

City of Ontario  
Ontario Museum of History & Art  
Board of Trustees  
Virtual Meeting - Zoom  
January 26, 2021, 6:00 PM

**Minutes**

**Call Meeting to Order:**

President Chris Kueng called the meeting to order.

**Pledge of Allegiance.**

**Roll Call:**

Board members present were Chris Kueng, Rick Caughman, Randy del Turco, Jerry Weems, and Shannon Gerstheimer. MA Liaison Leslie Sherwood-James, City Council Liaison Debra Dorst-Porada, Museum Director John Worden, Curator of Collections Michelle Sifuentes, Curator of Exhibition Leslie Matamoros, and Curator of Education Anitra Bishop.

Additional: Community Life & Culture Executive Director, Helen McAlary

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of November 24, 2020 and December 14, 2020 were approved on a motion by Rick Caughman and seconded by Randy del Turco.

**Public Comment**

None

Board President, C. Kueng welcomed new Board of Trustee Member, Shannon Gerstheimer to the Board. He informed her that during the Board Comments section of the meeting she can introduce herself and the rest of the Board will introduce themselves to her.

**City Council Liaison**

Thanked the new board members for wanting to learn more about the City of Ontario and for helping to make a difference. Encouraged everyone to utilize the MyOntario app to report any issues they see throughout the City (graffiti, abandon shopping carts, potholes, etc.) and help keep the City clean and beautiful.

**Staff Report**

Staff presented a Semi-Annual Update presentation for the Board. C. Kueng reminded Board they wanted this presentation and to please hold all question and comments to the end of the presentation. Museum Director, J. Worden shared out the goals of the presentation: to provide an update on our priorities and our projects and how they relate to our Mission, Vision and Values statements; how the priorities and projects contribute to Museum Accreditation; and communicate the Museum's operating environment as it has been affected by COVID. The Director went over the Museum's updated Mission, Vision and Value statements and is proud in the work both staff and Board did to shape these statements.



Director Worden discussed the operational challenges that the Museum has faced during the pandemic. The pandemic not only affected the Museum's operations, but it also affected the vendors the Museum have worked with. Staff scheduling has also been affected by the pandemic due to restrictions, at times only 50% of staff can work onsite. Some of the positive things to happen due to the pandemic are the creation of the new website and starting to provide virtual programs. An overview was given of the Museum's major commitments: Exhibition schedule & programs, including online postings of all exhibitions and programs; the biennial collaborative exhibition with Chaffey Community Museum of Art (CCMA) in 2022, *Built on Water* opening in early 2022; the first phase of the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) scheduled for completion by Summer 2021; the collections move in summer 2021; and the Accreditation application February 2022/decision Summer 2023.

### Accreditation

Director Worden went over the application requirements for Accreditation. One requirement the Museum does not currently meet is the hours of operations. A museum needs to be open to the public for 1,000 hours a year, currently the museum doesn't make that requirement. This is a budgetary issue that needs to be worked through since it involves additional staffing. The other requirement the Museum does not meet is the Core Documents Verification. Curator of Collections, Michelle Sifuentes, presented on the status of the Museum's Core Documents. A museum needs to meet 14 requirements before they can apply for Accreditation with the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), the Ontario Museum of History & Art meets all the requirements except for two. The Core Documents needed are: Mission Statement, Institutional Strategic Plan, Collections Management Policy, Institutional Code of Ethics, and a Disaster Preparedness/Emergency Readiness Plan. Currently three of the five documents are completed. The Collections team is working on the Code of Ethics, it will be presented to the Board at the April 2021 meeting. The Disaster Preparedness/Emergency Readiness Plan will be presented to the Board at the July 2021 meeting. Some documents have already been submitted to AAM for verification. Curator of Collections discussed the challenges the Collections team has faced, such as limited staff hours and because of the pandemic, the team will hit some walls. They will work on getting around the walls to get the projects done. Timeline was presented:

- Core Documents due to AAM: August 2021
- Application due to AAM: February 1, 2022
- Self-Study: Start March 2022 – Finish September 2022
- Site Visit: March-April 2023
- Decision: Summer 2023

From start to finish Accreditation takes between 11 to 16 months. The Museum is doing well with the Core Document schedule. The Museum is aiming for a Spring site visit to really showcase the Museum and its facilities, including a new offsite Collections storage space.

### Collections Move

Director Worden gave a brief explanation on the need for offsite Collections storage to house the collection items on the first floor of the Museum. These collection items were moved from the vault in the Built on Water gallery to the Carlson Gallery. The new offsite space will be expandable and eventually the Museum will be able to move the collections items on the second floor to the location. The first phase focuses on the items in the Carlson gallery



because of the upcoming planned renovations to the gallery (part of the CIP). Once the new offsite storage is completed, the items in the Carlson will be moved out so the renovations can start. The Curator of Collections discussed the first stage of the Collections move. All items in the Carlson gallery, vault and small storage area will be moved. The Curator broke down all the different stages involved in the move including inventory, rehousing, packing and transportation. In some cases, a professional moving company will be used to move the heavy items. The new Collection storage space will be built on City property at Bon View Ave. The storage space will consist of two 30'x30' storage rooms and a 30'x15 workroom. The Collections team has worked out on a layout for the space to utilize it to its fullest. As mentioned, the space is expandable, and the Museum is hoping to add more 30'x30' rooms to accommodate the collection items from the second floor. By doing this first phase, the Collection team can better plan for the second phase, moving of the items from the second floor. It is important to do a collections move right and avoid mistakes that can take years to fix. After the new space is constructed, staff will do an assessment to make sure it meets environmental standards before moving any collection items in. This project will be completed this summer. This will be an important part of the Accreditation site visit because it will show the reviewers that the Museum is serious about preserving the collection and has a plan it is following.

