

RIDGE HOUSE MUSEUM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

February 20, 2018

7:00PM

Ridgetown Arena

Present: Frank Vink Marlee Robinson Bob Wilson
Gord Williams Clr. VanDamme

Regrets: Dan Nicol

Staff: Stephanie Saunders Ann Robinson Meredith Cadotte

Guests: Matt Gibson

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by the chair at 7:10PM. A round table introduction took place.
2. **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest or Pecuniary Interest:** None.
3. **Election of 2018 Advisory Committee Chair:** Meredith explained the role of the chair. Bob nominated Marlee. **Motion #1** Moved by Clr. VanDamme, seconded by Gord that Marlee be re-elected as chair. **Motion Carried.**
4. **Review and Approval of Minutes from November 14, 2017:** **Motion #2** Moved by Clr. VanDamme, seconded by Gord that the minutes of the November 14, 2017 Ridge House Museum Advisory Committee meeting be approved as presented. **Motion Carried.**
5. **Chair's Report:** **Motion #3** Moved by Clr. VanDamme, seconded by Bob that the chair's report be received. . **Motion Carried.**
6. **Curator's Report:** Clr. VanDamme asked about the difference between paying and non-paying visitors. Stephanie explained that drop-in visitors or visitors for free programming are counted as non-paying, while visitors who participate in ticketed events or paid tours are counted as paying visitors. Marlee inquired about how attendance is counted by staff. Ann explained that a manual tick sheet is used for everyday visitation and clickers are used for events. Marlee asked if volunteers could be used to count attendance. Ann indicated that a review of the process would take place. Marlee asked that more information be provided about exhibits (e.g. concept, highlights). Stephanie will provide hyperlinks to the exhibit media releases with the curator's report. Clr. VanDamme wondered why the kitchen porch, fence repair & replacement, and front porch painting were not included in the maintenance section. Stephanie explained that the intent of the report is to record activity that has already taken place.
7. **Financial Reports:** Clr. VanDamme asked about the miscellaneous grant and maintenance lines. Stephanie explained that these are no longer used but remain on the report for several years before they can be removed. Marlee asked how information about where donations come from can be found. Ann explained that this information is not available on the report received by the committee

and that recognizing donors (but not amounts donated) is part of the ongoing marketing planning process.

8. 2018 Potential Projects

- a. **Strawberry Social:** Ann explained that it is staff's recommendation not to proceed with the Strawberry Social as a better return on investment can be attained through investing in programming to get visitors into the museum on a regular basis rather than a one-day event. Marlee and Clr. VanDamme explained the importance of the community-building aspect of the event and expressed their desire for it to continue.
- b. **Seniors' Days:** Marlee explained the concept of Seniors' Days to be held on the second Wednesday of every month. Marlee will provide information in advance to Stephanie regarding speakers and donations of refreshments. **Motion #4** Moved by Gord, seconded by Bob that the Seniors' Days continue for 2018. **Motion Carried.**
- c. **Halloween Trick or Treat and Exhibition:** Marlee would like to see the trick-or-treat event recur in 2018 with the addition of a special well-promoted Halloween exhibit so more people actually experience the museum. **Motion #5** Moved by Clr. VanDamme, seconded by Gord that staff investigate the feasibility of this request. **Motion Carried.**
- d. **Christmas Exhibition:** Marlee would like a Christmas exhibit installed for December 2018. **Motion #6** Moved by Clr. VanDamme, seconded by Frank that staff investigate the feasibility of this request. **Motion Carried.**
- e. **Museum Garden Project:** Marlee explained that students at Ridgetown District High School are currently researching Victorian gardens and creating proposals for a 19th century garden at the Museum. Marlee would like to have these proposals presented to staff and the committee members when completed. Marlee asked that staff deal with whatever process is required so that when students are ready to do presentations in March, there are no bureaucratic roadblocks. The proposals could then be assessed and implemented. The Ridgetown Horticultural Society (RHS) has agreed to fund up to a maximum of \$400.00 so municipal funds are not required. Marlee indicated that funds from RHS have been used in the past to buy plants for the museum as well as to decorate the porch.
Stephanie indicated that without knowing the details of an approved project staff cannot take action. She also expressed concern about the resources required for ongoing maintenance of a Victorian garden. The committee will review the options and choose their preferred garden proposal. Administration will then need time to vet the preferred proposal from a budget and maintenance perspective.
- f. **Museums Bike Trail:** Marlee has taken on a trails project with the approval of Jeff Bray, Manager of Parks and Open Spaces, and Genevieve Champagne, Active Transportation and Special Events Coordinator, to create a museum trail within Chatham-Kent. This museum trail would be linked with Ontario by Bike; Marlee has registered the Ridge House Museum with this program. The museum is in

the unique position of having a bicycle repair facility (Home Hardware) just down the road. This update was for information sharing only as this is not a Ridge House Museum project.

- g. **URL Project:** Marlee and Gord described an ongoing project involving making historic information about local buildings available on the web. Marlee indicated that this is a stand-alone project and this update was for information sharing only as this is not a Ridge House Museum project.
9. **Counting Attendance:** Previously discussed.
10. **2018 Exhibitions:** Previously discussed.
11. **Committee Vacancies:** Meredith explained that since the committee meets the requirements for a minimum number of members and has four or less meetings left this year, filling vacancies on the committee will remain on hold until applications for all of our Committees of Council are prepared in September for the new term of Council.
12. **Promotion – Posters and Press Releases:** Previously discussed.
13. **Collaboration with Chatham Museum / Milner House:** Marlee suggested that programming ideas could be shared between the sites.
14. **Planning for kitchen porch, fence repair & replacement, and front porch painting:** Previously discussed.
15. **New and Non-Agenda Business:** Marlee would like staff to consider participating on-site at Ridgetown's Art in the Park on the last Sunday in July. **Motion #7** Moved by Clr. VanDamme, seconded by Bob that staff investigate the feasibility of this request.
Motion Carried.
Ann asked that the committee prioritize their requests. Marlee indicated that the Strawberry Social, Seniors' Open Houses, Halloween event and exhibit, Christmas exhibit, and garden project were priorities.
16. **Date and Time of Next meeting:** Tuesday, February 20, 2018, 7PM, Ridge House Museum
17. **Adjournment: Motion #8:** Moved by Gord, seconded by Bob, that the meeting be adjourned. **Motion Carried.** The meeting was adjourned at 9:25PM.