

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

**May 2, 2024**

The May board meeting was held at the Jacksonville Area Museum (Old Post Office) with a teleconferencing option available. The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by Chairman Allan Worrell. Those present included Dave Blanchette, Chad Boehlke, John Clancy, Nick Little, Lisa Hall, Diane Hollendonner, Kyla Hurt, Jo Ann Nelson, James Pisell, and Allan Worrell. Absent were Patsy Erickson (Emeritus), Rebecca Houston, Laura Marks, Brittany Henry (Ex-Officio), and Judy Tighe (Ex-Officio). Also present were Manager McKenna Servis and consultant Steven Varble.

The minutes of the April 4, 2024, board meeting were approved as distributed.

The treasurer's report will be presented at the June meeting.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Administrative:** Allan Worrall announced that museum manager McKenna Servis successfully defended her master's thesis today.

McKenna reported that since construction has started and several exhibits have been dismantled, any requests for museum use will be "No" for the immediate future. Nestle will be contacted about their museum request and told that the area is now under construction and not available.

The board discussed building security and access to the museum during construction. It was suggested that the contractor provide "Under Construction/Construction Entrance Only" signs for open entrances; Blanchette will contact him. Jo Ann Nelson and McKenna took photographs of MacMurray Hall and other museum artifacts while being packed away and moved. Jim Pisell and McKenna will research ideas for an improved security system.

It was voted to approve moving expenses to be paid to ABC Moving for transporting museum items to storage and to ask the JAM Foundation to pay the bill. It may be possible to use the Covid grant money to pay the bill.

**Exhibits:** The strategic planning committee met on April 27 to discuss future exhibits. The theme for overall exhibits will be "Advancing Humanity." They developed a list of exhibit categories and established a ranking system for the size/scope of exhibits. No more new/temporary exhibits from outside groups will be considered during construction. Memorial Hospital has requested space for an exhibit for an upcoming anniversary (similar to the Dominican Sisters – the hospital would produce the exhibit and the museum would host it).

Jo Ann Nelson reminded everyone that the MacMurray College alumni gathering is scheduled for June 21-23 and they will be expecting to see a MacMurray exhibit of some kind. It was suggested that something be put together by the ferris wheel seat and perhaps Steven Varble could create a couple of timeline panels.

The Jacksonville Developmental Center exhibit is receiving good feedback from visitors.

**Fundraising:** No updates.

**Building and Grounds:** Jim Pisell reported that with warm weather, he is getting closer to solving the pigeon problem. They are still making a mess on the front steps.

**Collections:** It was voted to accept the following donations: the decorative lights from Washington School, a commemorative chrome casing of a WWII shell from NESCO, a stack of Speith Studio photos, and photos of JDC switchboard operator and security guards from Joan and Cotton Brannan.

**Promotion:** Steve Varble reported that social media posts have featured McKenna's award (also in Journal Courier/Source/WLDS) as the Russell L. Lewis Jr. Young Museum Professional Award winner from the Illinois State Historical Society and construction updates. McKenna's award Facebook post has received 4859 views. Podcasts/oral histories will feature more JDC stories. J. David Bone is currently the front-runner, with Bob Freesen in second place followed by Carnation/Mr. Schierl. Kyla Hurt asked if the museum wants to be added to the Source's Summer Guide feature. It was voted to purchase a 1/4-page advertisement at the cost of \$139.00 and use the South Jacksonville tourism grant funds to pay for it. Steve Varble will design the ad.

**OLD BUSINESS:** The board officially recognized and congratulated McKenna on her award and upcoming graduation.

**NEW BUSINESS:** The board discussed the logistics of remaining open during the construction phase while acknowledging there may be certain times when the museum will need to be closed to the public. The pre-construction meeting stressed the need to remain open, with a 24-hour notification if the museum will need to be closed. It was voted to keep the museum open as much as possible during construction contingent upon scheduling of stages of different types of work, with the final decision to be made by the board chairman. The end date for construction is currently anticipated for October 21. Frequent updates on the progress will be posted on social media, with the possibility of "hardhat tours" for museum and JAM Foundation members. The restrooms will probably need to be cleaned more frequently as the construction workers will be using them. We may also need to cover remaining exhibits with tarps or other coverings to protect them from dust.

Several change orders have already been filed to make the separation walls ten feet tall, have narrow windows of glass in the interior doors, and keep the south brick wall as brick (not drywall).

The Illinois State Museum invited Steve Varble and the exhibits committee to visit the warehouse of museum artifacts not currently on display to see if anything would be suitable to borrow for future exhibits. The Sangamon Valley Collection at the Lincoln Library has a large collection of Jacksonville area maps which may be helpful. Taylor Studios has been given a "shopping list" to provide price quotes for parts of the new exhibit area.

Dave, Laura, and McKenna will be taking the museum model to the workshop session of the Jacksonville City Council on May 13 to discuss the construction plans and ask for money for site development. Dave, Laura, and Allan have already met with Mayor Ezard to discuss funding ideas.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

**The next meeting will be held on Thursday, June 6, 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 6:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Hollendonner, Secretary