



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM  
MUSEUM BOARD AGENDA  
556 W MAPLE  
Thursday, May 5, 2022  
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 April 7, 2022
- 4. Unfinished Business**
  - A. Heritage Plant Exchange-updates
  - B. Underground Railroad Commemorative Event-update
- 5. New Business**
  - A. Upcoming Grave Marker Application: Historical Significance of George and Eliza Taylor
- 6. Communication and Reports**
  - A. Director Report
  - B. Member comments
  - C. Public comments
- 7. Next Meeting: June 2, 2022**
- 8. Adjournment**

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](http://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, April 7, 2022  
5:00 PM**

Members Present: Bev Erickson (left at 6:00 PM), Alexandra Harris, Pat Hughes, Judith Keefer, Marty Logue, Jay Shell

Members Absent: Caitlin Rosso

Student Members: Jordan Snyder-Phillipoff

Administration: Museum Director Leslie Pielack, Museum Specialist Caitlin Donnelly

Guests: Kristy Barrett

Chairperson Logue called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

**Approval of the Minutes  
Minutes of March 3, 2022**

**MOTION:** by Logue, seconded by Keefer:

To approve the minutes of March 3, 2022.

**VOTE:** Yeas, 7  
Nays, 0

**Unfinished Business**

Additional planning for the Heritage Plant Exchange resulted in the following:

- Promotion
  - The city's spring print newsletter has an article that has already generated response Facebook now has an events page and the museum website has event information
  - Mr. Shell will send out 200 postcards and will disseminate the press release to the Birmingham Farms Neighborhood Association
  - Ms. Snyder-Phillipoff also will forward the postcard/flyer
  - Ms. Harris will distribute flyers to the Sunday Farmer's Market in May
  - The museum's sandwich board sign will announce the event in advance, and a lawn sign will be placed at the museum to announce the event approx. two weeks ahead of time

- Staffing/personnel
  - Mr. Shell will be located at the garden bed and will wear an attention-getting “Master Gardener” hat or vest and will direct plant donations to the perennial bed
  - Ms. Logue will be with Mr. Shell at an easel with the Heritage Zone plans and renderings and a donation station for the Friends
  - Ms. Harris, Ms. Keefer, and Ms. Barrett will be stationed in the tents and will help visitors with plant labeling as needed
  - Museum staff will be on hand for Allen House and Hunter House visitors and to assist outdoors as needed
  - All personnel will wear lanyards/badges
- Other
  - Ms. Snyder-Philipoff will take photos of the event
  - Mr. Shell will take any leftover plants for the BFNA island garden on Northlawn

The Board decided on the following plan for the commemorative event for the Network to Freedom designation, with further planning at coming meetings:

- Date/Time—Saturday, September 17, 11:00 AM (Program) with cemetery visit to follow, and interpretive staff on hand until about 1:00 PM
- Program—1/2 hour in length; Museum Board designated representative will act as emcee; suggested speakers:
  - Researchers Getschman, Patt, and Casaceli
  - Commission representative (mayor)
  - (Possible: Michigan Freedom Trail Commission representative)
  - Snyder-Phillipoff representing Seaholm Black Student Union
  - (Possible: local minister or Black historian to discuss historic context of UGRR) (Ms. Barrett, Director Pielack will check into contacts)
  - (Possible: descendants)
- Cemetery Walk—following program
  - pedestrian access only, except for mobility challenged
  - police for crowd control/guidance at entrance and exit
  - Black Student Union members, Museum staff, volunteers in groups of three or four at each burial site with interpretive brochures to answer questions
  - Launch museum’s mobile tour app of Fish and Taylor sites (free/download in app store)

### **New Business**

Members were presented with the details for the **Birmingham Museum--Phase I Allen House Historic Window Restoration Project** and the proposal provided by L.G.K.

Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$112,000 for the complete restoration of the upper level windows and the installation of storm windows for additional long-term maintenance. L.G.K. has proven to be a qualified and dependable contractor with past historic preservation projects on the Allen House siding preservation and extensive repair of the Hunter House exterior and windows, drainage installation and foundation repair. Board members agreed by consensus that the proposal is appropriate and the contractor qualified, and recommend that the City Commission award the contract for the **Birmingham Museum—Phase I Allen House Historic Window Restoration Project** to L.G.K. Construction, Inc.

Members also discussed the grant-funded sign available for Greenwood Cemetery to designate it as a Michigan Freedom Trail/Underground Railroad Network to Freedom site. The sign is 10" X 14" with the MFT and Network to Freedom brand and logo and is consistent with other national NTF signage. The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board is considering whether to use the sign, which would be mounted on the fence outside the cemetery gate within view of the sidewalk and passing vehicles. The sign would have a unique QR code and web information to take visitors to online content explaining the site and the historical information about Fish and Taylor and their burial sites. The Board suggested that the sign is an honor, and agreed by consensus to recommend to the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board and to the City to accept the sign and install it at the entrance of the cemetery for the benefit of the city and the public.

