



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

Wednesday, February 11, 2026 @ 6 pm
126 South Monroe Street
Monroe, Michigan 48161

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Election of Board Chair
4. Election of Vice-Chair
5. Election of Secretary
6. Appointment of Past Chair
7. Appointment of Trustee Emeritus
8. Approval of Agenda
9. Appointment of Committee Chairs and Committee Members
10. Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting of December 10, 2025
11. Public Comment
12. Markers Committee
13. Projects Fund Committee
14. Awards Committee
15. New Business
 1. Monroe County Museum System Department Report
 1. First Flag Project Overview
 2. Acceptance of Accessions - **Action Needed**
 3. Approval of Deaccessions - **Action Needed**
16. Old Business
 1. Museum Expansion Update
17. Public Comment
18. Board Comments
19. Adjournment

Next Meeting

March 11, 2026 @ 6 pm
Monroe County Museum
126 South Monroe Street
Monroe, Michigan 48161

2025 Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees

(All terms expire December 31, 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, Sue Wagers <i>Staff:</i> Andrew Clark
Markers Committee	<i>Board:</i> Nick Guthrie (Chair), Brian Egen, Michael Humphries, Barbara Roe <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

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.

Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes: Wednesday, December 10, 2025 // 6:00 PM
Held at the Monroe County Museum
126 South Monroe Street, Monroe, MI 48161

Attendance:

Brian Egen, Chair	District 6	Present
Richard Micka, Trustee Emeritus		Present
Mike Humphries, Secretary	District 8	Present
Hobby Nels, Immediate Past Chair		Excused
Nick Guthrie	District 9	Present
Thomas Heywood	District 2	Excused
Michelle LaVoy, Vice Chair	District 5	Excused
Barbara Roe	District 1	Present
Sue Wagers	District 3	Present
L. William Conner, Jr.	District 4	Present
Anne Noland	District 7	Present

Museum System Staff

Andrew Clark, Director

JJ Przewozniak, Deputy Director

Robert Lutey, Lead Historian

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Egen, and roll call was taken by Secretary Humphries. L. William Conner made a motion to approve the agenda, which was supported by Nick Guthrie, and passed unanimously. Mike Humphries made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the November 25th meeting. It was supported by Sue Wagers and passed unanimously.

1st Public Comment: None

Markers Committee Update: N. Guthrie said that there were no updates.

Projects Fund Committee Update: M. Humphries said that there were some changes made to the 2026 historical projects grant application form, specifically to the requests for small grants and markers. The changes were made to simplify the process for small institutions trying to get a historical marker. Humphries added that the committee met prior to the full board meeting and agreed to recommend that the updates be approved. He made a motion to approve the

changes to the historical projects fund as presented. It was seconded by N. Guthrie and passed unanimously.

Awards Committee Update: Director Clark said that the committee changed the previous application form to a nomination form and updated the dates. W. Conner made a motion to accept the updated nomination form and was seconded by M. Humphries. It was approved unanimously.

New Business: M. Humphries made a motion to change the start time of future Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees regular meetings to 6:00 p.m. It was supported by Anne Noland and passed unanimously.

W. Conner made a motion to accept the department reports. S. Wagers asked what the historic research was in Deputy Director Przewozniak's report. He replied that museum staff has been researching the claim that Michigan's first U.S. flag was raised in Monroe. Staff is considering incorporating that event into the upcoming America250 project. A. Clark noted that there are other events in the works as well, including the Promoting the Public Good event, which will showcase activities surrounding early 19th century patriotic celebrations. S. Wagers seconded the aforementioned motion, which passed unanimously.

S. Wagers asked about the date of the biography booklet that made up accession number 2025.75. Robert Lutey replied that it is roughly turn of the century. N. Guthrie made a motion to accept the accessions, which was seconded by M. Humphries. It passed unanimously.

R. Lutey gave a brief explanation of the two deaccessions being proposed, which included a kitchen table without provenance and a collection of 685 ledgers originally from the Monroe County Register of Deeds/County Clerk's office. He explained that county clerk asked for the return of the ledgers due to her legal inability to transfer them to the museum. A. Clark added that the clerk's office is pursuing a grant to repair and scan a number of these books. The books would then be converted to a loan and continue to be available for researchers. A. Clark also mentioned that he hopes to make the loan an annual loan and to get the right of first refusal should the clerk's office ever wish to get rid of the books. M. Humphries noted his support for deaccession, but also questioned the need for it as both the museum and clerk's office are a part of the county. Brian Egen noted that it is for tracking reasons. A. Noland mentioned that she likes the idea of making the loan into an annual loan. B. Egen agreed. S. Wagers made a motion to accept the deaccessions, which was supported by M. Humphries. It passed unanimously.

