



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
MUSEUM BOARD
VIRTUAL MEETING
May 6, 2021
5:00 PM**

Members Present: Russ Dixon, Pat Hughes, Tina Krizanic, Marty Logue, Jacquie Patt, Caitlin Rosso

Members Absent: Judith Keefer

Student Members: None

Administration: Museum Director Leslie Pielack

Guests: None

Ms. Krizanic called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

**Approval of the Minutes
Minutes of April 1, 2021**

MOTION: by Dixon, seconded by Hughes:

To approve the minutes of April 1, 2021.

VOTE: Yeas, 6
Nays, 0

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

Members discussed the possibility of reviving the time capsule idea as a Museum Board project, with the focus on the COVID-19 pandemic and how it affected the people of Birmingham. Ideas were discussed that included using the physical 'time capsule,' which could be buried in the traditional sense, and could include electronic contributions in the form of digitized audio or scanned images. Members were enthused with the idea of requesting public contributions of 'what the pandemic means to me' for the museum's collection (as opposed to a time capsule), emphasizing the preservation of the thoughts, reflections, statements, creative productions, and other representative items. The contributions would be preserved, but brought forth at some future time as an exhibit that looks back on this period. This possible project will be included on the June agenda to attempt to finalize a plan and a timeframe to do the project.

Director Pielack clarified that, in regards to the upcoming Heritage Zone Phase I landscape improvements, the planned pea gravel excavation under the Hunter House fence will create significant maintenance problems. The Department of Public Services staff have recommended to leave the area below the fence as turf, which is easier to maintain. It also would reduce costs of the project installation. All members agreed by consensus that this was a positive change. Director Pielack will follow up with the landscape architect, Brian Devlin, to discuss the change.

Director Pielack then discussed the need to consider installing Mr. Devlin's design for the trash receptacle barrier earlier than planned. The existing wood pickets blew down in a recent windstorm, as they were more deteriorated than we realized due to their proximity next to the irrigation line for the hydrangea shrubs. Mr. Devlin's design consists of posts with cable to support growing vines, but he did not specify a plant list. Two options for consideration, based on location, conditions, growth characteristics, and historical appropriateness are *clematis viticella* and climbing hydrangea. These two plants also do not have invasive tendencies, which is a concern due to our proximity to the Rouge River trail corridor. Evergreen vines that are available are either invasive or can be destructive, such as ivy. Both clematis viticella and climbing hydrangea's twig and twining structure would be present throughout the winter, and would provide some visual barrier even without leaves. Members agreed by consensus that either plant would be acceptable, and further, that the choice of using either white support posts (to repeat the white vertical trim of the Allen House) or darker posts (Birmingham green or black) to recede and be less obvious, should be deferred to the landscape architect with follow up.

Communication and Reports

Director Pielack reviewed the Director Report and highlighted the fact that the museum is nearing 1000 Twitter followers, which is a substantial level for a small local museum. In addition, some new permanent collection items include the offer of materials from Chad Smith's (Red Hot Chili Peppers drummer) early years in Birmingham—his talent development, early performances, school days, personal items, photos, etc. The museum would be interested in his personal story and would also make a virtual exhibit available online. Other new collection acquisitions include the rights to a digital professional photo of the post office mural by Carlos Lopez, which was controversial in its time and is a special example of Birmingham's different approaches to cultural diversity over the years. She also highlighted the conclusive findings on the location of Greenwood Cemetery's former 'potter's field' area, which was a study and report Director Pielack prepared for the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board.

Mr. Dixon announced to the board that he will not be seeking re-appointment to the Museum Board when his term expires at the end of June. Mr. Dixon has served the City

in various capacities for 44 years, and feels it is time to step away and pursue other interests. The board thanked Mr. Dixon for his many contributions and his long experience with the museum. Ms. Krizanic also announced that she will not seek re-appointment after her term expires in June, as she will be relocating and can no longer serve on the board. She commented about the many things that the board has been able to achieve by working together, including the strategic plan, the landscape master plan, pop up exhibits, and the community engagement accomplishments, including our community engagement award. Board members also thanked Ms. Krizanic for her leadership and contributions to the museum.

There were no public comments.

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 3 at 5:00 PM, currently planned as a virtual meeting.

Ms. Krizanic adjourned the meeting at 6:03 PM.