christmas by Vice-Chair Potter and me.

*Sandy Creek Settlement* has been delivered to Sterling State Park for reinstallation. *Boyd School, Deloeuil Blacksmith Shop*, and the *La-Z-Boy/Knabusch* markers have been transferred over to the city for reinstallation. *Deloeuil Blacksmith Shop* has already been reinstalled by city parks. *Boyd School* and the *La-Z-Boy/Knabusch* markers will be installed by city public works; I believe the latter won't be done until the former La-Z-Boy site redevelopment is near completion.

Though we still retain possession of it, I've been in conversation with Erie Township about the relocation of *"War" with a Happy Ending*. I've suggested two potential locations and warned about the issues of reinstalling it in its former location. They will get back once they've made their decision.

The remaining markers will be reinstalled by museum system staff once the weather has become more amenable to such tasks.

Sewah Studios recently announced that they're expanding their facility and hiring additional staff to accommodate an increase in business.

#### Historical Projects Fund

All submitted reimbursements have been distributed.

2024 application has been posted and distributed to county organizations.

#### Personnel Updates

There are no personnel updates to report at this time.

#### Hodge Podge

Just a reminder that the River Raisin National Battlefield will hold its annual commemoration of the Battles of the River Raisin on Saturday, January 20th from 11 am to 4 pm.

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM  
Deputy Director's Report for December 2023  
Submitted by Jeffrey J. (JJ) Przewozniak  
Friday, January 12, 2024

### **Christmas at the Museum:**

At the time of this writing, thoughts of sugar-plums, candy canes, and all kinds of holiday-themed hustle and bustle are but happy memories, as all the Christmas décor and program supplies have been neatly packed away for a long winter's nap. All our educational and festive holiday programming was executed well with no major hiccups (aside from a little minor steam locomotive repair).

The full suite of holiday offerings were enumerated in in last month's report. Following that, the remaining events in the holiday series were *Cocoa with the Conductor*, a Polar Express-themed storytelling event held on December 9, and a chestnut roast held at the Eby log house on December 10. Both events were meaningful encounters with historic Christmas cheer for our visitors! The week of December 11 was a busy one as the last letters to Santa were rushed to the North Pole, and the Toys for Tots drive was concluded. Thanks to our generous visitors, the bins were overflowing!

Thanks to MCCC theater affiliates Cody Pado and Sydni Wallace for their help as storytellers and period clothing strollers in support of several events in the Christmas at the Monroe County Museum series.

### **Miscellany:**

- Alarm service occurred at RRTP in early December, due to some chewed wires.
- Participation in *One Book, One Community* meetings continues.
- Thanks to Tony Trujillo for assistance with *Cocoa with the Conductor* on December 9.
- Miscellaneous basement workshop tasks are ongoing, as are various projects in the period clothing collection.
- On Tuesday, December 19, we hosted a small group of Monroe County Convention and Tourism Bureau affiliates for a tour of the museum and a general briefing of plans for the coming year.
- On Thursday, December 21, students from Monroe Middle School paid the museum a quick visit. A great time was had by all!

**LOCAL HISTORY DIVISION Report**  
For December, 2023

We were open by appointment with 6 visitors, 4 walk-ins and about 18 GSMC members. Topics included the Duncanson family & Rotary Club of Monroe; surnames Schmidt, Nied, and Neidermeier.

Rachel processed 17 obits from 8 requests. She handled 7 phone call requests and 10 emails. Surnames included Black and Davis. She assisted at the front desk as needed, also working on the weekends, and handling visitors. With the new obit cabinets leveled and in place, she has moved about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the obits and labeled the drawers.

Robert had 13 outside calls and answered 12 emails. He assisted with the 'Ghosts of Christmas Past' and the 'Cocoa with the Conductor' programs. He finished organizing the Payette glass slides and started processing more William Capaul images from the Capaul collection. He also watches the front desk as needed.

Accessions during December:

|         |                                                                                    |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2023.75 | Elizabeth Romany: Monroe Bank & Trust logo mug                                     |
| 2023.76 | Steve Weber: Weis manufacturer wooden desktop file                                 |
| 2023.77 | Helen Walter: First National bank deposit bag                                      |
| 2023.78 | John Oerther IV: Identified family photographs of mostly the Yoas family           |
| 2023.79 | GSMC: Original death certificate for Ethel Muth                                    |
| 2023.80 | Rick Bryan: Family genealogy and original documents, mainly LaVigne and Bomia      |
| 2023.81 | Susan Kuehle: Monroe property abstract                                             |
| 2023.82 | Wendy DuVall: Photographic copy of Marie Gouin LaVoy 'Whitefeather.'               |
| 2023.83 | Alvin Schaut: two color postcards of the Lutheran Home for the Aged on South Dixie |

For December, I completed the Newton Victorian room decorations, the displaying of the Bill & Winnie Findley Christmas and Santa collection (in part), the two "I Spy" type exhibit using the Peltier village figurines and buildings, and the Christmas-ing up of the La-Z-Boy work bench as Santa's Workshop bench. Rachel and Robert also had decorated upstairs.

Transfer:

(8) b/w FIC photographs to the Tecumseh Historical Museum of a Tecumseh-built airplane

Deaccessions due to condition and/or lack of story:

|              |                                                             |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| A84.3.21.1.6 | 'Medicine Water' booklet                                    |
| A86.4.7.1    | 'War of 1812 Genealogy' by Schweitzer (obsolete, from 1984) |

County Obituary page: December, 2023: 6,258 page views.

Lynn W. Reaume, County Historian  
December, 2023

January 9, 2024

**Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees**

**Guest Services Division Report ♦ December 2023**

The Monroe County Museum hosted **478** visitors in the month of December: **104** seniors, **241** adults, **28** youth, and **105** children. **152** people were first-time visitors! The most popular visitation day was **Saturday**, bringing **77** visitors to the Museum. Visitors hailed from Bay City, Bedford, Carleton, Dearborn, Dundee, Erie, Flat Rock, Frenchtown Township, Hillsdale, LaSalle, Maybee, Milan, Monroe, Newport, Portland (MI), Royal Oak, Taylor, Tecumseh, Temperance, West Bloomfield, Woodhaven, and Wyandotte. We also had visitors from Alaska, Arkansas, DC, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin!

*Letters to Santa* concluded mid-month, and the program was again a huge success. 163 letters were sent, beating last year's 155. We had only one letter returned to us via the US Postal Service, but was hand-delivered by Santa Andy a few days before Christmas.

Several groups visited the Museum for scheduled - and unscheduled - visits, but collaboration with the Programs staff resulted in happy visitors.

Recurring tasks for December included submitting invoices and reimbursements for payment, depositing our monthly donations and archival fees at the County Treasurer's Office, submitting requests for new vendors, and ordering office supplies, archival items, and Christmas/holiday ephemera.

Respectfully submitted by Heather Piegza, Guest Services Coordinator