



**Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting**

Wednesday, 12 February, 2025 @ 7 pm
126 South Monroe Street
Monroe, Michigan 48161

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting of 15 January 2025
5. Public Comment
6. Markers Committee
7. Projects Fund Committee
8. Spirit of Service Committee
9. New Business
 1. Staff Reports
 2. Acceptance of Accessions
 3. Acceptance of Deaccessions
10. Old Business
11. Public Comment
12. Board Comments
13. Adjournment

Next Meeting

Wednesday, 12 March 2025 @ 7 pm
Monroe County Museum
126 South Monroe Street
Monroe, Michigan 48161

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 reach and varied stories, joining together to unearth meaning and illuminate relevant connections between the past, present, and future.

2025 Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees

(All terms expire 31 December 2026)

Officers	Trustees
Chair Brian Egen, County District 6	Trustee Emeritus Richard Micka
Vice Chair Michelle Lavoy, County District 5	Trustee Barbara Roe, County District 1
Secretary Michael Humphries, County District 8	Trustee Thomas Heywood, County District 2
Immediate Past Chair Hobby Nels	Trustee Sue Wagers, County District 3
	Trustee L William Conner, County District 4
	Trustee Anne Noland, County District 7
	Trustee Nick Guthrie, County District 9

2025 Board of Trustees Committees

(Appointed annually by the board chair)

Executive Committee	<i>Board:</i> Brian Egen (Chair), Michelle Lavoy, Michael Humphries, Hobby Nels <i>Staff:</i> Andrew Clark, JJ Przewozniak
Awards Committee	<i>Board:</i> Michelle Lavoy, Anne Noland <i>Staff:</i> Andrew Clark
Markers Committee	<i>Board:</i> Nick Guthrie (Chair), Brian Egen, Michael Humphries <i>Staff:</i> Andrew Clark, JJ Przewozniak
Projects Committee	<i>Board:</i> Michael Humphries (Chair), Bill Conner, Brian Egen, Nick Guthrie <i>Staff:</i> Andrew Clark

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM
BOARD of TRUSTEES
MEETING MINUTES
January 15th, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
at the Monroe County Museum, 126 South Monroe Street, Monroe

Present: Barbara Roe, District 1	(vacant) District 2	Sue Wagers, District 3
Brian Egen, District 6	Anne Noland, District 7	Nick Guthrie, District 9
Richard Micka, Emeritus	Hobby Nels, Past Chairman	

Excused: William Conner, District 4	Michelle LaVoy, District 5	Michael Humphries, District 8
Museum Staff: Director Clark	J.J. Przewozniak, Deputy Director	Lynn Reaume, Co. Historian
Guests: Robin Miller, clerk	Jeanne Micka, Sawyer Homestead	

At 7:00 the attending trustees were sworn in by clerk Robin Miller.

At 7:04 the Museum Director conducted the start of the meeting with elections.

Elections: Chairperson: B. Egen was nominated by N. Guthrie, seconded by A. Noland, for Chairperson. The vote was unanimous.

Vice-Chairperson: M. Humphries had submitted an endorsement for M. LaVoy. With no other nominations in the call, motion was made by N. Guthrie, seconded by H. Nels and the vote was unanimous.

Secretary: N. Guthrie nominated M. Humphries. There were no other nominations in the call, and the motion was seconded by A. Noland and passed unanimously.

Noted that present trustees abstained from their vote, and those absent had voiced their approval for their nomination.

The Trustee Emeritus Richard Micka and Past Chairman Hobby Nels were reappointed to their positions by unanimous vote, and abstained their vote.

Committee appointments: S. Wagers and B. Roe will consider and will be added to a committee soon. N. Guthrie will chair the Historical Marker Committee- there are many projects to consider.

Approval of the Agenda: Motion was made to accept as written by A. Noland, seconded by N. Guthrie and passed.

Approval of Minutes of December 11, 2024 Meeting: R. Micka made a motion to accept the meeting minutes as written, seconded by S. Wagers and passed.

Public Comment #1: none

Committee Updates:

Historical Markers Committee: Director Clark had shared new marker text for the previously damaged Ida Railroad Well marker- one side as it was, and the other side with text on local Ida author Gertrude Crampton. After discussion N. Guthrie made the motion to approve the new text, seconded by S. Wagers and it was unanimously approved.

Director Clark noted that due to the Heritage Trail expansion on North Custer Road, the 'Custer Farm' marker will be removed by staff and put in storage until a later time for reinstallation.

Projects Grant Committee: Director Clark reported that there was only change a 2025 date change from last year's application form. Motion was made to accept the change by A. Noland, seconded by N. Guthrie and this was approved unanimously.

Spirit of Service Award Committee: Director Clark noted that the only change was the 2025 application date change from 2024. Motion was made to accept the change by N. Guthrie, seconded by S. Wagers; approved.

