

Oakland County Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

7:00 pm, November 14, 2022

BOC Conference Room

- I. Meeting called to order at 7:05. Roll call: Jim Craft, Dave Decker, Stephanie Suszek, Rosie Richardson, Jerry Murphy, and guest Ruth DuFresne. Absent: Richard Stamps, Carol Egbo, Dave Walls.
- II. Approve Minutes from October 10, 2022 – meeting happened without a quorum, so we will vote to approve meeting “notes” – motion made by Jerry, seconded Dave Decker. Meeting notes approved.
- III. Additions to the agenda – none
- IV. Communication: Approval of grant for Birmingham Historical Museum – Rosie: Request for \$14,000-plus in grant funding from Michigan Humanities Council will be decided by vote on November 14. This was a combined request from Birmingham, Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society, and other Oakland County local historical organizations. OCHC is supportive of these groups’ efforts to seek funding for the "Underground Railroad and Abolition Movement in Southern Oakland County" project, which includes a traveling exhibit and website.
- V. Old Business - Follow-up items
 - a. Membership
 1. Steph and Rosie renew membership, the current term expires in Dec. 2022. Rosie has submitted; Steph needs to submit her renewal
 2. Replacement for Melinda
 1. Ruth Dufresne will apply
 2. Ron Campbell is thinking of applying
 - b. Certificates of thanks to Melissa – need to follow up with Rich to find out if this has been done already
 - c. At-Risk properties - any update; no update on the Rochester school building; Ruth: The Rose Gilliam Building (built 1902) in Walled Lake, was the first commercial brick building built in Commerce Twp. Recently, a contractor working on the building made a modification that was outside of permit; the building has been stabilized, but going forward it could be a problem.
 - d. Dave Walls - contact info for Melissa Luginiski; need to get a hold of her regarding our OCHC Facebook credentials
 - e. “1857 Land ownership map”, (Hess map # 6) Clarkston library copy for high resolution images. Dave Wall’s brother to photograph. No update.
 - f. Dave Walls to look for quality copy of 1820 Cass proclamation to put in the County Executive office. Dave Decker has a digital version of the draft copy that is part of the collection at the Burton Library; the Burton also has put a high-quality version online that Dave W. will try to get for this purpose.
- VI. Committee reports
 - a. Website - Jim, Tec Dave, Stephanie – Steph needs the August agenda (Rosie to forward); Dave Decker: Walls’s set of lithos is ready to go up on website but current link goes to his personal box account (list of files) – could these go in the gallery instead, so that county is hosting them? **Dave Decker to follow up with**

recommendations and see if County has a problem with a redirect like this. We can start adding to the events calendar in March. We need to update the photo gallery to include more than just pictures of museums; can solicit local historical societies for their “top five” or similar; contemporary pics of successful preservation projects (like the Rochester Grain Elevator). We should publicize the website (oakgov.com/historic), ask local museums and historical societies to help publicize; ask County for a month-long banner to promote on oakgov.com main page; add a Contact Us form and set up an OCHC email account that we can use to receive inquiries, information, etc.

- b. Local History as a subset of American History - Jim, Stephanie, Rosie
 - Public Project – Poster – one is about ready to go (Arsenal of Democracy); we need frames, assemble, and deliver
 1. Funding – did it get approved? We think so!
 2. Libraries, Emagine, Meijer’s, malls – Jim reached out to TLN for libraries and will follow up Wednesday (goal of 30 posters in libraries); Emagine (5 theaters in the county; **Jim will follow up**); Meijer (20 stores in the county; we probably won’t hear back until the New Year); Malls – still need to reach out to mall managements
 3. Jim has started a migration to Michigan pre-Civil War poster; **Jim will share a first draft with group and Dave Decker will help develop.**
 4. Jerry wonders if history classrooms would like to have these posters, too – they wouldn’t have to be framed, either
 5. Goal of distributing posters after the first of the year (Jim, Jerry, Dave Decker, Rosie); goal of having two different posters ready to go (Arsenal of Democracy and 1820s-40s wave of Oakland County migration)
 - Schools Project - Power Point is a no-go; maybe a video file could be sent instead (although this is less interactive than a slide deck would be) or linked (hosted on OCHC website) – **Dave will create a video file** so we can test this out. Oakland ISD would like us to help connect teachers to primary sources that they can use with their curriculum. **Jim, Steph, Rosie to revisit request from Oakland ISD** and see what we can do to help them curate digital primary source collections.
- b. McMath Hulbert Observatory – Jim: McMath group has drawn in additional people to brainstorm and Jim to moderate on January 25; participants from Cincinnati Observatory, Detroit Observatory, Mike McGuinness, Ron Campbell, someone from Cranbrook, Oakland County Parks (Chris Ward); hoping to involve the MacGregor Foundation
- c. Finding Guide - Tec Dave and Dave still working on it
 - historic house research guide - Carol, Tec Dave are working on it. Dave has given several talks on using Oakland County Gateway to research properties, and has essentially built this guide in preparing for these talks

- d. African American history - Rosie, Carol
 - Freedom Seekers in Oakland County (see above grant application update)
- e. Essay contest and time capsule- Rosie – has drafted letters to schools for both of these projects, including projected dates for essay contest and four \$100 awards
- f. History Coalition – no update; there will be a meeting soon. Coalition needs a mission/core purpose now that bicentennial is over. What can members of this group help each other do? Members/potential members should be given the chance to say what *they* want the Coalition’s mission to be. One thing to rally around: millage – how do we get people behind an Oakland County history millage?

Who “owns” the Coalition? It usually falls under the umbrella of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society, but is that the right place? Should OCHC be the “owner” of this group, as it fits within our charter? Probably yes! OCHC can supply Coalition members with finding guides from all over the county, an online calendar to advertise their upcoming events. Maybe a monthly theme/topics (historic map collection, how to write a strategic plan, grant writing, collections management and artifact/archival preservation, etc.) that guide the discussion and facilitate collaboration. Goal of reactivating and promoting it this winter. **Send Dave some topic ideas, promotion ideas, etc. Can we (OCHC) get a line item budget for money we can award to historical societies seeking resources.**

- VII. New Business – no new business.
- VIII. Review of Action Items from Meeting –Dave to reach out re: Facebook credentials, submit some ideas about the Contact Us and Gallery parts of website, will create a video demo of Jim’s Arsenal Power Point, and send Coalition info to OCHC. Jim will meet with Steph and Rosie re: Oakland ISD. Steph to update website meeting minutes and agendas.
- IX. Next meeting: December 12, 2022
 - a. Pot Luck – Richard to let us know what types of dishes to bring
 - b. Time: 5:30pm. Significant others invited. Agenda?

Motion to Adjourn made by Rosie, Seconded by Jerry. Meeting adjourned at 8:59pm.