

**JACKSONVILLE AREA MUSEUM BOARD MEETING**  
**(HERITAGE CULTURAL CENTER)**

**April 4, 2024**

The April board meeting was held at the Jacksonville Area Museum (Old Post Office) with a teleconferencing option available. The meeting was called to order at 5:17 p.m. by Chairman Allan Worrell. Those present included Dave Blanchette, Chad Boehlke, John Clancy, Nick Little, Lisa Hall, Diane Hollendonner, Rebecca Houston, Kyla Hurt, Laura Marks, Jo Ann Nelson, James Pisell, and Allan Worrell. Absent were Patsy Erickson (Emeritus), Brittany Henry (Ex-Officio), and Judy Tighe (Ex-Officio). Also present were Manager McKenna Servis and consultant Steven Varble.

The minutes of the March 7, 2024, board meeting were approved as distributed.

Treasurer Laura Marks distributed the financial report for March. Balance at the end of March was \$43,837.86 with income of \$309.00 in visitor donations, memberships, and memorials. Expenses totaled \$1,444.25, which included operational expenses, building maintenance, and exhibit construction. There were 33 visitors in March (reflecting two weeks closed for cleaning/moving items to basement).

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Administrative:** Laura reported that the Monday Conversation group would like to hold a meeting at the museum in October. It was approved pending construction with the understanding that they should be prepared for noise and possible limited space.

McKenna asked for volunteers to cover April 27 during the offsite exhibit strategic planning meeting, May 4 (10 a.m. – noon), and May 11 (UIS graduation). Allan Worrell will speak to JACIL on April 18 and McKenna will cover the Christian Women’s Connection on June 18. Chad Boehlke spoke at Morning Rotary on April 2. Rotary requested that the museum have an entry in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade on a Rotary-sponsored float with McKenna serving as Parade Marshal.

We may need to consider off-site storage for some larger items in the collection that are too difficult to move to the basement. Allan Worrell will contact Mike Wankel to see if any space is available across the street in the former Production Press building.

**Exhibits:** Nick Little reported that the Jacksonville Developmental Center exhibit is in place, with the members’ preview scheduled for April 5 and the public opening on April 6. Jo Ann Nelson reported that refreshments will be provided for April 5. Steve Varble put a link on the museum website to interviews from 1972 about JDC available from the Illinois State Archives. Jo Ann suggested putting a notebook out for visitors to log their memories of JDC.

**Fundraising:** The JAM Foundation issued a press release for the successful Phase 2 fundraiser. The contractor’s bid was approved and signed by the Foundation.

**Building and Grounds:** Jim Pisell reported that once weather warms up, he plans to clean out the window wells and replace lights.

**Collections:** It was voted to accept the following donations: a metal swing from the JDC grounds (a find by McKenna), WWII ration cards and stamps from the Siberts, a portrait of Esther Caldwell (local DAR member), a DuBois for Mayor matchbook, and Bette DeSilva's research collection (Mayor Ezard has offered city workers to move it into the basement once we locate pallets).

**Promotion:** Steve Varble reported that there are about eight podcasts scheduled for release. Press releases are out for the JDC opening and the fundraiser results. Blanchette is working on publicity for the Jacksonville TV station (1960s) weatherman Bob McClelland. The museum will be receiving his collection of weather props and artifacts.

Facebook posts are reaching around 7800 viewers, with recent posts receiving 1200 – 3300 views. Judge J. David Bone is currently the leader in podcast listeners.

For participation in area parades, Allan and Nick pointed out that we need a candy budget and a museum banner, which can be expensed as advertising from the South Jacksonville tourism grant.

Blanchette announced that the \$10,000 Back to Business grant was awarded to the museum and deposited in the JAM Foundation account. Lisa Musch and Kristin Jamison gave valuable assistance towards completing and submitting the grant.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Blanchette reported that the contractors' estimates on the bid package for the HVAC installation, electrical work, and construction of the new office wall were opened on March 28 and vetted by Benton & Associates. The low bidder was Neff-Colvin, Inc., of Jacksonville at \$411,725.00, and the JAM Foundation has approved it. It was voted by the museum board to approve the bid, with an estimated start date of June and 6-month completion schedule.

It was further voted to give Blanchette and Varble authorization to begin discussions with Taylor Studios of Rantoul with a list of design ideas and potential construction of items such as elm trees for background. It was suggested that Steve check with the Illinois State Museum for possible loan of a buffalo.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Rabbi Rob Thomas will be bringing four WWII tanks to the Morgan County Fair in July. The museum should develop related programs/podcasts to go with the production.

Laura announced that Dee Mathis (a Capps descendent) has offered to fund the digitization of newspaper articles written by Ensley Moore (Illinois College graduate, newspaper editor, and local historian) to link to the museum website.

Jenny Barker Devine's IC students have been researching the articles and will present their findings on April 26, 10:00 a.m., at the museum. The same class recently toured the museum. They are making "zines" in class and will make those available to the museum, too.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

**The next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 2, 5:15 p.m., at the Jacksonville Area Museum, 301 E. State Street. A call-in option is available upon request.**

With no further business or announcements to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Hollendonner, Secretary