#### Curator of Collections Additional Responsibilities

The Curator went over their additional responsibilities: printed PR material lead, exhibition planning, Emergency Operations Center (EOC) representative/EOC Planning Chief, facility maintenance lead, handling collections donations.

#### Exhibitions

Director Worden explained that exhibitions are not only physical but also virtual. The Curator of Exhibitions, Leslie Matamoros, explained what goes into turning a physical exhibition into a virtual one. Photographs are taken of all exhibit items both individual and gallery shots. There could be anywhere from 60 to 100+ photographs for an exhibition. Interns have been doing the photographing and editing the images in preparation to place them online. The Curator will then upload all the components to the Museum's website. The website averages around 970 visits a month. Virtual exhibitions increase the effort the exhibitions staff must do because it is a different process from staging a physical exhibition. There is also an additional process for approvals through the Communication Dept. for the website. The Curator used the last exhibition, *Law of Nature*, to demonstrate how the virtual exhibit can live on after an exhibition has closed. In addition to photographs, videos of the exhibition are being posted. The website is a good tool to document the Museum's exhibitions and artist and students can look at previous exhibition. The Exhibitions team is continuing to research and practice pushing the envelope with the use of a 360 camera. The Curator discussed the next collaborative exhibition with CCMA, the working title is *The Legacy of Woman Artists in Southern California* scheduled to open early 2022. The staff is excited to work on this exhibition, but also felt that one exhibition is not enough to celebrate woman. The result is the dedication of 2021 as *The Year of the Woman* leading up to the opening of the collaborative exhibition. There will be art exhibitions and historical lectures/programs dedicated to women. For the collaborative, CCMA will focus on the pioneers in their collections and the Museum will focus on women artist in academia and their roles as mentors. The Museum will also incorporate a personal component to the exhibition by



adding the artists' narrative and U.S. statistics regarding women in the arts. Curator discussed the upcoming Built on Water exhibition and showed some artifacts that will be on display in the exhibition. The development of this exhibition has given the Museum the opportunity to improve their museum practices. New case will be designed that will meet museum standards and help with the preservation and longevity of the artifacts on display.

#### Curator of Exhibitions Additional Responsibilities

The Curator went over their additional responsibilities: Exhibition development & planning (exhibition are planned 2 to 4 years in advance); Website lead (both Museum & City); E-blast lead; Technical support; Administration & Finance support; Artist liaison.

#### Education/Programs

Director Worden introduced the Curator of Education, Anitra Bishop, to discuss the Museum's education plan. The Curator discussed working on planning programs for the upcoming Ontario Living Magazine (OLM). There are a lot of partnerships going on with the upcoming programs, which fits into the Museum's Values. The Museum will be working with Tera del Sol on an art program, the Museum of Riverside/Harada House Foundation will be doing a presentation on the Harada House, and the Malki Museum will be doing a program with the Museum for Earth Day. The Curator spends a lot of time with these organizations to build relationships and develop strong virtual programs. The Museum had found that working with organizations that already have a following helps boost the Museum numbers and increase interest in programs. Partnerships are invaluable to the Museum right now. For Built on Water, discussion on educational standards and interactives have taken place. The Curator met with the Director, Chaffey Joint Union High School District Assistant Superintendent, Jim Cronin, and his replacement Charline Saenz and had a positive conversation. For the interactives, the content needs to dictate the design not the design dictates the content. The Museum wants interactives that mentally stimulate, are valuable and interesting. Virtual learning will always be around even when the students go back to in person learning. The Museum wants to know what kind of virtual programs the teachers want and cater to their needs. The Education Advisory Committee will be reactivated and introduced to the Curator.

#### Curator of Education Additional Responsibilities

The Curator went over their additional responsibilities: Virtual programs planning; Virtual PR & Social Media lead; OLM lead; Tracking statistics (has changed due to the pandemic, mainly virtual tracking)

#### Questions & Comments

C. Kueng: For Accreditation, are the deadlines listed established by AAM or are they deadlines the Museum created?

M. Sifuentes: Deadlines are set by AAM except for the Core Document deadline. The Museum made the deadline of August 2021 to give enough time for completion, AAM to review, and for the Museum to make any edits needed.

C. Kueng: For the Self-Study, do we choose that?

M. Sifuentes: The Self-Study would begin in March 2022 after the Museum submits its application. AAM will give the Museum the packet to be completed in 6 months.



