



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MUSEUM BOARD AGENDA
556 W MAPLE
Thursday, October 7, 2021
5:00 PM**

***Mission Statement:** The Birmingham Museum will explore meaningful connections with our past, in order to enrich our community and enhance its character and sustainability. Our mission is to promote understanding of Birmingham's historical and cultural legacy through preservation and interpretation of its ongoing story.*

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Approval of the Minutes**
Minutes of September 2, 2021
- 4. Unfinished Business**
 - A. Heritage Zone Community Garden Project-Spring, 2022
- 5. New Business**
 - A. Collections Policy Review, Planning, and Tour
- 6. Communication and Reports**
 - A. Director Report
 - B. Member comments
 - C. Public comments
- 7. Next Meeting: November 4, 2021**
- 8. Adjournment**

You are invited to attend the meeting in person or virtually through ZOOM:
Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/99524391376> Meeting ID: 995 2439 1376

NOTICE: Individuals with disabilities requiring accommodations for effective participation in this meeting should contact the city clerk's office at (248) 530-1880 (voice), or (248) 644-5115 (TDD) at least one day in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance. *APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MUSEUM BOARD MEETINGS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE AND ON THE CITY WEBSITE AT www.bhamgov.org.* City of Birmingham, 151 Martin, Birmingham, MI 48009; 248.530.1800. Persons with disabilities that may require assistance for effective participation in this public meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at the number (248) 530-1880, or (248) 644-5115 (for the hearing impaired) at least one day before the meeting to request help in mobility, visual, hearing, or other assistance.

Las personas con incapacidad que requieren algún tipo de ayuda para la participación en esta sesión pública deben ponerse en contacto con la oficina del escribano de la ciudad en el número (248) 530-1800 o al (248) 644-5115 (para las personas con incapacidad auditiva) por lo menos un día antes de la reunión para solicitar ayuda a la movilidad, visual, auditiva, o de otras asistencias. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MUSEUM BOARD MEETING
556 W. Maple
Thursday, September 2, 2021
5:00 PM**

Members Present: Judith Keefer, Marty Logue, Bev Erickson, Alexandra Harris, Caitlin Rosso, Jay Shell (arrived at 5:07)

Members Absent: Pat Hughes

Student Members: None

Administration: Museum Director Leslie Pielack, museum staff Donna Casaceli and Caitlin Donnelly

Guests: Assistant City Manager/Planning Director Jana Ecker, Assistant to the City Manager Melissa Fairbairn; museum intern Sarah Sanders

**Approval of the Minutes
Minutes of August 5, 2021**

MOTION: by Logue, seconded by Keefer:

To approve the minutes of July 1, 2021.

VOTE: Yeas, 5
Nays, 0

Unfinished Business

Brief review and discussion of planned spring 2022 community garden event for Heritage Zone garden bed; Ms. Harris has a contact who is experienced at organizing plant exchanges and has offered to help.

New Business

Guests introduced themselves, and members shared their views about serving on the museum board and ways the museum can continue to effectively serve the public and fulfill its mission. The areas discussed included

- holding interesting and entertaining public events that help accomplish landscape plan elements, such as goats for clearing weeds in the Rouge corridor
- increasing and expanding use of dynamic social media, such as developing new video series and content

- exploring technology applications for on-site storytelling to enhance visitor experience
- outreach through simple printed media to build awareness, such as bulletin board placement of postcards and recipes.

Board members were given printed manuals with essential ordinance information and key documents for use in the next few years; the Birmingham Museum Strategic Plan, the Landscape Master Plan, and the Collections Policy. Director Pielack suggested that the primary challenges in the next year will be

- the ongoing COVID pandemic, and how to best serve the public if partially open, or if full closure occurs again
- implementation of the Collection Policy, e.g., deaccessioning objects through all layers of review and recommending to the city commission
- continued implementation of the Master Landscape Plan
- support of the Friends of the Birmingham museum in their efforts to grow

Communication and Reports

Director Pielack reviewed the Director Report and announced that the museum was just notified that it will be the recipient of an award by the Historical Society of Michigan for institutional excellence. This is a state-level recognition of our all-around achievements as a public history institution, including community engagement and professional scholarship. The formal award will take place in several weeks, and publicity will be forthcoming once the award is officially announced.

