

FREEPORT HISTORICAL MUSEUM FOUNDATION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2018 10:00AM
FREEPORT HISTORICAL MUSEUM
311 E. PARK AVENUE
FREEPORT, TEXAS

MINUTES

Any item below may be discussed, deferred or be voted on.

1. Call to order

Mr. Hickey called the meeting to order at 10:30am.

2. Roll call

The following members attended the Board meeting:

- Nat Hickey, President
- Brenda Laird, Vice President
- Sandra Barbree, Treasurer
- Brenda George, Board member
- Dan Kessner, Board member
- Larry McDonald, City Council liaison
- LeAnn Strahan, Secretary

3. Approval of January 31, 2018 Minutes

With a motion made by Ms. Laird and a second by Mrs. Barbree, the Board unanimously approved the minutes from the January 31, 2018 meeting with no modifications.

4. Project updates

- **Heritage House**

Ms. Strahan presented the Board with quotes that have been submitted for the roof replacement for their recommendation to City Council. The quotes vary in their suggested scope of work leading to questions of which would be the best long-term option. Calling on Councilman McDonald for his knowledge of the historical buildings downtown, he explained in layman's terms why we are having the issues with water getting into the walls and damaging the window sills. With a motion by Ms. Laird and a second by Mrs. Barbree, the Board unanimously approved to recommend the Holden Roofing quote. Ms. Strahan will present the recommendation to City Council on Monday, March 5, 2018. Ms Strahan explained that for now the deck project is on hold pending Council's approval of the roof replacement.

- **Museum**

Ms. Strahan reported that we are still waiting on the maintenance department to schedule repairs to the museum roof. Additionally, she discussed remodeling the concession space in front of the Little Theater as a children's party room. Staff would market birthday parties to include a movie of choice and concession items.

The main expenses would include an Antonelli's mural to stay with our historic theme, and replacing the carpet in the theater/party room with a hard surface for easy clean up.

- **Hickey Building**

Ms. Strahan reported to the Board that Deano Merrigan has decided not to renovate his property for Isabel's, as it was not a cost-effective decision for him. For the time being, additional renovations for our building have been postponed as well. The Board requested that Ms. Strahan address City Council to allow the foundation the option of renting the building as an event venue.

- **Fort Velasco**

Mr. Hickey reported that there are no updates at this time.

5. Financial update & future budget discussions

Ms. Strahan provided the Board with a statement of account for the Foundation's Texas Gulf Bank account with a current balance of \$22,332.05. At this time all credit/debit card payments made at the museum for admission, gift shop items and rentals are directly deposited to this account. The only expenses to come out of this account are deposit refunds, which are written by check and signed by Mr. Welch.

Ms. Strahan also provided a current statement of expenses from the museum's City account, which includes balances for all line items for the current budget year. The overall budget remaining is \$171,168, which includes balances for maintenance, salaries, services and supplies. All cash deposits from the museum are now being deposited to the revenue account through the City.

6. Museum motto – "Connection with the Past"

Mr. Hickey discussed the high volume of calls he receives from groups and individuals looking for items from the past. For example, LNG is creating a video presentation of the history of Quintana and the sulfur mines, and we have an impressive inventory of items on the subject that are available for reference. With a motion by Ms. Laird and a second by Mrs. Barbree, the Board unanimously approved adopting the motto "Connection with the Past". The motto will be displayed with our logo, on our letterhead and on any marketing materials printed. Mr. Hickey will work on displaying in the museum as well.

7. Ideas for future exhibits & fundraisers

Ms. Strahan updated the Board on her suggested summer exhibit, Toys II: The Inside Story. The traveling exhibit is available for rent from May to September. Cost including shipping is estimated at \$21,000. Partnership requests have been made to Veolia and Waste Connections to help cover costs, and Ms. Strahan is confident that with grassroots and paid marketing, the exhibit will pay for itself in admission fees and gift shop items. With a motion from Ms. Laird and a second by Mrs. Barbree, the Board unanimously approved to recommend Toys II for Council approval. Ms. Strahan will take the recommendation to City Council at the Monday, March 5, 2018 meeting.

Ms. Strahan reported low attendance to the Presidential exhibit during the month of February. There have been few changes to the exhibit through the last several years to attract interest. Ms. Strahan suggested that we modestly invest new items each year to recurring exhibits to keep things fresh and new. Currently the museum staff is conducting research for a weather flag exhibit to replace the Presidential exhibit. This would be a low cost temporary exhibit we can provide until summer.

8. Upcoming community events

Ms. Strahan reported that the museum staff is currently working on a few new community events. We have reserved dates to host Downtown Market Days in April and May, and the Board discussed hosting a community cocktail party at the museum for the first week in May, all with the goal of increasing visitors downtown. Mr. Kessner enquired if the museum would have a table available to promote his books and upcoming events, Ms. Strahan concurred that we would do so. Ms. Barbree asked what fees we would charge for a booth. Ms. Strahan reported that there was no plan to charge at this time. The Board agreed that charging would be wise going forward.

9. Marketing strategies

Ms. Strahan reported that currently the main advertising venue being utilized is Facebook for updates and future events. Staff is creating ads for matinee movies, Downtown Market Square and temporary exhibits, which are then shared on other city pages including the City website. The Board discussed the need for brochure highlighting our rental opportunities. Ms. Strahan said that she would work with Laura on getting a proof for the Board, and Mr. Hickey stated that we could get them printed for a reasonable price at Blueline Shop.

10. Board member reports

- Nat Hickey – Mr. Hickey wants the Board to discuss ideas for future programs we can create to bring more traffic to downtown Freeport. Ms. Strahan will add this to the next agenda.
- Brenda Laird – no report
- Brenda George – Mrs. George updated the rest of the Board on the plans to visit the Children’s Museum in Houston the following day and invited anyone that who wanted to join.
- Sandra Barbree – Mrs. Barbree updated the Board that the Hickey Building renovations were put on hold per her conversation with Mayor Brimage regarding no funds available for the work at this time.
- Carmen Read – no report
- Dan Kessner – Mr. Kessner requested that we market the books on Facebook and special events. He also commented on the typographical errors in one of the museum’s pamphlets, and requested they be pulled until it could be corrected. The Board agreed that items should be proofread before being put out for display.
- LeAnn Strahan – Ms. Strahan updated the Board about the grant writing course she attended in Humble. The class was very informative, citing search engines to easily identify grants suitable for the museum. Additionally, she is interested in hosting the course at the museum for the southern Brazoria County area. She provided copies of Facebook ads and feedback regarding the Classic Saturday Matinees and the presidential exhibit. She discussed the part time staff and their current roles and duties, and notified the Board she is currently seeking one more part time position.

11. Items for future discussion

- Children's Museum tour update
- Hickey Building rental fees
- Program ideas
- Downtown market
- Trolley quotes

12. Schedule next Board meeting – The next Board meeting is scheduled for March 28, 2018 at 10:00am.

13. Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Hickey at 12:20pm.

LeAnn Strahan, Museum Manager
Freeport Historical Museum Foundation