Old Business: B. Egen gave a brief overview of updates regarding the building expansion. He mentioned that some slight modifications have been made to the reception area and that the next meeting will be January 5, 2026.

2nd Public Comment: David Hoffman spoke, first apologizing for the previous night's meeting of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners. He then offered to handle the digging services for the museum expansion in order to help the budget. His generous offer prompted expressions of gratitude from the trustees and staff. Hoffman said he appreciates history. A. Clark said the museum is about four to five months away from issuing contracts, but will select Hoffman's firm for the job when the time comes.

Board Comments: W. Conner wished everyone a Merry Christmas, which was reiterated by the rest of the group. Deputy Director Przewozniak expressed his gratitude for the board's support and participation. Director Clark mentioned that he appreciated the board's involvement with collections procedures and invited the group to attend the Ghosts of Christmas Past program at Nocturnal. A. Noland complimented the decorations in the museum. B. Egen praised the board's teamwork and is looking forward to a transformational 2026.

A discussion also ensued regarding the terms of the current trustees.

M. Humphries made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by N. Guthrie and passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

These minutes were prepared by Robert Lutey on December 15, 2025.

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM

Department Report

Compiled and submitted by Andrew Clark, Director
with contributions from
JJ Przewozniak, Deputy Director and Robert Lutey, Lead Historian

Wednesday, February 11, 2026

Director's Report

Submitted by Andrew Clark, Director

Operating Hours

County Museum

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

County Archives

Mondays and Tuesdays: By Appointment

Wednesdays: 10 am to 4.30 pm

Thursdays: 1 pm to 4.30 pm

Fridays: 1 pm to 4.30 pm

Territorial Park

Historic buildings closed for the season; grounds open.

Vietnam Veterans Museum

Museum closed for the season; memorial open.

St Antoine's Historic Site

Grounds are open year round.

Upcoming Scheduled Closures

February 16, 2026, Presidents' Day

Upcoming Events

February 14, 15, 21, 22, 28

YesterWays: Paint Like Rob!

Monroe County Museum

11 am to 3 pm

Free and open to the public.

March 1, 7, 8

YesterWays: Papermaking

Monroe County Museum

11 am to 3 pm

Free and open to the public.

Maintenance and Operations

Museum and Archives

The afternoon of January 6 proved to be rather more exciting than the usual Tuesday.

Due to an ongoing issue with one of our rooftop HVAC units reporting for work, the radiator in the processing room was opened up to warm the room. We didn't know that there was anything wrong with that particular radiator until it had been on for about an hour and it set off the smoke alarms which resulted in a friendly visit from the City of Monroe's fire and police departments. While we had generally figured out the issue before their arrival, their response time was quite impressive and they thoroughly looked over everything before departing. Staff dutifully evacuated; a visitor had to be cajoled into leaving despite the blaring alarms.

Having the alarms go off when they're not being tested can be rather exciting. Opening up the door to a room only to find out that you now have a cloud in your building really can change the course of your workday. At the suggestion of the fire department, a local plumbing contractor was summoned for a diagnosis and it was determined that the union on the radiator had given way. The radiator has since been fixed and we have not had any localized, stratus formations in the processing room.

The undiagnosed dead mouse smell continues to plague the building this winter. It's been particularly ripe due to the low temperatures we've had the last few weeks and the greater than usual call for heat. We think we've figured out a workaround to dissipate the smell during public hours and it appears to, generally speaking, be working. Except for my office. My stinky, stinky office.

Two of the three older, rooftop HVAC units required minor servicing. It is quite clear that they've reached the end of their service life and will need to be replaced. (Replacing the three older units during the expansion has already been included as an add alternate.)

I'm currently working on revising the museum's website to be compliant with upcoming ADA changes.

Territorial Park

Nothing to report.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum

Nothing to report.

St Antoine's Historic Site Memorial

Nothing to report.

Exhibits Update

In early January, museum staff put together an exhibit of materials from the United Way and from the Monroe County Museum to commemorate the centennial of the organization. We hosted the United Way for an opening of the exhibit on January 15

which was well attended and received a considerable amount of televised media coverage. The exhibit will be up through March 15.

