



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM  
MUSEUM BOARD AGENDA  
556 W MAPLE  
Thursday, September 1, 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 August 4, 2022

**4. Unfinished Business**

- A. Underground Railroad commemorative event-final planning
- B. Museum window project-update

**5. New Business**

- A. Michigan Humanities Council Grant Application

**6. Communication and Reports**

- A. Director Report
- B. Member comments
- C. Public comments

**7. Next Meeting: October 6, 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, August 4, 2022  
5:00 PM**

Members Present: Kristy Barrett, Pat Hughes Alexandra Harris (left the meeting at 6:06 PM), Marty Logue, Jay Shell

Members Absent: Bev Erickson, Judith Keefer, Caitlin Rosso

Student Members: None.

Administration: Museum Director Leslie Pielack

Guests: None

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

**Approval of the Minutes  
Minutes of June 2, 2022**

**MOTION:** by Harris, seconded by Barrett:

To approve the minutes of June 2, 2022.

**VOTE:** Yeas, 5  
Nays, 0

**Unfinished Business**

Updates for the Underground Railroad Commemorative Event included:

- Program/Promotion
  - Review of the program, speakers, and activities
  - Electronic version of the program will be sent in later August as an event reminder to all who received the Save the Date; Mr. Shell will include it in his neighborhood newsletter
- Staffing/personnel
  - Museum Board members will self-introduce at the podium before Ms. Logue speaks, and will send her ideas about what she might want to include in her remarks on behalf of the Museum Board
  - At the conclusion of the program, Mr. Hughes and the Museum Board will lead the crowd to the cemetery
  - Police will assist with crowd control
  - All four museum staff will be on hand at the cemetery until 1 PM, when the museum will be opened to visitors at no charge

- Mr. Getschman and Donna Casaceli will be at the Taylor and Fish gravesites to interpret and answer questions
- Other
  - The Museum Board will host a small private reception with finger foods and soft drinks for the speakers and the Friends Board at the Hunter House beginning at 12:30
  - The reception will be catered, funds requested from the Friends
  - The museum will be open until 3:00 PM

The museum windows project is moving at a good pace and the final restored wood windows will be reinstalled some time in September. New historic storm windows will also be installed this fall, which will give the correct appearance to the windows exterior and provide additional weather protection and insulation. The Hunter House painting project has just been completed. This brings the interior into alignment with the Hunter House Interpretive Plan and is based on the actual evidence of paint colors on the trim in the various rooms. Board members were invited to see the house in person after the meeting.

### **New Business**

Director Pielack shared the final design for the ADA parking and sidewalk area near the pond with space for a bench. The bench will be consistent with the city's park benches to help integrate with other city parks. A recent large donation to the Friends may cover the cost of the bench, which is around \$1,000. The Museum Board may also wish to consider a fundraiser in the spring to generate additional funds for portions of the next phases of construction. Director Pielack also gave a summary of the Find-a-Grave online cemetery crowd-funded database. It will help achieve a goal of the Greenwood Cemetery Board to have an online database with grave location and biographical data, and a photo of the marker, which provides a baseline of the markers' condition for documentation and planning purposes.

### **Communication and Reports**

Director Pielack provided a summary of the Directors Report and the plan for reopening the museum as expected on Tuesday, August 9.

Ms. Logue noted that it would be helpful for board members to respond their attendance when receiving the email with the packet. Mr. Shell suggested an electronic calendar invitation would allow immediate confirmation, and Ms. Barrett mentioned Doodle as another means of electronic schedule management. Director Pielack indicated that she follows the city's process for communicating and posting meetings, and will inquire whether another method could be used in keeping with required communications protocol.

There were no public comments.

**The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 1, at 5:00 PM.**

Ms. Logue adjourned the meeting at 6:43 PM.



# UNDERGROUND RAILROAD COMMEMORATION CEREMONY

FOR THE GRAVE SITES OF

ABOLITIONIST **ELIJAH S. FISH**  
& FREEDOM SEEKER **GEORGE B. TAYLOR**

IN GREENWOOD CEMETERY  
BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN



NATIONAL  
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD  
NETWORK TO FREEDOM

**SATURDAY, SEPT. 17 11:00 AM**

QUARTON LAKE PARK, CORNER OF OAK AVE & LAKESIDE DR



*Brief History* : While researching Birmingham’s Black heritage, museum staff and volunteers discovered documents that firmly established that both **Elijah Staunton Fish** and **George Basil Taylor** were associated with Michigan’s Underground Railroad in the years before the American Civil War. Each man’s story tells a different perspective of the struggle for freedom from enslavement; Fish as an abolitionist and Taylor as a freedom seeker who fled bondage in Kentucky, and ultimately settling in Birmingham after being aided by the Underground Railroad network. With the support of the Friends of the Birmingham Museum, the Museum Board, and the Birmingham City Commission, an application was submitted to the National Park Service’s Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program to designate their final resting places at Greenwood Cemetery in the official listing of national sites. On March 29, 2022, the listing was made official, and Greenwood joined over 700 other sites all over the U.S. that have connections to the Underground Railroad, either as those seeking freedom or those helping others achieve it.

**A WALKING TOUR** of Elijah S. Fish and George B. Taylor’s gravesites will follow the ceremony. Greenwood Cemetery is a short walk, approximately one block east of Quarton Lake Park. The Birmingham Museum at 556 W. Maple Road will be open to the public at no charge from 2 – 4 PM the day of the ceremony.





# PROGRAM

## JOIN US TO SHARE THIS MOMENTOUS OCCASION

with invited remarks from members of our community  
and family descendants of Elijah Fish and George Taylor.

