

Minutes
Frontier Culture Museum Board of Trustees Meeting
September 21, 2018 9:00 a.m. - Lecture Hall

Members Attending:

Nwachukwu Anakwenze, Richard Bell, Eric Bond, David Bushman, Kevin Callanan, Ben Cline, Eric Curran, Pamela Fox, Diane Fulk, Cliff Garstang, Emmett Hanger, Steve Landes, Frank Nolen, Peggy Sheets, Emmett Toms, Paul Vames, Kenneth Venable, John Welch

Members Absent:

Terry Austin, William Hausrath, Kenneth Plum, William Stanley, Frank Wagner

Guests Attending:

Elizabeth Griffin, Office of the Attorney General, Gold Star Presenter Jerry Dumont and guests, Jeff Wood, President, American Frontier Culture Foundation, David Holsinger, Member, Board of Directors, American Frontier Culture Foundation, John Avoli, Ry Winston, Collette Associates,

Staff Attending:

Megan H. Newman, Executive Director, Joe Herget, Marketing Director, Merritt Schoonover, Director of Administration, Lydia Volskis, Sr. Administrative Coordinator, Cliff Edwards, Facilities Manager, Andrew Richardson, Director of Education, Justin Reiter, Executive Director, American Frontier Culture Foundation

I. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF APRIL 2018 MINUTES

Mr. Paul Vames called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. and welcomed participants, each of whom introduced themselves. He thanked the American Frontier Culture Foundation for hosting the Museum's 30th anniversary party the evening before.

The minutes of the April 2018 meeting were approved as distributed.

II. PRESENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS

(Museum 30th Anniversary and Mrs. Lee Cochran)

Mr. Vames read aloud a resolution from the Board to thank Trustee Joe Fitzgerald for his work; Mr. Fitzgerald rotated off of the Board in June. The resolution is framed and will be sent to Mr. Fitzgerald.

Senator Hanger, Delegate Landes and Delegate Bell came forward to present two other resolutions. Senator Hanger and Delegate Landes, with co-sponsors Delegates Austin, Cline and Plum read House Resolution 637 and Senate Resolution 540, commending the Museum on its 30th anniversary. Former Senator and current Trustee Frank Nolen, who was closely involved in the

launch of the Museum spoke briefly and thanked the current and former legislators and others who were instrumental in founding and building the Museum, and noted the change and growth he has seen over the years.

Senator Hanger and Delegate Bell (also sponsored by former Trustee, Senator Creigh Deeds) presented a resolution commemorating the life and work on Mrs. Marion Lee Stuart Cochran, who passed away several months ago, and who was, among many other accomplishments, a stalwart and active founding Member and supporter of the Museum. Her son Stuart Cochran accepted the resolution for his mother and family.

Mr. Vames also thanked the Search Committee for their hard work and time in managing the process to select the new Executive Director.

III. SPECIAL PRESENTATION BY GOLD STAR MEMORIAL GROUP

Mr. Jerry Dumont and several area VFW Members made a presentation regarding the proposed Gold Star Memorial on either Museum or possibly Foundation property. He showed a small 3D model of the monument, and described the fundraising process. Delegate Bell made a motion that the Board approve the establishment of the monument on Museum property, or if more feasible on Foundation property. Delegate Landes asked for clarification from Ms. Griffin on whether the monument could be built on state property; she replied in the affirmative as long as all state reviews and requirements were followed. Delegate Landes seconded Delegate Bell's motion, there was no discussion, all voted "aye" and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Vames asked for a small committee to review the monument proposal and work out the details for this particular monument as well as a set of rules to be followed within a Memorandum of Understanding in the event other groups make a similar request in the future. Delegate Bell volunteered to chair the committee, and other volunteers were Dr. Bond, Mr. Callanan, Dr. Newman, Mr. Avoli, and Foundation President Jeff Wood.