New Business: Staff Reports: N. Guthrie made a motion to accept the reports as presented, seconded by S. Wagers; approved.

New Accessions or Deaccessions: as given in the Local History Division monthly report. No deaccessions.

Old Business: nothing discussed.

Public Comment #2: none

Board Comments: All were looking forward to the work of 2025; there was welcome to new trustee Barbara Roe.

R. Micka announced the River Raisin National Battlefield Annual Commemoration in January. It was suggested that the Museum Strategic Plan be distributed to the new trustees.

Director Clark announced the first 'Third Thursday' event for this year. He also reminded the group that the country's 250th anniversary may promote more history interests.

On the Museum expansion, he said that he is working to get a State of Michigan grant and is exploring Contractors, with approval of the County. Chairman Egen summarized the objectives for the project an its eight million dollar estimate. The city of Monroe is cooperative, grants are important to investigate, and being open to cost-cutting measures will be considered. H. Nels said the momentum must keep up with opportunities and clear focus with communication.

Chairman Egen said the next board meeting is Wednesday, February 12th at 7:00 p.m.

With no other business to discuss, motion was made by A. Noland to adjourn, seconded by N. Guthrie and the meeting was concluded at 7:55 p.m.

Lynn W. Reaume
Acting recording secretary
27 January 2025

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM

Director's Report

Submitted by Andrew Clark, Director

Wednesday, 12 February 2025

Organizational Operations

County Museum

Hours of operation are Sundays through Saturdays, 10 am to 5 pm.

County Archives

Research is by appointment and via phone, mail, and email.

Territorial Park

Planned reopening is for 22 May 2025. Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 10 am to 4 pm.

Vietnam Veterans Museum

Planned reopening is for 23 May 2025. Fridays, 10 am to 4 pm.

St Antoine's Historic Site

Grounds are open year round.

Upcoming Closures

The Monroe County Museum System will be closed Monday, 17 February for the Presidents' Day holiday. Regular operations resume 18 February.

Maintenance and Operations

Museum and Archives

Elevator had some hiccups in January that resulted in visitors getting stuck, a surprise visit from the fire department, and a service call from the maintenance company.

Territorial Park

No maintenance projects to report.

The mounds of dirt that mysteriously appeared in the Octobernight parking field were removed at the direction of Raisinville Township. I've been reassured that the field will once again be available for our use in October.

Loop Trail construction around Territorial Park begins this week. Currently, the focus of work will be on the bridge over Willow Run with a target date of completion sometime in "July." As July notably has 31 days, and as it has been cited that the work will be done in time for Fair Week, we're estimating closures and detours directly impacting the park through 25 July. For the bulk of the 2025 season, we'll shift visitor service operations to the east lot of the property as that portion of the park will not be in the primary path of construction; Papermill School will be closed until that section of the park reopens and can safely accommodate visitors. As we get closer to opening the

park for the season, we'll be working on informing the public through social media and temporary signage. Presently, it does not appear that there will be any impacts on the execution of Octoburnight.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum

Service flags outside museum removed until Spring.

St Antoine's Historic Site Memorial

Nothing to report.

Exhibits

Mike completed the new LaZBoy chair platforms. Mike, Robert, JJ, and SMCC job shadow Luke prepped the area, placed the new platforms, moved chairs, and added glass partitions. The finished product looks more deliberately planned than its previous iteration. As the platforms were built to be moved by pallet jack, the chairs can now be easily moved if needed.

Building Program

A \$1,000,000 grant to the State of Michigan's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity was submitted at the end of January. Award notifications are supposed to be sent out in the early part of March.

At the 4 February meeting of the Board of Commissioners, Chairman Egen and I gave them a brief presentation about the museum expansion and answered any questions they had about the project. If we are awarded the \$1,000,000 from the state, the county board unanimously pledged a 100% match to the building project.

Markers Program

The Ida marker approved at last month's meeting has been submitted. Nothing yet to report on the timeline.

There is nothing further to report at this time.

Historical Projects Fund

The Historical Project Fund application went live on 31 January.

There is nothing further to report at this time.

Awards Program

The Spirit of Service application went live on 31 January.

There is nothing further to report at this time.

Personnel Updates

Thomas Heywood was reappointed to District 2 Trustee at the end of January.

We currently have three part-time positions open: two part-time presenters and one part-time visitor services specialist.

Hodge Podge

Please join us on Thursday, 20 February at 7 pm for our Third Thursday Lecture, *Maple Sugaring from A to Z*, presented by Deputy Director JJ Przewozniak.

Ric Mixer returns on 20 March at 7 pm for his program, *Howling Winds*.

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM

Deputy Director's Report for January 2025

Submitted by Jeffrey J. (JJ) Przewozniak
Thursday, February 6, 2025

Several outreach visits occurred this month, in which Programs Division staff traveled to various places around the community to deliver educational programs. *Aquatic Mammals of the Fur Trade* is a cornerstone outreach program developed over the last few years that's proved very popular, which incorporates education about the fur trade, the natural history of our region, and environmental stewardship. This month, resources were invested into that program, including incorporation of original artifacts, improved replicas, and refined presentation points/outcomes. More information is included below.