We are already doing some staging for our American Semiquincentennial exhibit which has a targeted run of Memorial Day through Labor Day weekends.

Building Program

Progress on the building expansion project continues. We will be focusing on finishes at our next meeting with the architect later in February. Museum staff and county personnel have engaged with the architect and their contractors on more detailed items. The most recent set of drawings will be presented during the February meeting.

Markers Program

The eight markers taken to Marietta for refurbishment have all been sandblasted and are awaiting to be repainted.

Two markers are in the queue to be manufactured. (The Railroad Well/Gertrude Crampton and South Rockwood Evangelical Church/John Strong Jr.)

Three markers are on my to-do list to be written and submitted to the committee for review and approval.

Historical Projects Fund

There are no Historical Projects Fund updates.

Awards Program

There are no Awards Program updates.

Personnel Updates

Jill Jablonski is leaving her part-time presenter position in February.

PB Brescol will be moving from seasonal visitor services to seasonal presenter.

American Semiquincentennial

Museum staff have been assembling a robust lineup of small and large programs and an exhibit related to this year's semiquincentennial.

In January I submitted a proposal to the America250MI for a film project to augment the Custer exhibit.

Little Bighorn Sesquicentennial

I've been working with the staff of the Ellis Library to develop a joint program related to the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of the Little Bighorn. We are aiming for an event to be held around mid-April.

Programs Division Report
Submitted by JJ Przewozniak, Deputy Director

Christmas at the Monroe County Museum:

It was another success! I'm happy to report that Christmas at the Monroe County Museum has again proven to be an attractive and reliable suite of holiday-themed offerings that offers consistent results and opportunities for growth and expansion. This program series represents a diverse, accessible, and meaningful opportunity for visitors to encounter the MCMS in a variety of ways. While variables such as weather events provide a degree of uncertainty, the richness of offerings, interconnected messaging, and overall MCMS presence in the community all form into one broader holiday program that's worthwhile and meaningful for everyone. Thanks to all volunteers and staff who helped make the program great, from miniature railroading, to chestnut cookery, to creative content development, and of course the rapid setup and strike of Xmas decor at the museum. Most of early January was dedicated to program strike.

Miscellany:

- YesterWays continues. In this period we've gone from pomanders and Froebel stars, to knitting needles, and now we're on to paintbrushes.
- I and most of the staff participated in construction of the United Way exhibit prior to the opening on Thursday, January 15.
- On Saturday, January 17, Andy and I attended the annual commemoration of the River Raisin battles.
- A suite of America250 programming has been organized, developed, and locked in prior to an informal unveiling of sorts at the planning committee meeting on January 29.
- Participation in OBOC continues. Content has been 90% completed for *A Knife at the Museum*, which is scheduled for Saturday, March 28. Planning continues.
- Advanced planning has been going on for the year's activities. This includes but is not limited to:
 - A. Expansion and development of classroom educational outreach programming;
 - B. Territorial Park operations including substantial work on the Navarre House and assorted site improvements scheduled for April;
 - C. Annual events such as maple sugaring, Earth Day outreach, Ag day programming, and Promoting the Public Good;
 - D. Misc. outreach participation for events such as Michigan History Day, and the Local History Conference in March.
- Participation in the building expansion project also continues. This is manifested mostly via meetings and sporadic dialogue with Kohler and their affiliates. Additional work includes assorted replacement of articles around the museum and satellite sites like furniture, etc.

- Sewing and related period clothing work has been ongoing. Tasks this period included felling seams on our 1810s woolen blanket capotes, measuring/tagging garments, and general organization/cleaning of the period clothing storage and adjacent areas.
- We said farewell to Presenter Jill Jablonski, who has left the organization. We wish her the best of luck in her future pursuits.
- Special thanks to everyone who donated to the Toys for Tots Drive this year, and to Nocturnal Monroe for hosting Ghosts of Christmas Past in December.

Collections Division Report (December)
Submitted by Robert Lutey, Lead Historian

Research requests/contacts: 85

Phone: 11

Mail: 4 (6 obits)

Email: 55

In-person: 15

I assisted with the Cocoa with the Conductor event.

I installed the winter items in the seasonal exhibit.

Director Clark and I had a brief meeting with the architect regarding the new archives space. I was able to see a 3D rendering and pass along some recommendations. It was very exciting to see everything coming together!

