

**Culture & Heritage Commission
Board of Commissioners Meeting
November 23, 2021
6:00 PM
Museum of York County**

Person Presiding: Penny Sheppard

Members Present: Ed Stewart, David Duncan, Nancy Craig, Craig Lentz, Luanne Kokolis, and Penny Sheppard

Members Absent: Jeff Lyon

Ex Officio Members Present: Margaret Parson-Willins

Ex Officio Members Absent: Bobby Walker

Staff Present: Richard Campbell and Dabney Scholler

Others: Michelle Totherow and Michael Kendree

Call to Order

- Penny Sheppard called meeting to order at 6:09pm.
- Penny Sheppard presented minutes from the October 26th Meeting and asked for changes or corrections
 - David Duncan made motion to accept minutes as written
 - Ed Stewart seconded
 - Accepted minutes as written

Calendar Review

- No calendar changes or updates
 - Calendar for 2022

Reports and Presentations

- Richard Campbell presented Director's Report.
 - Visitation totals for October were good but we're still not up to pre-Covid levels. The total visitation for October was 4,277 and year to date we have had 19,340 visitors. School groups are returning at both HB at MYCO which has been 25.9% of our admission totals for the period. It has been exciting to have them back.
 - We've added 46 new memberships with a total revenue of \$3,705. Cumulative totals stand at 2,351 with a year to date total of 417,515. Curious Kids Memberships are at 41 members but we have lost 2 due to aging out.

- Membership numbers have dropped significantly due to extensions expiring (given because of the MSCM flood and Covid closing). Members have been beginning to renew them as they have been visiting our sites. Prior to the MSCM flood we were adding record memberships each month. Alison Gray has been working with members to build the base back up.
- Late October/November Events
 - All special events have been sold out.
 - Boo-seum
 - It sold out within a few days. The demand was so strong that we added an additional day, which in turn, sold out. We received a lot of positive feedback from surveys.
 - The Southern Sound Radio Show wraps up on November 27th. We have received great feedback from it.
 - Harry Potter Science Saturday was on November 6th at MYCO. Online pre-registration was required. To maintain social distancing we were able to break it up with both indoor and outdoor activities. We sold out the tickets very quickly. Thirty percent of members with reserved tickets were no shows.
 - Thirty percent is becoming the common trend for member no shows. Maybe we are posting the event too soon so people reserve their tickets early before knowing their schedule. We have a plan to remedy this *reserve and no show* trend, which will be put in place at the beginning of the year. At present members have first priority on the tickets so if they do not show, the spot is unavailable for anyone else.
 - The Kudzu Trail Race was on November 13th at HB. We had around 50 participants. There was great weather and we had several volunteers come out. Alison Mallard did a great job bringing this event together.
 - Vernon Grant Debut Day was virtual this year but was a success.
 - Cookies with Santa took place on November 18th. It sold out in an hour and a half. Exhibits did a wonderful job with setup and we were still able to maintain social distancing. Santa was able to see families one at a time and as a whole the event was very well received.

- Upcoming Events
 - The Brick House exhibit at HB opened November 23rd. We had close to 50 visitors on the first day. The Rock Hill Herald and CN2 came out to cover the opening. Other media outlets, such as WSOC, WBTV, and SCETV are scheduled to come out. WFAE Charlotte did a piece on this event for their Tapestry program but we are not sure when that will air. We will be getting a lot of long term exposure.
 - On Friday, November 19th, members of the Williams descendants (21 people) came out and were able to see the exhibits, have lunch, tell stories and speak with staff. The feedback was fantastic.
 - On Saturday, November 20th, the Bratton descendants and members of the African American Advisory Group (30 people) came out to see the exhibits. This was a drop in event with a reception. Site tours and a tour of the slave cemetery was given by Carey Tilley.
 - We will have an interpretive plan in place so that we can communicate the information accurately and respectfully as well as have an interpreter in the building on a regular basis.
 - Christmas Candlelight
 - In 2019, we went to timed tickets so that every single visitor received a great experience. In previous years, our extremely high visitation numbers outstripped our ability to give a quality program. We wanted to keep a few walkup tickets to transition to timed tickets. It was a success.
 - This year visitors expected timed tickets and it's less of an issue. We have increased the number of walkups because we have noticed a trend with our members. Our members are reserving tickets and not showing up. We are guaranteeing a spot for online purchases but we are not saying "sold out". We have 10 walkup tickets per time slot that are built in. We will be having more interactive outdoor tours due to restorations. This will allow us to add more walkups. The timed tickets sold out in 6 days. Tickets should be expanded when we come out of COVID-19.

