

**Brant Historical Society  
Board of Directors Meeting  
May 9, 2017**

Brant Museum and Archives, 57 Charlotte St., Brantford  
**Meeting Minutes**

Present: Tim Philp (Chair), Bill Hanna (Treasurer), Carolyn Purden, Willy Hilgendag, Esther Brouwer, Doug Summerhayes, Annette Minutillo (Secretary)

Guests: Natalie Bull and Robert Pajot from the National Trust Canada

Regrets: Michael St. Amant (Past President), Zig Misiak

Staff: no staff present

1. Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm.
2. Chair Tim Philp welcomed Natalie Bull and Robert Pajot from the National Trust for Canada. Natalie provided the Board with the background to the National Trust, formerly called the Heritage Canada Foundation, and referenced the early local partnership with Friends of Myrtleville, the meeting held at Myrtleville in July of 2015, and the ongoing relationship with BHS, particularly with Sarah Thomas, Michael St Amant and Jack Jackowitz. Natalie shared that the National Trust is interested in building relationships and with remaining involved in property they hold in trust, reminding the Board that Myrtleville is an exception having been a donated property paid for with a handsome tax receipt. She shared that the National Trust is in a period of transformation and their current focus is on spreading the message that historic places are part of the future, with less attention to being museums and more to their adaptive use as buildings. All museums are faced with the challenges of attendance and covering costs. She believes Myrtleville has a lot of potential to generate new and innovative uses, revenue, and programming the site more extensively. Her Board is committed to seeing that change, having recognized the challenges of being an absentee landlord, and now intends to become more active managers of the property. She noted that BHS had declined to submit a proposal for the RRFP with The Prince's Regeneration Trust to do something with the site, although they did have a proposal from the Good family. The brainstorming from the July 2015 meeting remains valuable and the National Trust is prepared to invest in the site, including hiring a programming coordinator. They were clear that they don't want to do anything without BHS. Natalie addressed a rumour going around about condos being built etc. and assured the Board that was not being proposed.

Tim Philp noted that timing is appropriate as BHS is also now moving in a direction that sees change. Myrtleville has been the BHS venue for education. Sarah is focusing on educational components with primary and secondary students. Tim noted that with the university focused on heritage issues as well, there will likely be a resultant synergy. Tim also noted that BHS is severely resource constrained and underfunded comparatively. The BHS Board would be willing to meet for discussions and work together to bring in resources and provide local flavour. It was agreed that approaching funding bodies together will prove more effective as they respond to our partnership or differing eligibilities.

Natalie noted that programs were currently being run out of Myrtleville with all revenue being retained by the Museum. She suggested revenue generation strategies that differ from simply being interpreted buildings: meeting rooms, dinners, affordable housing/shelters/banks, proposals that meet the needs of and are relevant to the neighbourhood and the community. She shared that she had no answers yet, and will be meeting with John Utley (City Counsellor) in morning to get his perspective. The National Trust wants to be transparent and they value the activity that is going on.

Tim concluded with a request for time for the Board to consider the possibilities, and determine the role BHS may play. In the meantime all at the meeting agreed that the status quo was to continue and it was reasonable to assume that it would do so for this year. The national Trust would follow up with a new contract for this year. It was also agreed that we would like to have our next discussions sooner rather than annually.

3. No Additions to the Agenda

4. Approval of the Agenda

**Moved by Carolyn Purden and seconded by Bill Hanna that the Agenda for the Meeting be approved. Carried unanimously**

5. Approval of the Minutes of the April 11, 2017 meeting (sent previously). Annette noted that Nathan had provided the following correction: #11. Cultural and Built Heritage Funding Program - Proposals are due May 12. Each project requires 3 quotes and must be for a minimum of \$20,000.

**Moved by Doug Summerhayes and seconded by Bill Hanna that the Minutes of the April 11, 2017 meeting be approved as amended. Carried unanimously**

6. **Treasurer's Report** - Bill Hanna. The April 30, 2017 Report was circulated by email prior to the meeting.

Month End Results: Bill noted a profit nearly \$39,000 ahead of the budgeted profit of \$7795. This was largely due to the early receipt of the city grant of \$48,087, which exceeded expectations by over \$500. This in turn was slightly offset by a delay in getting a major donation of nearly \$14,000 due to transfer delays. Taking these factors into account, the net income would have come very close to budget for the month.

