

Danbury Museum and Historical Society Authority
Huntington Hall
Meeting Minutes – February 13, 2020

In compliance with Connecticut General Statute § 1-225, these minutes are being provided for informational purposes and are subject to approval of the Danbury Museum & Historical Society Authority Board of Trustees at its next regular meeting.

In attendance were, Geoff Herald, Paul Valeri, Marian Hesemeyer, Brigid Guertin (DMHS), Michele Amundson (DMHS), Mike Flanagan (FDMHS), Bob Doyle, Patrick Wells (DMHS), Doug Polistena, Elizabeth Hudson, Bob Young and Roberto Alves
Members not in attendance: Brandon Whitfield, Dr. John Clark

President Report: Geoff Herald called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm and asked the board for any changes or corrections to last month's meeting minutes.

A motion to accept the minutes from January 9, 2020 meeting was made by Elizabeth Hudson and seconded by Bob Young, all in attendance voted to accept the January meeting minutes in a unanimous vote.

Finance Report: Bob Doyle informed the members of the Board that the new bookkeeper is working out. The Museum balance sheets were presented and the Hat City Ball fund raiser results were discussed. The Hat City Ball was successful and the money raised will be used to help cover the Museum's operational expenses.

A motion to accept the financial report was made by Roberto Alves and seconded by Doug Polistena, all in attendance voted to accept the financial report in a unanimous vote.

Executive Director's Report: Brigid Guertin reported that the Museum has been busier than expected between the Danbury Fair exhibit and the number of research requests. The response to the exhibit has been so enthusiastic that we will be keeping it up through November. The exhibit will be refreshed and changed over this time so that visitors have a new experience each time they come.

The decision has been made to increase the cost of the Museum field trips, offered to the area schools, to \$20.00 per student. The increase is due to the reduced funding for the Museum in the City Budget over the years. We need to be able to cover the cost of maintenance, repair, cleaning of historic buildings and program expenses incurred by the Museum for these programs. All the members of the Museum Board of Trustees accepted and supported this proposed increase.

Bob Doyle and Brigid Guertin opened a discussion in regards to the insurance expense covered by the Museum for the buildings, liability and the deductible our private insurance company will allow. The buildings and property belong to the City of Danbury and not to the Museum itself so it was agreed that the Board members will have a discussion with Mayor Boughton about this subject.

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BY: JEC

Fundraising Events & Programs: Brigid Guertin presented potential change in our fund raising model. We will be rolling out a new corporate sponsorship program. There will be discussions with potential sponsors to give us the framework as to what this will be. This will also change the nature of the Hat City Ball, making it more of a friend raiser event.

FDMHSA:

Old Business:

New Business: Brigid Guertin explained to the Board that the few staff members (there are three) at the museum do all of the cleaning along with their other responsibilities. We will need to find money to hire a cleaning company as it isn't possible to keep the Historic buildings clean, with the increase in the number of visitors, researchers and volunteers. Brigid stated it was "a good problem" to have.

Geoff Herald opened a discussion in regards to Mayor Boughton's State of the City address in which he talked about a potential gift of \$5,000,000.00 for the maintenance of historic properties. This statement has caused confusion and has created difficulties for the Museum's fundraising efforts. Board members decided to discuss this with Mayor Boughton, to reach a point of clarity.

Geoff also informed the Board that we would be inviting City Council members and City Officials to the Museum. The reason for doing this is that it has become apparent they are not aware of the financial stress the Museum is under.


Liz Hudson motioned that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter, Bob Doyle seconded the Motion. Paul Valeri motioned that the Board come out of Executive session, Elizabeth Hudson seconded the motion.

Geoff also suggested that the Board should buy a Corporate Sponsored table at the next Hat City Ball.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:38 pm with a motion by Paul Valeri, seconded by Elizabeth Hudson.

The next meeting of the Board will be March 12, 2020 at 5:00pm, in the Huntington Hall at the Danbury Museum.

Respectfully submitted,



Marian Hesemeyer