C. Kueng: So, it is contingent on us getting the Core Documents done and everything in place?

M. Sifuentes: Yes

R. Caughman: Comment – Can't think of a better time for S. Gerstheimer to jump in and see what the Museum does. This was an excellent presentation, hats off to everyone.

Question – Regarding accreditation and additional hours, do we need to do any backtracking for how much time we have been open for a percentage of hours or is there anything they are looking at to augment? Would we be able to track during COVID? Are there any recommendations AAM would have to monitor that?

M.Sifuentes: AAM is taking into consideration how COVID has impacted museums and working with museums regarding the hour requirement. For us we must show that during normal time we intend to be open to the public for 1,000 hours a year.

R. Caughman: So that is something we hope City Hall would approve? Is there anything the Board could do to speak on that?

J. Worden: The Museum has been aware of this requirement. It is not a huge amount of money to provide additional staffing to be open for the additional hours. Overall, there are two ways the Board helps. First way, Board will be involved directly in the Accreditation process. AAM wants to see a Board that is active, that is involved, that makes the necessary and key decisions and is aware of how the future of the Museum can best unfold. Second, the Board represents the community. The Board champions the Museum to the community. Those both are qualities that are paramount to the process of Accreditation: Good governance and champions of the organization.

M. Sifuentes: When the site visit takes place, the reviewers will want to talk to the Board as a group and possible individually to get feedback and see what their roll is.

R. Caughman: As you are knocking out the elements for Accreditation, once you do that does AAM come back and want to see them again?

M.Sifuentes: Once AAM verifies the five Core Documents, then we are set to apply. But those documents must be verified – if not then we cannot move forward to apply. We should be hearing back soon regarding the documents that Museum already submitted. The goal for the Collections team is that any comments/edits AAM have will be minimal. That is why it is taking so long; the team is giving 100% toward producing strong documents.

### **Old Business**

None

### **New Business**

#### Board Election

Elections of the Board officers was done last year in February. It was traditionally done in March. This year the election will be held in March and will be added to Future Agenda items in the February agenda. If any Board Members are interested in serving as Board President or President pro Tem, please let the Director know by the March meeting.



### Board Meeting Time

The Board used to meet at 5pm, and currently meets at 6pm. President Kueng would like the board meeting times placed on the next agenda under New Business. Director will poll the Board on meeting times.

### **Museum Associates/Liaison Comments**

L. Sherwood-James introduced the Museum Associates to new Board Member Shannon Gerstheimer. The Museum Associates (MAs) received a \$20,000 grant that will go towards the improvement of the Museum. The MA's are halfway through with their annual retreat, they are looking at examining their practices and action plan and how it relates to the Museum's new Mission, Vision and Value statements. Will be working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for their part of Accreditation and fine tune the Store Policy.

### **Museum Board of Trustees Comments**

Shannon Gerstheimer – Has been a resident of Ontario for 14 years. Loves Ontario and how it has the small town feel that has the amenities of a larger city. Homeschools 9-year-old triplets and has a 4-year-old. Most education up to this point was centered around Museums, loves museums. Grateful to participate in the City this way. Was able to take a tour of the Museum, loves the building and grounds. Really eager to contribute and thank you for the warm welcome.

Jerry Weems – Introduced himself to S. Gerstheimer. Loves Ontario as well. Has been serving on the Board of Trustees for the past 3 to 4 months. Also serves on the Museum Associates board and is a participating artist at the Museum. Is extremely fortunate to be a participating artist and board member.

Rick Caughman – Introduced himself to S. Gerstheimer. Picked a great night to get a feel on what is going on at the Museum. The staff is tough, smart, talented, and fun, a great group of people. The Board tends to be productive and passionate. When you see all the work the staff is doing, this is a great time to be a part of this institution. Even during COVID, the staff has not missed a beat. Been a resident for 30 years, is an artist, designer, and educator.

Chris Kueng – Introduced himself to S. Gerstheimer. Echoes what R. Caughman said about Museum and staff. The Museum has come a long way from when he started in 1999, has been on the Board for 21 ½ years. Loves the Museum, loves supporting its growth. Seeing the Museum's evolution makes him happy and proud. The Museum has a great staff who are eager to help, it seems like they work 27/4 even during COVID. Proud of all the accomplishments and it is due to the staff. He is a retired educator (worked for over 30 years), an artist and writer of children books. Deeply passionate about being on the Board, the Board is more hands on in support of activities happening within the Museum. This is a time of big change with regards to collections, accreditation, and exhibitions. Thanked staff for the very comprehensive presentation.

**Future Agenda Items**

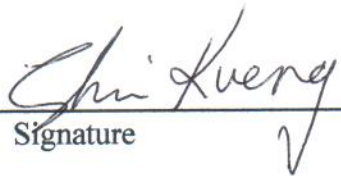
Board of Trustee Elections, Board meeting times.

**Next Meeting:**

February 23, 2021 at 6pm.

The Board of Trustees would like to adjourn tonight's meeting in honor of James Dorst.

Motion to Adjourn by Rick Caughman, seconded by Shannon Gerstheimer, 7:40 PM.

  
Signature

2-23-2021