

Rogers Historical Museum Commission
Meeting Minutes
1/14/2021

Attending virtually via ZOOM: Commissioners Barry Cobb, Nancy Swearingen, Mike Whitmore; Friends President Sandy Chalmers; Foundation Director Sherry Ashley; Museum Director Serena Barnett

Chairperson Nancy Swearingen called the meeting to order at 4:00 on ZOOM; the minutes from our December 3rd meeting were discussed and approved.

Sandy Chalmers reported for Friends, who are looking forward to working with their newest board member, Diana Kolman. At this time, there is not a meeting scheduled. Serena mentioned that Ray Sanford of the Friends Board had visited with her and is working on plans for the next newsletter.

Sherry Ashley reported for the Foundation, who will have four new board members when they meet in February. She is updating the membership lists of the following groups: Museum Commission, Friends of the Museum, Foundation Board, and the Museum Staff, and will email a each group a listing of her current information for them, so corrections can be made and returned to her. Sherry is also working on both a fundraising letter due to go out in April, and a SWEPCO Foundation grant for \$1,500.

Serena gave the Director's update on Museum Operations:

- Plans continue for the 140th birthday of Rogers this spring.
- Current exhibits: a Valentine display is now up in the Collections Gallery, while the "Reflections on the Black Experience" will remain in the Trammel Gallery through February.
- The Hawkins House is now closed after having been open for tours through the holidays...Serena cited the rising COVID numbers and difficulty getting volunteers.
- New objects received from the Beaver Lake Corps of Engineers will be installed in that exhibit in mid February; these items will help fill the gap for the period post-dam construction.
- Serena is working on the Annual Report, noting the impact of COVID-19 over the last year: while our "physical numbers" are significantly down, our online numbers are way up, demonstrating that there has still been successful engagement with our community. Hats off to the Museum Staff for their efforts to monitor and adjust!
- The Marketing Director position was posted December 30th, and applications have been received; Serena hopes to begin interviews soon.
- Serena inquired of Ashley and Sandy where to direct people who wish to make donations to the Museum so she can put that info on the Museum website, as neither the Foundation nor the Friends currently operates a website; both gave her contact information for their organizations.

The Collections Report has been deferred to our next meeting.

Two items of New Business were addressed:

1. Election of Officers for 2021...Nancy moved and Mike seconded the following slate of proposed officers: Chairman, John Ford; Vice Chairman, Barry Cobb; Secretary, Nancy Swearingen. The motion carried.
2. Proposed New Commission Member...the Commissioners agreed that Serena should first contact Dana Mather, and then Emory Davis, as our first and second choices to fill the vacant seat on the Commission, and to then communicate the resulting information to the Mayor, who will officially make the appointment.

The meeting was adjourned; next meeting will be on April 1, 4:00 via ZOOM.

Respectfully submitted by Nancy Swearingen