There were no board member comments.

Ms. Fairbairn thanked the Museum Board for the opportunity to attend the meeting.

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 7, at 5:00 PM.

Ms. Logue adjourned the meeting at 6:19 PM.

V. DEACCESSION

Occasional judicious removal of previously accessioned objects from the Permanent Collection is a valuable tool and activity used by museums to maintain and enhance the remaining collection. This can occur if the mission or scope of the collection changes, an object has become damaged, obsolete, a better-preserved example of the object becomes available, etc. Eliminating an object from the Permanent Collection may improve efficiency or increase resources that may be used for other objects or to add new objects to the collection. Deaccessioning is the process of formally removing objects from the collection deemed inappropriate for continued inclusion in the Permanent Collection.

A. Requirements for Deaccession

In considering deaccession for an object, the Birmingham Museum shall consider the primary goal of furthering the museum's mission. The Birmingham Museum will follow strict deaccession guidelines that reflect the highest level of accepted museum standards and ethics, in accordance with City of Birmingham standards and ethics, and in accordance with fiduciary duties of loyalty and care. Proceeds from the sale of deaccessioned objects may not be used for operational expenses. Funds generated, if any, shall be used only to acquire new objects or to provide direct care for those objects remaining in the collection.

Recommendations for deaccession shall be prepared in writing by museum staff, reviewed by the Collections Subcommittee, and recommended to the Museum Board for its review. Independent professional assessment may be sought if deemed appropriate. The Museum Board will make recommendations to the City Commission for deaccession of collection objects.

To be eligible for consideration for deaccession, one of the following criteria must be met:

1. The material is not relevant to the mission or scope of the collection, or another institution is deemed a more appropriate repository for long term care in the public trust.
2. The material has failed to retain its integrity, or has been lost or stolen and is deemed unrecoverable.
3. The material is a duplicate, or is redundant, and has no value as a set or part of a series.
4. The material cannot be preserved, housed, displayed, or cared for appropriately by the Birmingham Museum in the present or in the anticipated future.
5. The museum's possession of the material is not consistent with applicable law, e.g., it may be subject to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), have been stolen, illegally imported, etc.
6. The material is determined to be a fake, forgery, or reproduction.
7. The removal of the object will refine or improve the remaining collection.

Upon approved deaccession, the following rules will apply:

1. In accordance with the U.S. Tax Reform Act of 1984 and associated Internal Revenue Service regulations, no donated material shall be deaccessioned before a period of two years has passed.
2. Objects deaccessioned shall not be privately sold, given, or otherwise transferred to any employee or official of the city government, including the Museum Board, museum

staff, museum volunteers, or members of the Friends of the Birmingham Museum, or their family members.

3. Objects withdrawn from the Permanent Collection may be assigned to the Use or Study Collection by the Museum Director.
4. A complete record of deaccessioned objects shall be kept, and a copy shall be retained permanently. The deaccession documentation shall include an image of the object. The permanent Object ID# shall not be re-assigned.
5. Before disposal, the Birmingham Museum's object identification numbers shall be removed.
6. Funds derived from the deaccessioning and disposal of objects from the Birmingham Museum collection shall be restricted and used exclusively for the acquisition or purchase of objects for the collection, or for direct care of the collection. In no event shall proceeds be used for operating or capital expenses or for any purpose other than acquisition or direct care of the collection in a manner consistent with the Birmingham Museum's mission and collection scope.

Disposal of deaccessioned objects can occur through:

1. Transfer to the Birmingham Museum's Use or Study Collection.
2. Disposal (The disposal of hazardous materials will follow all applicable laws and regulations).
3. Transfer, sale, or trade to another museum.
4. Sale at public auction.