Director Clark, Deputy Director Przewozniak, and I went through the updated collections policy. Many good ideas were shared and will be included in the next iteration. We are planning another meeting soon to address the comments that were made by other museums. Once this is complete, I will produce the final document that will go before the board for approval.

I picked up Dr. Long's gas-o-meter, a clock, and a typewriter from our conservator, Mark Gervasi. I dropped off two accordions, a bugle, a Civil War drum, and a banjo for him to work on.

Director Clark and I went to the United Way in order to accept a loan of some materials for their 100th anniversary. An exhibit will be put together from these items and an event will be held on January 15.

I have continued organizing the processing room.

Nicholas and I spent some time putting a great number of rolling racks together. We anticipate that these will come in handy during and after the construction of the addition.

Dana has been working on processing and organizing our Santa letters in order to make them more accessible. He also did some research regarding July 4 events of the 19th century for the upcoming America 250 celebration.

Research requests have continued to be handled by Rachel and myself. Topics of interest included family genealogy, house research, Carleton during WWII, the Monroe glass industry, Michigan Tobacco Works, and the Milan Area Fire Department.

Collections Division Report (January)
Submitted by Robert Lutey, Lead Historian

Research requests/contacts: 87

Phone: 17

Mail: 1 (2 obits)

Email: 50

In-person: 19

I assisted with United Way exhibit, which we have received positive feedback on.

I assisted with the removal of the Native American corn grinding exhibit. While the case was gotten rid of, the painting on the back wall was saved. It was painted by local artist Edwin Long when the exhibit was first installed, and will be accessioned into the collection soon.

Director Clark, Deputy Director Przewozniak and I discussed the creation of a new exhibit for America 250. I am currently in the process of going through the collection to see what artifacts might be suitable for such an exhibit. On a related note, I contacted ICA Art Conservation in Cleveland to obtain a quote for the conservation of a deteriorating paper fan we have that dates back to 1797. It celebrates George Washington's life of public service. Unfortunately, ICA wanted between \$8,000 and \$10,000 for the work.

I removed the artifacts from the Sieb family case, which will be changing over as we plan for our America 250 exhibit and more.

Director Clark, Deputy Director Przewozniak and I went through the comments made by various museums regarding our updated collections policy. I am now in the process of putting all of our work into one document. Once completed, it will be presented before the board for approval.

Mark Gervasi, our conservator, is continuing his work on the items from last month. I will be picking those items up on February 6 (assuming the weather cooperates). I have continued organizing the processing room as time permits.

Rachel attended the G.S.M.C. meeting on January 3rd, in addition to her work with the newspapers and general research.

Dana finished processing and organizing the Santa letters. He has since been helping with donation processing.

Research requests have continued to be handled by Rachel and myself. Topics of interest included Monroe Police Department history, house research, Weis furniture research, Alonzo Curtis (Civil War Medal of Honor recipient), the Pageant of Monroe, and Muehleisen Cemetery.

Monroe County Museum System
Collections Division
Accessions Report
December 2025

Accession Number	Donor	Item(s)
2025.76	Greg Wittkop	A wedding dress worn by the donor's mother and four model train books used by his father
2025.78	David Doss	A letter written by Monroe County Sheriff William Hause in 1901
2025.79	G.S.M.C.	Three Old French Town Days record books
2025.80	Debra Heath	Apron and handkerchief that once belonged to Ethel Wiech (Stowell) and a glass Pepsi-Cola bottle
2025.81	Robert Sieb	Fourteen letters written by Elizabeth "Libbie" Custer between 1917 and 1923

There were no non-accession transfers made in December 2025.

Monroe County Museum System
Collections Division
Deaccessions Report
December 2025

There are no deaccessions for December 2025.

Monroe County Museum System

Collections Division

Accessions Report

January 2026

Accession Number	Donor	Item(s)
2026.1	Teri M. Monday	Military materials once belonging to Vietnam veteran Charles McDowell and two spaghetti glass cups
2026.2	D'Orcie Marsrow Jablonski	Archival materials from the Mather family including MHS items, greeting cards, photographs, and more
2026.3	Jim Johnson	Sieb & Baier advertisement card
2026.4	Historical Society of Michigan	Collection of aerial photographs, maps, and a bound report regarding Monroe's shoreline

There were no non-accession transfers made in January 2026.

Monroe County Museum System

Collections Division

Deaccessions Report

January 2026

There are no deaccessions for January 2026.