- The setup will be different because of the restoration of the site. Jayme has put together an interpretive plan and we have high hopes for a great program this year. There will be 22 tours per night with 15 tickets “guaranteed” plus walkups.
- CHM Projects
 - The Settlemyre Planetarium is out-of-order due to the projector not working. A technician has been out to diagnose the problem. The estimated quote was \$250,000. We think it will be the lamp and some additional parts. It will be expensive to repair but not as expensive as the original quote. We do have an alternative plan until it can be fixed.
 - Schools who have booked a planetarium show have received a discounted rate and Carole Holmberg has been able to project using Stellarium and a flat projector. We will be offering a complimentary show for the schools once the projector is up and running.
 - General admission visitors who specifically ask about the planetarium show will be offered a pass to return to the museum when the projector is repaired. Shows are still scheduled for the regular scheduled time.
 - HB High Speed Internet Infrastructure is projected for December 1st. We hope to use it the first week of December. The finding was approved by County Council back in March 2021 at a cost of \$58,000. We could have wireless in some of the historic structures as well as in the Admissions Barn.
 - Collections and Archives continues to work with the Museum of Western York County. Jillian Matthews worked with Paul Boger to submit a packet to the SC Abandoned Properties Committee. We were able to expedite a request for temporary custody while donations are being processed. We should hear back by December 3rd and will be able to begin the process of moving 1000 items to the McCelvey Center by December 10th. In addition to the items we will be receiving over 40 bankers’ boxes of archival material.
 - We still do not have access to the loading dock at the Historical Center or the upper floors of McCelvey due to the roofing issue.

- We released the invitation for bid for the exterior painting of Hightower Hall and Outbuildings. The submittals are due by December 8th. We have entered a contract with Shenandoah Restoration to rehabilitate the shutters. We have previously worked with them on the restoration of the McCelvey windows. Sara Johnson is currently working with blacksmiths to replicate the hardware for the shutters. She is also working with preservation volunteer Rusty Robinson for repairs to the smokehouse so that it may be painted.
- The Lowery Family Theater Roof project has not made much progress. We have been in contact with York County Purchasing to give Scaffolding Solutions a deadline to sign the agreement by Monday, November 29th. If they have not signed it by this deadline we will find another company to complete the shoring work. Sara Johnson and Joe Mester have done all that they can do to move forward.
 - Michael Kendree stated that we would go back to the next bidder to determine who we can use. The bids might not be valid but we can make contact to see if the bids can be honored. Michael Kendree and Richard Campbell will discuss.
- On October 29th we received 100% of the drafts of the construction documents for the Colonel Bratton House and Homestead House Restoration projects. We should receive the estimates and finalized documents by the end of this month. We will then go through the purchasing process and request for proposals by the end of 2021.
- Preservation has been working with ethyl silicate for the Masonry Ruins Preservation Project. This chemical testing will retard the process of erosion on the bricks over time. The chemicals are expensive so a second test of diluted ethyl silicate is being applied to see what can be done on cost and efficiency.

[Note: A full copy of the Director's Report is attached to these minutes as Addendum A.]

Committee Reports

- Collections Committee
 - Recommendations for Accession. David Duncan presented items recommended for accession.