WELCOME --MUSEUM BOARD CHAIR.....Marty Logue

BIRMINGHAM'S MAYOR.....Therese Longe

The RESEARCHERS....George Getschman, Jacquie Patt & Donna Casaceli

MICHIGAN FREEDOM TRAIL COMMISSION

*Commemoration Letter, Amanda Campbell*

BIRMINGHAM SEAHOLM HS BLACK STUDENT UNION PRESIDENT

*Jordan Snyder-Phillipoff*

PASTOR-IN-TRAINING, SOUTHFIELD REFORM PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH (est. 1834).....Antonio Troutman, Jr.

DESCENDANTS' REMARKS

FAMILY of ELIJAH FISH

Letter, Jerry Fish

FAMILY of GEORGE TAYLOR

Lucretia Jackson

Sheryl Ross

Karen Sims

*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.



The Birmingham Museum is a municipally operated local cultural institution. The Friends of the Birmingham Museum (a.k.a. the Birmingham Historical Society) is a 501c3 non-profit organization and the Museum Board is a city-appointed advisory board.



**556 West Maple Road ~ Birmingham, Michigan  
48009 ~ 248.530.1928**

### *Birmingham City Commission*

Therese Longe, Mayor	Andrew Haig
Pierre Boutros, Mayor Pro-Tem	Elaine McLain
Clinton Baller	Katie Schafer
Brad Host	

### *Birmingham Museum Board*

Marty Logue, Chair	Judith Keefer
Kristi Barrett	Jay Shell
Bev Erickson	Jordan Snyder-Phillippoff,
Alexandra Harris	Student Representative
Patrick Hughes	

### *Friends of the Birmingham Museum Board*

Leslie Mio, President	George Getschman
Marty Logue, Treasurer	Jay Shell
Fred Amrose	



**DATE:** September 1, 2022  
**TO:** Museum Board  
**FROM:** Leslie Pielack, Museum Director  
**SUBJECT:** Director Report

---

Museum Reopening—We have had a successful re-opening since August 9, with several visitors who were waiting for us to re-open, lots of phone calls and emails, research requests, and several groups who plan to visit. As August is a slower month, typically, we are encouraged to see people letting us know they missed us when we were closed!

Museum Board Opening—We have an opening on the Museum Board for a regular member. The opening will be posted by the commission sometime in September and will be posted for 30 days. We hope to fill that position with another active and engaged board member, so stay tuned!

Hunter House Painting and Interpretation—We are still reorganizing the Hunter House after the painting project and will be using the Interpretation Plan to guide changes. It should be ready for the September 17 event.

Windows Project—The windows have been restored off site and will be brought back for installation on September 19, and a final coat of touch-up paint will be applied to the interior. Storm windows will be installed separately. We look forward to a warmer, toastier winter this year upstairs!

Winter Repair Projects—One of our furnaces in the Allen House is budgeted for replacement, as it is 20 years old. In addition, our carpeting in the central hallway is getting worn and is slated to be replaced. Both these projects will involve getting at least 3 contractor bids, and the current climate is still very difficult for contractor delays.

Underground Railroad Museum Tour App—We are adding to our list of app-based tours with a special tour of our Underground Railroad history and the Greenwood Cemetery grave sites of Elijah Fish and George Taylor. We are still collecting surveys of the app, and the feedback is positive.

Fall/Winter Lecture Series at Baldwin Library Adult Lecture Series—We're returning to our fall series, beginning in October and ending in March. Programs will be held on the second Thursdays of the month at 7 PM, in person and on Zoom. Our past presentations are video recorded and available on our YouTube channel and are viewed on a regular basis.

Cemetery FindAGrave Memorials—progress is being made on working to transfer management of the data 'files' for Greenwood. Jacquie Patt has continued to refine the data, and will be meeting with staff in September to begin the process.

Collection News—The FJ Watkins Pony Farm was well known for its Shetland ponies, some of which were used in concessions at Boblo Island. We recently received a donation of pony bells from the Watkins Farm, which is a very fun new acquisition to add to the pony stories we like to tell.

**Collection** Birmingham Museum Collection  
**Other#**  
**Old#**  
**Accession#** 2022.25  
**Received as** Gift  
**Cataloged by** Donna Casaceli  
**Source** Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society  
**Creditline**

020\2022251.JPG



2022.25.1-1

**Home loc** AH-Blakeslee Open Shelving: A-5 / bottom shelf

**Description** Four bells on a leather strap used as decoration for ponies at the Watkin's Pony Farm. The leather strap is cut on either side, and shows signs of deterioration. there is an awl hole at tone end and what looks like a rip in the leather on the other side. the strap is 13 inches long and 1 inch wide. Each bell is 4 inches circ. with each bell about 3.25 inches apart. The bells are heavy and made of metal, that is showing signs of rust and corrosion.

**Date**  
**Year Range** 1900 - 1930  
**Condition**  
**Status date**  
**Status by**  
**Status**

**Height** 0.000 in  
**Length** 13.000 in  
**Diameter** 0.000 in  
**Weight** 0.000 oz  
**Width** 1.000 in  
**Depth** 0.000 in  
**Circum** 4.000 in  
**Count**  
**Dim Notes**

**Collector**  
**Site**  
**Pl origin**  
**Coll date** / /  
**Site#**

**Event**  
**Material** Leather - metal

**Found**  
**Used**  
**Made**  
**Owned** Watkin's Pony Farm

**Title** Watkins Pony Bells  
**Artist**  
**Provenance** The bells were part of Patricia Andrews personal museum, and were given to the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society at ther death in 2021. The OCPHS felt that the bells were better placed with the Birmingham Museum, and were donated in 2022.

**Makers mark**  
**Inscription type**  
**Inscrip techq**  
**Inscrip lang**  
**Inscription text**  
**Inscription position**  
**Inscription translation**

**Updated/by** 08/25/2022 11:21 AM Donna Casaceli