Delegate Landes made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sibert, that the Gold Star Memorial Committee report to the Executive Committee, which is delegated authority to proceed with planning, and such plans will be ratified by the full Board at its April 2019 meeting. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Senator Hanger welcomed new Trustee John Welch and noted that his expertise and work at Colonial Williamsburg will be helpful to the Museum

IV. AGENCY REPORT

Dr. Megan H. Newman reported that she has enjoyed her first month on the job, and thanked the Board and staff for their welcome and support. She complimented the staff for their work and accomplishments and noted that she was happy to be joining the team. She said that the Museum

has great opportunities and challenges ahead. Upcoming important projects include the Mill (Early American Industries Exhibit), budget, legislative and planning work for the Crossing Gallery, security enhancements around the sites, infrastructure upgrades, and plans to reward and retain staff members. She noted that all projects are in support of the Museum's mission, and that she, the Board, and others will work together to update the Museum's Strategic Plans

A. Budget

Director of Museum Administration Merritt Schoonover reviewed the Statement of Appropriations, Allotments, Expenditures and Revenues for FY18, which ended on June 30, 2018. The Museum ended the year with a surplus which can be rolled into FY19. She also reviewed the Revenue Status report, the Diversification of Revenue pie chart, the Comparison of Monthly Revenue by Fiscal Year chart, and the Expenditure and Discretionary Spending charts, all for FY18. Mr. Curran noted that the Marketing budget – 2.5% of the overall budget - seems low.

She also reviewed the Statement of Appropriations, Allotments, Expenditures and Revenue for the first two months of FY19, as well as the Revenue Status and Monthly Revenue Comparison charts for the first two months of FY19.

Mrs. Schoonover gave an overview of the transfer of the Museum Store to the state from the Foundation and showed slides of the updated merchandise in the Store and noted which items are top sellers. Eventually, she plans to have all Store items available for online sales. Mr. Garstang asked how the Store sales compare to past sales; Mrs. Schoonover replied that she will follow up with Foundation staff to make a comparison. She said that the fudge-maker is still on staff and works some hours each week to keep the fudge in stock and fresh.

Mrs. Schoonover described the state budget packages which are due from all state agencies to the Department of Planning and Budget by October 9; the packages first must be reviewed by the Secretary of Education. In addition to some routine budget adjustments, the Museum will seek funding for security needs, employee retention and wage positions, emergency supplies, information technology upgrades, capital projects and requests.

B. Capital Projects and Maintenance Reserve

Facilities Manager Cliff Edwards gave definitions of Capital projects and Maintenance Reserve projects. Maintenance Reserve projects recently completed include re-keying the entire Museum (once every five years), upper and lower terraces were completed, paved and regraded Octagonal Barn lower parking lot and some other paving. Future Maintenance Reserve Projects include upgrades to all American site buildings as needed, renovation of the old Museum Store and retaining walls near the patios.

Current capital projects include the Mill (Early American Industries Exhibit)the 1820's Barn, the Crossing Gallery (preliminary studies are completed, the next steps are to submit the project

through the budget system, then move to the schematics and design phase), security upgrades to include twenty-four hour armed security and security cameras.

Mrs. Sheets said that a small committee including herself, Mr. Sibert and Mr. Holsinger from the Foundation Board have been supporting Mr. Edwards as he makes significant short and long-range plans for the site. She reiterated the importance of the security upgrades, as times have changed and our staff, volunteers and guests expect and deserve a higher level of site security than we have had in the past.

C. Marketing

Director of Marketing Joe Herget reviewed the visitation report for the end of FY18, which showed that visitation increased by 2% overall for the year. He also reviewed a chart depicting FY18 visitation segment breakout. He noted the risks of being an outdoor Museum and the effects that weather has on visitation numbers. A few rainy days during large events can significantly impact visitation. Delegate Landes asked if the Museum collaborates with other local attractions to avoid scheduling large events at the same time. Mr. Herget responded that the Museum is an active member of the Tourism Advisory Board and does discuss events with other entities. Mr. Reiter said that Dan Layman at the Community Foundation has created an online community events schedule/calendar for this purpose and that it is most welcome.

Mr. Herget said that visitation for FY19 (2 months) is down a bit compared to last year. He reviewed Annual Pass sales, and discussed the possible negative effect of too many pay-what-you-will days on annual pass sales. He said that annual pass visitation is generally between 5-7% of total visitation. He reviewed the core user groups that visit the Museum; schools, families with children and tourists, as well as a few “niche” groups such as re-enactors or historians.

The Marketing and Education Departments are working together on the annual education poster. The Museum is also participating in some co-marketing ventures with Bojangles, and expects to do the same with McDonalds, Chik-Fil-A and Sheetz.