Various organizational work in sculpting the 2025 season took place throughout the month. Developing moving parts, strategies, and networks related to major events, RRTP site improvements, and educational programming are ongoing focus areas. The recent announcement of imminent construction on the bike path project has been a particular point of attention, as the North Custer road closure will severely impact visitation for most of the RRTP 2025 operating season.

As the old saying goes, "Clean ships save lips" (I think). Anyway, I've taken opportunities afforded by winter to organize and clean up basement storage areas. Much like the ancient story of Ubiquitous, doomed to push his chariot up a mountain for all eternity only to have it burn up as it neared the sun, this persistent task remains a necessary monotony that allows rapid deployment of, and easy access to, our wide array of diverse supplies throughout the year.

Finally, Mike and I have been working on some projects aimed at enriching living history programming. Namely, researching and building some reproduction shoulder yokes for the upcoming maple season, and also a replica food safe (*garde-manger*) for the Navarre house, based on an original identified in *Les Meubles Anciens du Canada Français* (1963).

Miscellany:

- *YesterWays* continues to be offered Saturdays and Sundays from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. January's activity was WWI-era knitting, and February's is a watercolor painting workshop, inspired by the story of Robert Duncanson.
- Participation in *One Book, One Community of Monroe County* is ongoing. Preparations were made for a thematic twist on *Aquatic Mammals of the Fur Trade*, incorporating the interactive detective work one would expect from our own "*Remarkably Bright Creatures*" (This year's book, by Shelby Van Pelt).
- Director Clark and I attended the annual commemoration event at the River Raisin National Battlefield Park on Saturday, January 18. Congratulations to the River Raisin National Battlefield Park Foundation and the National Park Service staff on another successful commemoration.
- On Friday, January 31, we participated in a mini job shadow event organized by SMCC. Best of luck to Luke as he prepares for his career in history, and thanks to teacher Kyle McElvaney at SMCC for the invitation to participate in this special program for students.
- Special thanks to Chairman Egen and family for the donation of items to the MCMS, including a collection of reference books, and an assortment of original and reproduction items for use in living history programming.

Museum Outreach for January 2025:

Date	Location	Program	Est. Attendance	Notes
Thursday, January 16	MCM	3rd Thursday: <i>Guardians of Michigan</i> with Jeff Morrison	18	
Thursday, January 23	Triumph Academy 3000 Vivian Rd., Monroe MI 48162	<i>Aquatic Mammals of the Fur Trade</i>	60	3x 3rd-grade classes
Wednesday, January 29	Cornerstone Baptist Church (HIS Homeschool Co-op) 4000 Lewis Ave., Ida, MI 48140	<i>Aquatic Mammals of the Fur Trade</i>	35	Variety of elementary-age students and families
Saturdays & Sundays throughout January	MCM	YesterWays: <i>Knit Your Bit!</i> (WWI Knitting)	18	

LOCAL HISTORY DIVISION

For January, 2025

Research Requests By:

Phone 30

Mail 6

Email 60

In-person 30

The framed embroidery sampler (item 71.6.33.1.12) on loan to the I.H.M. Museum came back safe and sound and is back in storage.

We have now passed over 63,000 images in Past Perfect Photographs- over 6,000 of those were new images and negatives from Payette Collection 2023.33.39. I consider this one 'done' but I'm sure there will be some other images added.

Work continues to be done re-examining the Monroe Evening Newspapers for those obituaries that were missed over the years on the front page (and elsewhere.) After checking and verifying, new obits continue to be added by the hundreds and the obit index online reaps the benefits of this. Rick Grassley is working with me on this project. This will continue until the errors and omissions are corrected.

Some GSMC members are working on indexing some of the more important Probate books such as wills, from last year's Probate book transfer.

County Obituary page: 7,772 users; 16,961 total for all events

Lynn W. Reaume, County Historian

6 February 2025

Archival and Collections Accessions during January, 2025:

2025.0	Found in Collection (FIC) items	Will be used for miscellaneous items as found
2025.1	Paula Sturn	Photographs and Archival items, some relating to the Monroe Post Office
2025.2	Jerry Sopher	Monroe city property Abstract of Title and a few metal tools
2025.3	Lynn Reaume	Digital photographs of Sterling State Park showing the old pilings visible from the Monroe Yacht Club
2025.4	Brownstown Historical Society	Photographs and Archival items of Monroe Doctor Harry Orvis
2025.5	Micaeli Bogi	Monroe High School photographs and student related items
2025.6	Rene Cavins	Archival items of J. H. Reaper and son William A. Reaper

Recommended deaccessions by staff to the Collections and Exhibition Committee for January, 2025:

None

[illegible]