ATTACHMENT 3 Object Deaccession Record



Object/Title: _____ Object ID Number(s): _____

Justification for deaccessioning:

- _____ Out of scope
- _____ Poor condition/loss of integrity
- _____ Redundant
- _____ Storage, display, or conservation needed exceed resources
- _____ Non-legal possession
- _____ Fake, forgery, or reproduction
- _____ Enhancement of remaining collection

Remarks: _____

Restrictions: _____None Donor or IRS _____

Museum Staff Signed: _____
Date

Approved by Museum Director (date) _____
Reviewed by Collections Subcommittee (date) _____
Approved by Museum Board (date) _____
Approved by City Commission (date) _____

Method of Disposition

___ Transferred Recipient: _____
Address: _____
Shipped via: _____ Picked up: _____ Date: _____

___ Sold Recipient: _____
Address: _____
Date sold: _____ Sale price: _____
Shipped via: _____ Picked up: _____ Date: _____

___ Destroyed Method: _____

Removal of object ID# (date) _____

PastPerfect, individual object, and deaccession records complete: (date) _____

Signed: (museum staff) _____ Signed: (Museum Director) _____



Director Report

DATE: October 7, 2021
TO: Museum Board
FROM: Leslie Pielack, Museum Director
SUBJECT: Director Report

Update—Sign Installation and Heritage Zone Work—Trees are in and the sign installation is imminent. Plaques for the donor trees have been ordered, and will be delivered some time in late October or early November.

Hunter House Update—Paint analysis is in process. By determining the early paint layer colors, we can re-paint the interior with more accurate appearance. The basement storage area has been repainted and we are re-organizing the collection storage for the new digs.

Engineering Study for ADA/Barrier Free Parking Spot on Willits—Awaiting proposals from three firms to provide engineering design for the ADA parking spot and needed retaining walls and pathways leading from the parking area to the planned seating areas along the lower edge of the park. The engineering study and design is essential before moving forward to complete the design and address construction for the project.

Conclusion of Porch Pop Ups—The pop up project for this year is concluded. We have hosted 21 separate exhibits in five categories, each with its own artifacts and displays. We have increased our visibility and become a part of passers-by experience. We also have gained new Friends members, received artifact donations, and had a good time re-engaging with the public. The project has been very successful all around and made good use of staff resources, while generating new and future content and advancing our mission.

New Web Site—Our city's web site structure and features will take some time to best translate for our final web page. We are working on it to make it more functional and to learn how to use the new features. It will be several weeks before we have the museum web page ready for prime time, so stay tuned.

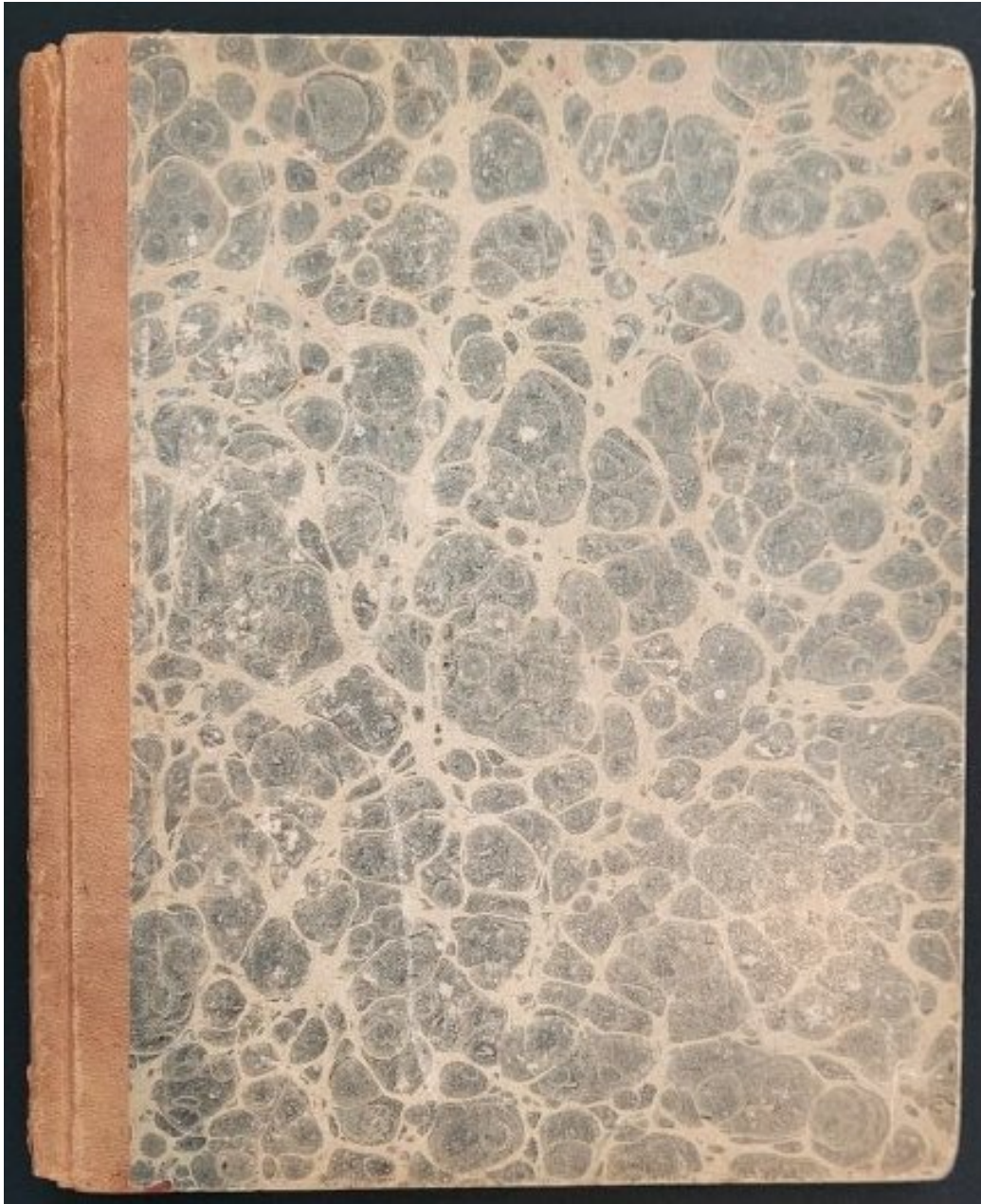
Fall Lecture Series—We're B-A-A-A-C-K! Limited in-person seating at the Baldwin Public Library and Zoomed presentation of our free Adult Lecture Series (fall schedule below).

