

Mendocino County Museum

ADVISORY BOARD

November 18, 2019 Minutes

Museum Advisory Board Members Present:

Roger Krueger, Mendocino County Historical Society Representative

Greta Kanne, City of Willits Representative

Rebecca Montes, Mendocino College Representative, Museum Advisory Board Chair

Jim Eddie, First District Representative

Lois Lockart, Second District Representative

Brent Walker, Third District Representative

Ric Martin, Fourth District Representative

Karen Horner, Cultural Services Director

Guests:

Megan Dukett, Program Administrator

1. **Meeting Called to Order:** 10:09 a.m.
2. **Roll Call:** Above individuals were present.
3. **Consent Items--Motion to Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting:** Greta Kanne made a motion, Brent Walker seconded the motion
 - a. **Board Voted to Accept Past Minutes:** All in favor.
4. **Public Expression:**

N/A: No members of the public present.
5. **Museum Director's Report:**
 - Karen Horner welcomed new MAB member Lois Lockart thanking her for joining the board.
 - Announced another MAB member representing the 5th district has been approved. Phonenix Trent will be joining the MAB board in January for the next meeting, which means we will finally have a full MAB roster.
 - Karen Horner reviewed the Director's report
 - Natural Expressions: Art Inspired by Mendocino County Exhibit opened on November 9th with 41 in attendance. All exhibited items are from the Museum's permanent collection.

- Former large gift shop space was opened as the new “Interactive Room” featuring a reading corner, sensory table, block puzzle, weaving station and sensory table. We hope families can learn together by doing interactive art. This is also the space where our programs are being held, like our Edible Mushroom class was held with 26 participants this past Saturday.
- The Museum has two new collections volunteers who are working on data entry for the Museum’s collection software Past Perfect.
- New Staff Assistant, Briana Brooks. She has a bachelor’s degree in history and has been a great addition to the team in terms of daily operation and exhibit programming.
- Chair Montes asked Karen Horner how the Archives and Research Library is going.
 - Karen Horner responded how Benjamin MacBean is handling all research requests working with the Museum’s curator, Karen Mattson.
 - All requests via the website submission or paper forms are handled as they come in.
 - Benjamin is working on finalizing the set up of the Reference Research Library and organizing the collection. We hope to have that finalized this winter.
- Chair Montes asked if there were any new deaccessioning plans.
 - Karen Horner referenced the Curator’s report, in which she reported on the deaccession and transfer of two items the prop/model of the Cabrillo Lighthouse and the Coleman Barn, both of which were donated to local non-profits for display.
- Brent Walker asked if there was planning in regard to upcoming events in 2020
 - Karen Horner explained the Museum team is working on extending the planning process for the whole year so that we can properly advertise when would have extended public hours etc.
 - The Museum staff is working to prepare and plan more in advance now that we have a full staff.
- Chair Montes asked about future exhibit planning for 2020
 - Karen Horner responded the Museum team was planning a Spring display but needed to confirm with staff before announcing.
 - The Collector’s Journey Dusty Whitney exhibit will be potentially a Redwood Highway exhibit in the future.
 - Wonacott Photography exhibit in the Spring of 2020 will replace Natural Expressions
 - The Museum team would also like to work on improving Woven Worlds with the involvement and input from tribal groups and was excited to have Lois Lockart on the MAB board to assist with that in the future.

- Lois Lockart stated she believes and supports tribal involvement with Museum education efforts. She believed that Vicki Patterson did a great job in its initial development. Lois stated how important the tribal role was in environmental education and how important it was to teach the next generation the importance of caring for the land.
- Karen Horner expressed how she would very much like to work with Lois Lockhart in including tribal communities to work behind the scenes and in consultation as we work to improve interpretation as well as include them in programming efforts
- Greta Kanne expressed how important it is to find ways to celebrate Native American Heritage Month in November. That the Museum should think and plan ahead for next year in that effort.
- Karen Horner agreed, and said now that the Museum has a full staff we can work on planning more for future programming like Native American Heritage Month.

