

BHS Strategic Plan: 2019 to 2021 Public Consultation

**Brantford Public Library, 173 Colborne Street
Saturday, June 22, 2019 10 AM – 12:15 PM
Facilitator: Nathan Etherington (Staff)**

Attendees: Tim Philp (President), Willy Hilgendag (Treasurer), Annette Minutillo (Secretary), Leisah-Marie Jansen (Board Member), Jean Kendall (Board Member), Denise Methot (Board Member), Doug Summerhayes (Board Member), Kay Boyd (Member), Lynn Elsie (Member), Brian Moore (Member), Ed Pancoe (Member), Kathryn Papple (Member), Lorraine Sherred (Member)

NB: A copy of the presentation is included as a separate PDF as Appendix A.

The consultation was started at 10:05 AM. After some brief introductory remarks by the Facilitator and the President, the background portion leading up to the creation of the strategic plan was introduced. This included reviewing the mission and value statements for the Brant Historical Society as well as priorities established from the completion of the mass deaccession project completed in November 2018.

MUSEUM INFRASTRUCTURE

The Facilitator reviewed the existing improvements that have occurred over the past three years. The three points of the proposed plan include: identifying a long-term capital plan, applying to funding for capital resources, and creation of an expansion plan by the end of 2021. Attendees engaged in an activity using a sketch of the museum to identify future needs for infrastructure, as well as making note of ‘one thing we should do and one thing we should not do’.

Respondents shared the following wants:

- Space for exhibits
- Accessibility/Elevator/AODA Compliance by 2025
- Digital Infrastructure including interactive technologies
- Additional Programming/Community Space
- Public Art Piece
- Fire Suppression System
- Curb Appeal/Garden/Picnic Area/Bike Rack
- Coupons to local Coffee shops
- Mobile Exhibits
- Workshop Space for Archives
- Lobby Improvements/Brighter Lighting.
- **DO NOT MOVE** (at this time)

ACCESSIBLE DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

The second portion of the strategic plan built on a direction to improve the organization as well as digitize the entire archives. Staff started on this work in 2018 and shared some of the outcomes in the first year including increasing the archive database from 7,540 records in January of 2018 to 18,300 records to date. Three points in the proposed plan include: investing resources in digitizing the archives, sharing collections online, and developing a digitization work plan for the archives over the next decade. The plan also identifies volunteers as being useful for organizing and numbering collections, youth and summer students for digitizing and computer work, and staff for integration of the work into the database. An activity with sorting sheets was introduced as an example of sorting to use our volunteer base.

Respondents highlighted that:

- There is no consistent numbering or database entry standard that museums across the province use in their collections management.
- Issues involving copyright that may affect the organization
- Capitalizing on the wealth of information in the Expositor Archives
- 3D Digitization Methods / LIDAR Technology
- Use of offsite digitization service (3rd Party Agency)
- Reinventorize the Publications/Research Committee
- Continue to build new partnerships in the spirit of cooperation

ADVOCATE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The final portion of the consultation focused on the financial sustainability of the organization and the need to garner more public funding, donations, sponsorships, and membership. The facilitator indicated that there is an increased need for support across the sector from all three levels of government. Staff and Board Members have invested time in creating, nurturing, and maintaining relationships with the City of Brantford, the County of Brant, MPP Will Bouma, and MP Phil McColeman. The organization also needs to increase the number of donations it receives from its membership, and expand its membership to include the corporate community. The plan proposes the Board will take an active role in advocating with public stakeholder, seeking out corporate membership opportunities, and initiating a donation campaign by 2021.

Attendees shared:

- The need for a corporate liaison
- Identification of other stakeholders
- Improved membership communications
- A community and youth engagement strategy possibly with the Grand Erie District School Board
- Current members should be advocating for new members to join
- Recognition of the increased press exposure the museum has received over the past year

- The public perception that we are owned and operated by the City of Brantford, not an independent charity and not-for-profit museum
- Working with partners like the Ontario Genealogical Society – Brant County Branch
- We need to ask more, because we often don't ask people for assistance
- The need to engage individual members
- The need for increased human resource capacity including Board, Staff, and Membership to supply the man hours that all of the proposed initiatives will require

The meeting was adjourned at 12:17 PM.

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