

Brant Historical Society Special Business Meeting Myrtleville House Museum

September 5, 2024

Minutes

Establishment of a Quorum:

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm by Murray Angus, President and Chair of the Board of Directors. He declared quorum based on the number of registered members present or represented by proxy. It was reported that 37 members had registered in person or were represented by proxy.

Report on Mailings Executive Director Marion McGeein reported that about 100 packages containing the meeting agenda and documents had been sent to members by email or by post.

1. Approval of Agenda:

Motion: Moved by John Utley, seconded by Pat Duern, that the agenda of the September 5, 2024 Special Business Meeting be approved. **Carried.**

2. Financial Status:

Treasurer Bill Hyde, assisted by Murray Angus, took the gathering through a number of documents circulated earlier. They included Management of the Endowment Fund; Statement of Current Financial Situation; Results of Discussions with City of Brantford officials; and Future Considerations Regarding the Museum.

B. Hyde described how the Endowment Fund had historically been mismanaged by monies in the fund being loaned out without following the proper regulations and protocols prescribed in the bylaw. As a result, the Fund is now mostly depleted.

The Endowment Fund began at \$310,000 in 1986. The balance of the amount borrowed and not yet repaid as of March 12, 2024 stands at \$273,948. The Fund has a little more than \$30,000 remaining.

The overall finances of the Brant Historical Society are in a precarious position. The Society has insufficient income to cover operations, due to a lack of fundraising programs and an over-reliance on grants from three levels of government. It is recommended that an enhanced campaign to raise money from individual and corporate donors, along with fundraising events are needed.

Further B Hyde and M. Angus noted that meetings were held with members of the Board of Directors and the City of Brantford officials to discuss such options as selling the Society's current headquarters in the Brant Museum and Archives on Charlotte Street and moving to a new facility. They looked at the Old City Hall on Wellington Street, the Thrive Church on Charlotte Street, the third floor at the Brantford Public Library on Colborne Street, and the second floor at the Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre. All venues were meant as a mid-term solution to allow the Society the space to sell its current building on Charlotte and re-establish the endowment fund at an appropriate level.

It was noted that city officials showed a willingness to co-operate to help the Society as an important historical, heritage and cultural organization in the city.

They also presented a draft Brant Historical Society Three Year Fiscal Plan. A main focus is selling the building at 57 Charlotte St. This would facilitate the ability of the Brant Historical Society to replenish the Endowment Fund and improve the Society's fiscal position, and search for a new location for its headquarters and the museum.

Other components of the plan include:

- Asking the Stedman Foundation to increase its support back to tradition levels of about \$30,000, and some extra short-term funds to support moving costs in the next year;
- Approaching Enterprise Brant to forgive the \$80,000 loan on the books;
- Staging an annual fundraising gala to augment the Endowment Fund;
- Securing more grants if and when they become available to reduce support from the municipality.
- Engage a new board member who has expertise in fundraising;
- Begin work on a first gala fundraiser;
- Development of a new trust fund;
- Develop a new marketing plan.
- Develop a plan to increase the BHS membership.

The members were asked to vote on three resolutions deriving from the reports.

Jack Jackowitz questioned whether the wording in the bylaw concerning the counting of votes meant that the two-thirds majority of the votes required for passage meant two-thirds of the total membership or two-thirds of those present at the meeting plus proxies.

He said the rule had to be clearly understood to avoid later legal problems.

The Chair ruled that the regulation should be interpreted to mean two-thirds of those present at the meeting and those represented by proxy.

Resolution: Moved by Keith Gloster, seconded by Michael-Allan Marion, that the Brant Historical Society membership authorize the Board of Directors to use the remaining monies in the Endowment Fund, if required.

Carried, with 34 in favour, 1 opposed and 2 abstaining.

Resolution: Moved by Brian Moore, seconded by Glad Woodburn, that the Board of Directors of the Brant Historical Society be authorized to undertake the sale of the Brant Museum and Archives property at 57 Charlotte St., and report the results to the membership.

Carried, with 35 in favour, 1 opposed and 1 abstaining.

Resolution: Moved by Keith Gloster, seconded by Bill Hyde, that the Board of Directors of the Brant Historical Society be authorized to establish a new Trust to hold the monies of the Endowment Fund.

Carried, with 34 in favour, 1 opposed and 2 abstaining.

3. **Adjournment:** The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.