

# Ridge House Museum Advisory Committee

## Minutes

Tuesday, Sep 24, 2019

7:00 PM

### Call to Order

Present: Cl. John Wright  
Sara Mervin  
Edythe Marlatt  
Frank Vink  
Bob Wilson  
Stephanie Saunders, Curator, Chatham-Kent Museum  
Blair Newby, Assistant Curator, CKM/Curator, RHM  
Dr. April Rietdyk, General Manager, Community Human Services  
Deborah Furlan, Admin Assistant, Arts and Culture

Regrets: Heather Slater, Manager, Arts and Culture

#### 1. **Provision for Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

No member of the Board declared a pecuniary interest on any matter on the open session agenda.

#### 2. **Election of the Chair**

Ms. Saunders acknowledged receipt of a resignation, Chairperson Mindy Bowls.

Mr. Vink nominated Ms. Mervin; Ms. Mervin accepted.

Committee voted, "That Sara Mervin be appointed chair for the remainder of the calendar year be approved."

Unanimously in favour. Ms. Mervin acclaimed.

#### 3. **Introduction – Blair Newby, Assistant Curator, CKM/Curator, RHM**

Ms. Newby has 14 years of experience in the museum field. Ms. Newby has Bachelors in History from the University of Waterloo and Masters in Museum Studies from the University of Toronto.

Ms. Newby has previously worked at the Buxton National Historic Site and Museum as a summer student for six years and at the Chatham-Kent Black History society for five years as the Executive Director.

More recently, Ms. Newby worked in the Special Events department at Black Creek Pioneer Village coordinating events for four years and at the Multicultural History Society of Ontario as the Outreach officer for 3 three years.

Ms. Newby is truly excited about this opportunity and what the year ahead has in store for her as the Curator of Ridge House Museum.

The committee welcomed Ms. Newby.

**4. Minutes of the Meeting of May 29, 2019**

Ms. Marlatt moved, seconded by Cl. Wright.

**“That the minutes of the May 29, 2019 Ridge House Museum Advisory Committee meeting be approved.”**

The Chair put the Motion.

**Motion Carried**

**5. Business Arising from the Minutes**

None

**6. Education and Training**

None

**7. New Business**

**A. Items for deaccessioning**

None

## **B. Information Reports to be received**

### a) Curator's Report, by Ms. Newby, Curator

#### *Attendance Summary:*

- May
  - Paying: 0
  - Non-paying: 42
  - School: 0
  - Total: 42
- June
  - Paying: 6
  - Non-paying: 74
  - School: 0
  - Total: 80
- July
  - Paying: 0
  - Non-paying: 115
  - School: 0
  - Total: 115
- August
  - Paying: 0
  - Non-paying: 135
  - School: 0
  - Total: 135

#### *Web Visitors:*

- May:
  - Municipal website:
  - Facebook users/clicks: 1609/79
- June:
  - Municipal website:
  - Facebook users/clicks: 0/0
- July:
  - Municipal website:
  - Facebook users/clicks: 592/64
- August:
  - Municipal website:
  - Facebook users/clicks: 731/15

#### *Staff Development:*

- Paige Alexander and Courtney Pinsonneault have been hired as Museum Ambassadors.

- Blair Newby has been hired on contract as the Assistant Curator, CKM/Curator, RHM.
- Keirsten Smith has resigned from her position as a Museum Ambassador.
- Adele Steele, Kelsie VanDeVelde, and Lauren McKerrall have completed their contracts as Historical Interpreters (summer students).

*Maintenance:*

- Acquiring quotes and working with the heritage committee to complete lifecycle projects.

*Curatorial Activities:*

- 23 artifacts have been accessioned.
- Three research requests were received and two completed from May to August.

*Conservation:*

- The table top steeple clock and Regulator wall clock are back in working order.

*Exhibitions:*

- Discovery Den featured the theme of “On Your Mark, Get Set, Go!” in June, “Explore the Night” in July, and “Branch Out!” in August.

*Interpretation/Education:*

- Eleven children created outdoor tic tac toe games at the Creative Kids program on June 8.
- The RHM DIY Den for June, July and August were cancelled due to low enrollment.
- Creative Kids on July 6 to make galaxy play dough had eight registrations.
- Eight children participated in making a natural loom as part of the Creative Kids workshop in August.

*Marketing/Public Relations:*

- Posters, web postings, signage, and social media promotion were undertaken as required for all museum programming and exhibits.

*Governance/Policy:*

- No update.

*Items of Interest:*

- Upcoming Events:
  - Trick-or-Treat, October 31, 5-8PM
  - RHM Adult Gingerbread Workshop, December 5, 7-9PM
  - RHM Christmas Open House, December 14 (tentative), after Christmas Parade

**Committee discussion re: Curator Report**

The Committee asked whether Arts and Culture uses Instagram. Ms. Saunders replied that since the restructuring, staff are discussing use of Instagram either as a collective or as a museum, gallery, theatre. Museum staff to keep committee posted on decision re: use of Instagram.

Committee pleased new back door has assisted in maintaining keeping critters out.

Mr. Vink has been itemizing bits and pieces left at Ridgetown Municipal Centre (previously borrowed by an old curator). The four categories of items are (1) John Blue – 1840s; (2) Beatties (Highgate); (3) John L Smith (Morpeth) – innkeeper; letter about cast iron stove; and (4) Robert Grey (William Grey's brother)

Cl. Wright asked if Ridge House participates in the Golden Pumpkin event (trick or treating for little ones before dark). Museum staff will look into whether or not the Ridge House can get involved in the Golden Pumpkin. Museum staff to ask the Gingerbread Workshop patrons what would get adults out in the summer.

Cl. Wright moved, seconded by Ms. Marlatt:

**“That the Curator’s Report be accepted as information.”**

The Chair put the Motion.

**Motion Carried**

**8. Non-Agenda Items**

Cl. Wright was interested whether Ridge House has participated or would participate in the Kiwanis House Tour led by the Kiwanis Club of Ridgetown. Ms. Saunders replied that the Ridge House has not participated in the past but could explore participation in the future. Committee ideas to have costumed interpreters and to keep Discovery Den closed should the museum participate. Cl. Wright to get the MaryAnn Hawthorn's information to Ms. Saunders.

Mr. Vink requested removal of the mulberry tree as it is over-grown.

**9. Time, Date and Place for the Next Meeting of the Board**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held January 28, 2020 at the Ridge House Museum at 7:00 pm. Additional meetings in 2020 are May 26 and September 22.

**10. Adjournment**

Moved by Mr.Vink that the meeting be adjourned at 7:32 pm.