

Rogers Historical Museum Commission Meeting Minutes
May 7, 2020

Attending virtually via ZOOM (thanks to Jennifer Sweet for setting up the meeting!) were: Kathleen Dickerson, John Ford, Jerry Hiatt, Nancy Swearingen, Mike Whitmore, Serena Barnett, and Sherry Ashley.

The meeting was called to order about 4:10 after everyone got logged into ZOOM. There was no April meeting due to the Museum being closed indefinitely due to COVID-19 concerns, and therefore no minutes.

Sandy Chalmers had sent in the Friends report, noting that 4 new members signed up during the Meet the Director event on March 12, and that several current members had “upped” the level of their membership.

Sherry Ashley, Foundation Director, reported that the new office at the Center for Non-Profits is up and running, and that she applied for a payroll protection loan of \$4600.00, which had received approval. Additionally, a \$1000 donation from the Buck Foundation had been received. She is working on operational issues, and has a Foundation Board meeting scheduled for the 4th Thursday of May. Discussion will include how to continue fund raising during the pandemic.

Serena gave the Operations Report for the past two months:

- By order of the Mayor, the Museum was closed to the public on March 16th due to the pandemic, so of course this has altered the work of the staff, who have continued to work despite the closure. For the Director, the focus has been on how to engage an online audience through social media and the Museum’s website, and Serena has varied content on daily posts, including historical trivia, the THEN and NOW feature, and collection highlights. She has also been working with the City Records Administrator on a plan to archive and digitize City records from 1881 on.
- The Collections Department has used the time to change out and/or update exhibits; complete the removal of objects from the basement of the Annex building; and worked to get a searchable online database for almost 10,000 records on the web that people can search from home. Items stored offsite have been consolidated into one storage unit. Weekly environmental checks have been performed and the data uploaded. Jerry requested information on the integrated pest management report, and would like to see the physical maps; Serena will make those available to the Commissioners.
- Exhibits report includes improvements in the Children’s Gallery, and work in the apple orchard to replace dead trees.
- With all schools closed, the Education Department has used this time to create online lessons and videos, including links from the Facebook page, and to reorganize the entire teaching collection for future use. Storage has been cleaned and reorganized.
- Plans are in the works for the 140th birthday of Rogers next year.

Jerry commended the staff on the increased social media presence through Facebook and Instagram.

Looking ahead, there will be NO family day on June 6th, but we remain hopeful for Frisco Festival on August 22nd; an effort is being made to return the train races back to the Museum for that.

There is currently no date for a reopening, but practices and procedures for that eventuality are being discussed now, including hand sanitizer stations, the closure of the children’s gallery, and eliminating the interactive exhibits so there will be “no touch” exhibits.

The next meeting is planned for June 4, 2020, at 4:00 PM

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00.
Respectfully submitted by Nancy Swearingen

Minute