Mr. Herget also gave an update on various activities for the Museum’s 30th anniversary such as 1988 pricing for the month of September, a pancake breakfast for annual pass holders and other plans. He also gave a report on upcoming media and communications activities and reviewed the rest of the Calendar of Events for 2018.

Mr. Curran said that recent efforts to collaborate with other local entities might lead to more visitation from tourists and to garner more overnight guests for Staunton. The visitors might attend several local attractions and restaurants as well as stay in local hotels. He noted that long-term plans for the Crossing Gallery as well as short term plan to use the old Museum Store for workshops etc... would help in this regard.

Dr. Anakwenze asked if the current restaurants on the front property are paying rent/generating income yet. Mr. Vames said that two of the parcels were purchased and the funds used to service the debt on the property and that the other three are paying rent, which , after paying off the rest

of the debt for the development, will come into the Foundation for use to support the Museum's mission within a few years.

V. EDUCATION & INTERPRETATION REPORTS

Director of Education Andrew Richardson reported that education visit totals for FY18 were 36, 446 including field trips, outreach programs, home school days and toddler programs. He reviewed the field trip and outreach program feedback form teachers and said that the vast majority said that the program met their needs and was either good or very good.

The Charles Fund and other grants supported 14, 608 students for field trips, lunches and transportation during the last fiscal year; in the future, Museum and Foundation grants to schools will focus on transportation and entrance fees.

A large group of about 500 Newport News students will visit again in April 2019 on a Saturday.

Mr. Richardson will attend the Virginia Social Studies conference in Roanoke in early November.

The Museum will again host Non-fiction nights on October 3 and 4th for the Augusta County and Staunton City Schools.

Mr. Richardson will work to be sure that all scholarships are used during next summer's camps.

Mr. Richardson also gave an overview of interpretive staffing, current John Lewis Society membership, and the farm animals who live at the Museum.

Dr. Anakwenze asked if the Museum is offering online education programs; Mr. Richardson said that as online programs do not have the hands-on component like a visit or even an outreach, we have not prepared a great number of programs. However, online programs would be great for other educational needs such as lectures and demonstrations. He also said that the Museum is trying to attract more college and university groups. Dr. Anakwenze suggested contacting some dancers, musicians and crafters in the Washington DC area for special events and workshops on the West African site; he will give Mr. Richardson some contacts.

Mr. Sibert said that the Crossing Gallery project is now in a more detailed planning phase, and that when it is finally finished in several years, it will have a dramatic impact on the Museum's programming possibilities.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Mr. Kenneth Venable reported that CISA (Council of Igbo States in America) event in late July hosted over 1,000. Video coverage of the event was taken by an attendee, who is a Professor at the University of Tennessee; some video clips may be made available for our website. Mr. Venable said that last year (2017) he made an analysis of the event and presented his finding to the CISA Board for ways to improve this year's event. Some of his suggestions were incorporated and he hopes that his analysis of this year's event will lead to more improvements in future years. He also noted that the event received good coverage from the local media. He presented several ideas for adding an event for spouses. He also is working with staff to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding for next year that builds on the improvements of this year.

Next year's event will be held the third weekend in July, and will feature more workshops which can be advertised in advance, such as genealogy and family history as well as crafts and trades and language. The CISA planning committee will be exploring ideas for these as well as ways to build an endowment for the care of the West African Farm. Work will also begin to reach out to other African-American organizations which may be interested in supporting or advertising the exhibit. Younger Igbo and more women will be invited to participate in the planning for the event as well. He said that attendance was lower than hoped for at the church service, but he learned that many groups thought they had to pay an entrance fee – he will make it clear next year that no fee is required. He hopes that within about five years, the event can grow to include more workshops and programming throughout the entire week. He hoped to show footage at the April 2019 Trustees meeting as a promotion for the 2019 event.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Report from the Foundation

American Frontier Culture Foundation President Jeff Wood reported that his goals as Foundation President are to strengthen the relationship between the Foundation and the State, especially in supporting the Crossing Gallery. He said that the Foundation has significant assets but was operating at a deficit last year after giving \$100,000 to support field trips. He said that it will be three-four years before funds from the front property development will be available for the Foundation to spend, so Foundation staff and the Board will increase fundraising. Last year the Foundation raised \$24,000 from new donors.