- Oct 14 **The 1825 Utter Murders, Revisited** (Commander Scott Grewe and Leslie Pielack)
Join Commander Scott Grewe of the Birmingham Police Department and Leslie Pielack of the Birmingham Museum in a re-examination of this crime in the wilderness of early Birmingham.
- Nov 4 **The Saginaw Trail and Oakland County's Indigenous People** (Leslie Pielack)
The indigenous people of Michigan faced catastrophic loss with the incoming white settlement after the War of 1812, but this tragic history is rarely covered in school. Join Leslie Pielack, author of *The Saginaw Trail: From Native American Path to Woodward Avenue*, for a discussion of the major events affecting local Native people, and their relationship with settlers along the Saginaw Trail.
- Dec 2 **Christmas in Early Birmingham** (Donna Casaceli)
Celebration of the Christmas season has changed in Birmingham throughout the years. Learn how early Birmingham celebrated the holidays as we explore these early traditions and their history with Donna Casaceli from the Birmingham Museum.

The Virtual Birmingham Museum—we are incorporating some of the ideas shared by the Museum Board for our planned virtual content over the next year, especially some new takes on our video series. Stay tuned.

National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom—we have sufficient documentation to be eligible for listing on the NURN and the corresponding Michigan Freedom Trail. The most appropriate site is Greenwood Cemetery, as the Taylors and Elijah Fish are buried there and the key connections to our Underground Railroad heritage. A request to the City Commission to authorize the application is planned for later in Oct.

Collection Update—Baldwin Diary-Sarah Sanders is a new virtual volunteer working to transcribe Martha Baldwin's recently discovered teenage diary. Martha was quite the handful in her adolescence! More to come.

**Description**

Diary written by Martha Baldwin between April 1, 1859 and 1860. The contents of the diary cover activities through Martha Baldwin's days, with an expense report at the back and an accounting of letters received and letters written. The book was an expense account book, and it looks to be upside down and reused. On the back cover, which is actually the cover meant to be the front cover, there is the date of "1836" scratched deeply in pen, with "Baldwin" written also in pen. The inside cover of this has 1836 also written, but the pages had been cut to remove the accounts, and Martha repurposed the account book to a diary.

The book is a marbled paper covered book with a light brown leather binding. On the inside cover of the diary is the date "Jan 1859" but the first entry is April 1.