- *TC248- Collection of Vernon Grant related items that were collected by his daughter Kay Grant Martin:*
 - *128 original artworks, advertisements, brochures, stationary, audio/visual recordings, holiday cards, family papers and exhibit invitations*
 - *80 newspaper clippings or articles*
 - *26 photographs*
 - *Donor Name: Kay Grant Martin (via Keith Martin)*

- *TC272- 1 set of antique, wooden quilting frames*
 - *Donor Name: Trudy Mattox*

- *TC277- 001 – Vernon Grant Old Maid playing cards in original box, in excellent condition*
 - *002A-B-Rayo oil lamp with painted glass shade, missing hurricane shade, c. 1905*
 - *.003-small, child size chair made of bent/curved tree branches*
 - *.004A-B- matching skirt and bodice, dark red-purple fabric and gold/dark yellow design*
 - *.005-008 – 4 quilts, standard/full size*
 - *.009 – child’s, twin sized quilt with embroidered figures and words, like “dog” and “goat”*
 - *.010-bonnet*
 - *.011-cloche hat, c. 1920*
 - *.012-small, upholstered sofa*
 - *.013-framed quilt pieces*
 - *.014-.038- 25 pieces of infant and toddler sized clothing*
 - *Donor Name: Lynda Hancock*

- *TC288- .001-Catawba pottery, effigy duck*
 - *Donor Name: Eric Canty*

- *TC290- 001- Vernon Grant original painting of "Toy Town", a castle scene featuring faceless villagers and toys throughout, including a train along the top edge and a toy soldier in a boat in the bottom PL corner.*

- *.002-Small, horizontal Vernon Grant original painting of a river scene with 6 gnomes. 2 gnomes are riding in a small row boat. Background has a pink sky, teal water and black and gray mountains. Painting lacks the artist's signature and could be considered unfinished given that some gnomes and trees have not been completely painted*
 - *Donor Name: Keith Martin*
- *TC291- (1) bound copy of the Yorkville Citizen, (1854-1855), No. 1-52 (208) pages*
 - *Donor Name: Jonathan C. Rice*
 - *TC293- .001 – White t-shirt for Hickory Grove High School Grand Reunion (1916-1975), May 23, 1992*
 - *1 – program for the Grand Union for Hickory Grove High (1916-1975), which occurred on May 23, 1992, with donor's name and graduation year (Jeanne Moss Moore, 1966)*
 - *1 – Laminated flyer for the Grand Union for Hickory Grove High School*
 - *Donor Name: Jeanne Moore*
 - *TC294- .001A-C – Mink pill box hat, with two hat pins, made by "Reggi of Wilshire", c. 1950 (excellent condition)*
 - *.002 – "Montaldo's" hat box made of cardboard, c. 1950 (fair condition)*
 - *Donor Name: Dee McSwain*
 - *TC295- .001 - 2021 annual MYCO Vernon Grant Christmas tree ornament, titled "Classy Santa", numbered 250 of 600*
 - *.002 - 2021 annual MYCO Vernon Grant holiday card, titled "Instant Replay", numbered 102 of 500*
 - *Donor Name: MYCO Gift Shop*
 - *TC297- .001- Confederate flag that flew over SC State Capitol building*
 - *.002- Certification of Authenticity*

- .003- Photograph of the flag flying over the SC State Capitol dome
 - Donor Name: Tom Dissington
- Penny Sheppard motioned that the committee is recommending to accept accessions *TC248, TC272, TC277, TC288, TC290, TC291, TC293, TC294, TC295, and TC297*
 - David Duncan made motion to accept, Craig Lentz seconded.
 - Penny Sheppard called for a vote; vote was taken, and the motion passed.

Note: Copies of the above Recommendations for Accession are attached to these minutes as Addendum B.]

- Finance Committee
 - Treasurer's Report
 - We are four months into the fiscal year and everything looks good.
 - Michelle will be posting the Budget Amendments in January.
 - We have a rough draft of the audit. The wording of the draft is a little confusing, we have a new auditor. The audit looks good and reflects good financial shape.
- Governance Committee
 - Nothing to report

New Business

- No New Business

Executive Session

- No Executive Session

Adjourn

- Penny Sheppard entertained a motion to adjourn.
- David Duncan made a motion to adjourn, Ed Stewart seconded
- Penny Sheppard called for a vote; vote was taken, and the motion passed.
- Meeting adjourned at 6:59pm.

Prepared by: Dabney Scholler

Submitted by: Nancy Craig, Secretary/Treasurer