He also said:

- Thanks to all who attended the 30th anniversary party last evening in the Cochran Pavilion
- The Campbell County model for businesses supporting field trips from their county can be used in counties across the state. Each business partner pledges \$2,000 a year every other year for a total of \$6,000.
- The Beach Party was a great success and raised \$25,000 to support the Museum.
- The Heritage Golf Classic will return for one more encore in the Spring of 2019 in honor of Frank Summers and as a part of the 30th anniversary year celebrations.

- The Foundation will launch its 30 for 30 fundraiser; three donors will give \$10,000 each and the Foundation will raise matching amounts.
- The new Annual Fund video is ready and can be used for fundraising and other purposes; he showed the video to attendees.
- The Foundation plans to increase its social media presence during the upcoming year.
- The Foundation Board consists of twenty-one members; Mr. Reiter asked for nominations or suggestions for future members. Mr. David Holsinger has been nominated as Vice-President of the Foundation at their meeting this afternoon.

Mr. Wood reiterated that the sole mission of the Foundation is to support the Museum.

Mr. Vames reminded the group that many grant organizations view 100% participation by all Board Members as a strong factor in determining which organizations receive grant funding.

B. Ratification Items

Ms. Elizabeth Griffin reviewed the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Museum (state) and the American Frontier Foundation. She explained that the document is needed to clarify important aspects of the relationship, as the Museum is a governmental agency and the Foundation is a private 501C3 non-profit. She outlined the respective responsibilities and the separation of governance contained within the MOU, and described various aspects, noting that it is a revision of an existing, older MOU.

She gave an example of George Mason University's current legal issues which relate to the need for a clear separation between a State agency and a private foundation.

A group with representatives from both the state and Foundation has been meeting for several months to prepare the draft document, with an Appendix which outlines shared services and compensation for these services still under development. Today it is hoped that the full board will approve the draft MOU and authorize the Executive Committee to finish the draft and the Appendix, so final work can begin. It is expected that the full Board will then ratify the MOU and the shared services Appendix at the April 2019 meeting. Mr. Nolen made a motion that the Board approve the draft Memorandum of Understanding in concept and authorize the Executive Committee to complete work on it and the Appendix, and present both for ratification at the April 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Delegate Landes, there was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

C. Board Elections

Mr. Vames reminded the group that the Executive Committee serves as the Nominating Committee, and asked Mr. Sibert to present the candidates for Board elections. Mr. Sibert made a motion that Mrs. Peggy Sheets be nominated as Chair of the Board of trustees for a two year term and that Mr. Kenneth Venable be nominated as Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees for a two year term, both from September 2018 – September 2020. Mr. Nolen moved that the nominations be closed and that Mrs. Sheets and Mr. Venable be elected by acclamation. Delegate Landes seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

E. Public Comment

Mr. Nolen said that the grounds around the DeJarnette building are not looking great, with all the overgrowth and weeds. Mr. Reiter said that the Foundation has hired some helpers to mow parts of the future development property, but that recent rain and bad weather has made it difficult to access parts of the property.

VIII. CLOSED SESSION

At 12:15 Mrs. Sheets said:

I move that the Board of Trustees of the Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia enter closed session for:

- 1. Discussion concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business' or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community, pursuant to the exemption in Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A)(5), and related to the potential sale or lease of real property conveyed by the Museum to the American Frontier Culture Foundation.*

AND

- 2. Discussion of personnel matters pursuant to the exemption in Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(1) pertaining to the assignment and performance of specific employees subject to review and recommendations by the Department of Human Resource Management*

The motion was seconded by Delegate Landes, there was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously. All staff and guests left the room at 12:16.

At 12:30 p.m. Delegate Landes said:

I move that the Board enter open session.

The motion was seconded by Mrs. Sheets, there was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Delegate Landes said:

Whereas, the Board of Trustees of the Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia convened in closed meeting on September 21, 2018 pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act;

NOW BE IT RESOLVED, in accordance with Virginia Code § 2.2-3712, that the Board of Trustees of the Frontier Culture Museum hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge:

(1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under Virginia law, and

(2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened

were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia.

The motion was seconded by Mrs. Fulk, and all Members certified verbally that no other matters had been discussed and the motion passed unanimously.

IX. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be Friday April 12, 2019 at 9 a.m. in the Lecture Hall.

X. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 12:35 pm.