### **Communication and Reports**

Director Pielack provided updates to the Director Report. The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board is finalizing its review of cemetery rules and regulations in coordination with the city attorney and Clerk's office. These include proposed rules and a procedure for installing markers on historically significant gravesites when the applicant is not the deed holder, such as is the case with the Taylors. The proposed rules would establish a sequence of review and approval that would include the city clerk, Museum Director, Museum Board, and the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board before final administrative approval to install a marker. The rules and regulations are expected to receive final approval from the City Commission in May or June. To facilitate the approval and installation process for the Taylor marker, the Museum Board could provide their review of the historical significance of the Taylors in advance, since that determination can be made independently and then included with the application once the forms are finalized. The Board agreed by consensus to include this item on the next Agenda for May 5. Director Pielack also summarized the museum's new mobile app and how it would work, and indicated the museum will be launching a pilot project of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade tour app on Saturdays in the month of May. Adults with students will be free to the museum in exchange for testing the app and filling out a survey.

There were no member comments.

There were no public comments.

**The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 5, at 5:00 PM.**

Ms. Logue adjourned the meeting at 6:15 PM.

**DATE:** May 5 2022  
**TO:** Museum Board  
**FROM:** Leslie Pielack, Museum Director  
**SUBJECT:** Director Report

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Budget Hearing—The city's budget hearing is scheduled for May 7 and is open to the public. As previously reported, the Museum's recommended budget continues with ongoing operational costs while also including funding for an increase in personnel hours for FY 22/23, funding for completion of the Willits accessible parking and path, completion of the lower level window restoration of the Allen House, and replacement of the second floor furnace, which is 22 years old. After the hearing, it is expected that the commission will approve a final budget on May 23.

Allen House Windows & Doors—Project was approved by the city commission on 4/25. Actual construction is planned to begin in July according to a timeline that would have the work complete and new storm windows installed by October. During the first 3 weeks, it may be prudent to close the museum to the public and relocate staff due to lead mitigation. Stay tuned for more updates as the project nears. A RFP has been posted seeking a contractor to re-finish the Allen House visitor doors. They are made of sapele wood (related to mahogany) and require periodic maintenance to maintain their beauty. We hope to have the doors refinished this summer.

Hunter House—we anticipate beginning the painting project at the Hunter House soon. It will include removal of the wallpaper, which there is insufficient evidence for, and repair and repainting of cracked plaster in the ceilings. The trim in the house will be painted in colors that were actually found on the trim in the rooms under the existing white. This will be a more authentic interpretation of the rooms' appearance over the house's lifetime.

Special App-based Tour Launch in May for Students and their Parents—The museum is launching the new mobile tour app for May with "Student Saturdays in May," a program that will have us open on Saturdays during May. It will allow students to bring a parent to get in free, and in return to try the app at the Allen and the Hunter Houses and fill out a quick survey form. The tours available both are drawn from curriculum requirements for 2<sup>nd</sup> graders but will also be fun and promote relationship-based learning with parents.

#### Presentations/Interviews—

- About You Cable Program—Leslie was interviewed for this cable program in regards to the museum, its recent achievements, and her book on the Saginaw Trail. The 28-minute interview has had a surprising number of viewings and was praised by two commissioners, who suggested it be promoted by the city. We have a link to the Vimeo on our Facebook Page and Twitter, and the city has re-posted it.
- Remaining presentations at the Baldwin Library for this year:
  - May—Birmingham's Stories of War and Service (Donna Casaceli)
  - June—Juneteenth and Birmingham's Connection to the Underground Railroad

Taylor Marker Update—still awaiting final approval of new rules and regulations that would affect installation of the marker for the Taylors; we hope to know the particulars in June. We anticipate the project being completed by the fall.

## Birmingham Museum Mobile App Survey

*Your survey will help us and future visitors! Please complete and return to the front desk in the lobby. Thank you!*

1. How easy was it to find and download the app from the App/Google Play store?

*Difficult*      1      2      3      4      5      *Very Easy*

2. How easy was it to use the tour app?

*Difficult*      1      2      3      4      5      *Very Easy*

3. The variety of objects and stories featured on the app tour were interesting.

*Disagree*      1      2      3      4      5      *Agree*

4. The amount of information on the tour app was appropriate.

*Disagree*      1      2      3      4      5      *Agree*

5. The tour app added to my museum experience.

*Not at all*      1      2      3      4      5      *A lot*

6. I would use this app on other historic tours at the museum and around the city.

*Disagree*      1      2      3      4      5      *Agree*

The tour app would be better if: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other tour ideas I would like to see featured on this app: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_