6. Unfinished Business:

- A. Karen Horner addressed the Admissions Fees Discussion from the previous meeting
 - Explained how the County has increased salaries after the MOU agreements and how important it is that the Museum look at ways we can save money, and how eliminating fees would impact next years fiscal budget.
 - Karen Horner asked the MAB board should we decrease our revenue which directly impacts our operating budget.
 - Greta Kanne explained from her perspective in business operations, that by not charging an admission fee might undervalue peoples association of the Museum experience. She gave an example of how that has worked at the book shope. Free pile vs. selling books for 50 cents. More books were taken when they were sold than when they were given away for free. Sometimes giving things away for free undervalues them in peoples minds.
 - Roger Krueger expressed his disagreement. He said although, that may be true for a product in sales, it isn't in his opinion true for Museum experiences. He explained that the cost of admission and repeat visitation does not happen because folks see the admission fee as a barrier. He explained how the real crucial element if fees are removed is to set up a more appealing donation box system to entice people to donate.
 - Jim Eddie, pointed out that there is a cost for operating the Museum and paying for exhibit installation. He does feel, like donations help keep the Museum open.
 - Brent Walker suggested that we do a trial run with Free Saturdays to see if the amount of donations off set the loss in admission revenue and really encourage and set up a donation system that is more appealing.

- Megan Dukett mentioned that during Free 1st Wednesdays our attendance varied from an average of 5-15 most Wednesdays.
- Brent Walker: Saturdays are more appealing for Families than Wednesdays and would be a better test for admission number increases. Suggest that we try and offer free admission on a Saturday moving forward.
- Chair Montes asked about when the next budget would be developed
- Karen Horner said the 1st Quarter Report was going to be addressed in the next BOS meeting, and that next fiscal years budget process begins in the Spring and is determined by June 2020.
- Roger Kreuger: Posing a question to the group: What is the real metric for the Museum visitation or revenue generating dollars from admission?
- Chair Montes: Is there a motion?
- Roger Krueger: I think we should pursue Free Admission on Saturdays as well and have staff look at improving donation collection box and signage to help.
- All MAB agreed to take to the BOS a motion to change 1st Wednesday Free Admission to Saturdays Free Admission.
- Greta Kanne: I would suggest signage that said "Did you love your Visit? Donations and Support of Museum Programs is appreciated"
- Roger Krueger: Is there efforts to grow volunteers to help with covering the admission desk?
- Karen Horner: We are working toward that effort to save staff time from the reception duties.
- Jim Eddie: Guest Service at reception is really important to making the visitors feel welcomed and to help them orient or tour the site. That first impression can also lead to people wanting to donate money.
- Lois Lockart: Museum is so important for learning. The next generation needs to learn to be more grateful in terms of being stewards and having a Museum. We are lucky to have this as a place of learning.
- Karen Horner: Per the direction of the MAB board I will propose to the BOS to change 1st Wednesday Free Admission to Every Saturday Free Admission. Our staff will monitor attendance and donation income to report to the MAB.

7. New Business:

- Chair Montes: Roots MOU will be moved to January because Troy James, Roots of Motive Power is not present with a draft MOU.
- Chair Montes: Every November the MAB must elect officers. Is there any nominess.
- Brent Walker: I nominate Roger Krueger for Chair.
- Greta Kanne: I second the nomination.
- Chair Montes: All in Favor?

- MAB Votes all in favor for Roger Krueger to be Chair in 2020.
- Roger Krueger: I nominate Brent Walker as Vice Chair.
- Greta Kanne: I second the Motion
- Chair Montes: All in favor?
- MAB Votes all in favor for Brent Walker to be Vice Chair in 2020.
- Chair Montes: Do we have any changes that we want to be made to the Bylaws?
- Roger Krueger: I would like to have the most recent bylaws for the next MAB meeting in January for MAB to review and discuss for changes.
- Karen Horner: Our staff will include this in the next packet. We will confirm if the 2011 version is the most recent version of the bylaws.
- Chair Montes: Let's discuss the Friends Group item.
- Brent Walker: I would be willing to get the Friends Group formed and developed but need guidance in terms of taxes and how to get this going. It would be nice to have someone to talk to and get advice.
- Roger Krueger: Tax element is 40 pages and has to be filed yearly. It is important to have a good understanding of the responsibilities of starting a 501c3b.
- Chair Montes: We should invite a Friends of the Library group representative to the next meeting and ask them to provide advice input in this process.
- Karen Horner: I can invite the Fort Bragg Friends of the Library group to talk with us.
- Greta Kanne: I would like to propose we talk about perhaps having Museum art work at the City of Willits chambers like the BOS chambers.
- Karen Horner: I will talk with our Curator, and look into that request.
- Brent Walker: I want to voice my concern over security in the Long Gallery especially in concern to priceless art work.
- Megan Dukett: All Events have a staff person present, and our current security and alarm systems are active in that space. I will talk with staff to monitor and do walk throughs during the day to add an element of security.

8. Next meeting: 1/13/20 at 10 a.m. at the Mendocino County Museum "Wonacott" Room, 400 E. Commercial St. Willits, CA 95490. Museum Main Line: (707) 459-2736.

9. Meeting Adjourned: 11:41 a.m.