Bill noted that on the revenue side Myrtleville nearly made budget while Membership income was off, as was Research and Gift Shop. Of concern was the total lack of income in the Seniors' program where no presentations were made to Seniors' homes in the month of April.

Expenses came in significantly under budget by over \$10,000. Much of this came from a reversal of an accrual made at the end of the year on salaries for a little over \$5000. Facility costs were up over budget and total program and projects due to the Vimy project referred to above were also under.

Year-to-date: Again because of the early receipt of the grant we are over \$65,000 ahead of budget in profit but one must keep in mind that next month will show quite a different picture with the city grant budgeted in that month. Areas of concern on the revenue side are on Membership income (50% down), Research (33% down), Seniors' program (nearly 50% down) and the lack of the county grant, which is being presently addressed with the hope of recovering it. Donations should come in line fairly shortly and the Myrtleville program continues very strongly but a little behind budget which we hope to make up the summer. Project specific grants are now \$1000 over the total 2017 budget.

On the expense side, full-time salaries are down and accounting and professional fees are also down (our accrual at the end of the year for audit fees was higher than what was actually charged).

Cash flow: With the donation received in the month of May and the city grant we are in a good position to reach our summer months when Myrtleville operation revenues kick in..

**Moved by Doug Summerhayes and seconded by Willy Hilgendag that the Treasurer's Report be received. Carried unanimously**

7. **Publications Committee Report** - provided by Bill Hanna

In view of the urgent need to upgrade our computer system in order not to lose all the memory (including that for the inventory project which cost a great deal of money) any further publications for this year will have to be postponed.

**Moved by Bill Hanna and seconded by Carolyn Purden that the Publications Committee Report be received. Carried unanimously.**

8. **Member Event Planning Committee** – Annette Minutillo

The Member Event Planning Committee Meeting Minutes of April 19, 2017 will be circulated after the meeting.

Esther Brouwer has agreed to be the Board liaison to the Member Event Planning Committee.

9. **Business arising** from the Meeting of April 11, 2017

Tim Philp is reviewing By-Laws and will extend invitations to the Board to assist in the future.

10. **Operational Report** - Tim Philp

**Moved by Bill Hanna and seconded by Doug Summerhayes that the Board Meeting be moved In Camera. Carried unanimously.**

**Moved by Carolyn Purden and seconded by Doug Summerhayes that the Board Meeting be moved Ex Camera. Carried unanimously.**

**ACTION:** Doug will connect with Jack Jackowitz to identify the Volunteer lists.

- a. The Board discussed a Capital request for Computer replacement. A great deal of money has been spent on the Inventory project and the data is kept on a server that has the potential of being lost. Tim suggested that the data be set up in a similar fashion to Rosewood, as our present system will inevitably lose the database and the current back-up system is not certain.

The Board considered the purchase of a brand new server, and Tim circulated quotes identifying that \$3500 would be sufficient for the server, and additional funds would be required for upgraded terminals for staff.

**Moved by Bill Hanna and seconded by Willy Hilgendag that Tim Philp be authorized to spend up to \$6000 on critical IT infrastructure. Carried unanimously.**

**ACTION:** Tim will pursue savings on the Bell internet bill.

**ACTION:** Tim is exploring using Office 365 as a cloud software strategy

- b. Collections - Tim observed that the Collections resembled a hoarder rather than museum, acknowledging that the process of deaccessioning is a challenging one. Too much stuff that has no relevance to this museum. During the Inventory project two lists were made with one being items to be deaccessioned; a list of items to be removed from the Collection is already made. Must also look at the Accession list

**ACTION:** Esther and Bill will work with Tim to take a lead on sifting through the current collection, identifying what has been and should be deaccessioned.

- c. Need to look at getting some external storage space - storage of textiles in particular should be addressed. The point of sale equipment is antiquated and inefficient.

**ACTION:** Doug will call Rick Stern regarding a new POS system that would meet the needs of the Museum.

11. **Board Members:** There is still one vacancy. Cody Groats will be returning to Brantford in September and has expressed interest in returning to the Board. To be tabled until September.

12. **Coming Events:** identified in the Member Event Committee Update

- a. HerStory event - currently running
- b. Confederation Day Picnic June 17
- c. Canada Day exhibit at Lion's Park for Canada 150 - July 1.

13. No Announcements

**Next Meeting - June 13, 2017**

Tim moved that the **Meeting be adjourned** at 9:00 pm

TP/am