

November 17, 2012

Franklin County Historical Society Planning Meeting

Present: Darwin Meyer, Berry Johnson, Charlie Brown, Myron Card, Reg and Jane Morton, Larry Meyer, Leon Pralle, Deb Brown, Keri Rojas

Darwin:

- We have been operating without bylaws.
- We have 31 members on our board.
- We need 50% plus one to make quorum.
- Introduced Dr. Stewart and reviewed her resume.
- PhD in Historic Textiles
- Discussed how we receive and dispose of items.

Dr. Stewart:

- Gave her background and experience – she works with smaller organizations and helps them grow
- 1974 original articles of incorporation were filed, 3 amendments have been added
- Bylaws tell you how to run meetings, something to fall back in disagreements – and we don't have any
- we will need to have them – in 1974 we did not have them
- need a formal collections policy

Discussion:

- People who work with the museum make the collections decision and never come to the board
- Provides you with clear rules on acceptance
- We do have a legal form for transfer of ownership
- We need to have a way to keep track of those items given
- We'd have to prove ownership and we do have past perfect software and every item does have an item assigned
- Should be some catalog training in the future and how to use the past perfect software

Other issues to take a look at first before moving forward:

- Size of board
- Amendment in 1984 added representative from each township
- We need 17 to make quorum
- County provides funds, and could come back and say we are not conducting business correctly and could withdraw funds
- IRS could come after us as well
- We would have to create an amendment to change this and would require  $\frac{3}{4}$  of our existing board
- Today's planning session does not have a quorum, but she can show us what to do and we have to have a vote to go forward with quorum
- Our board is more than twice the size it should be to be functional
- Harriman Nielsen is a splinter group but technically should be part of the board
- We need to take a work product back to the board that can be voted on – like bylaws, amendments, etc.

- Reg suggested we set up board first
- Charlie and Keri both said we need to do something today
- Melissa: we have to do something to get the vote, by proxy or by mail
- Need: amendment to articles, bylaw template, consideration of your mission statement

Board approved mission statement: needed because we do not have one: beginning was Franklin County Historical Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving historical buildings, locations, and memorabilia of citizens within Franklin County for the betterment of the community and for passing our history to the next generation.

- Larry used this to get a new roof for REA
- Also need value and vision statement
- We do have articles of incorporation
- Need bylaws
- We do have a financial account system
- Filed 501© 3 policy
- Collections policy
- SWOT analysis

**Mission statement:**

**FCHS is dedicated to preserving, sharing and honoring the history of Franklin County for present and future generations.**

Must include this (after it is voted on by the board) in all areas of communication.

**A vision should be:**

**What you see your component of the FCHS will be in the future.  
We will ask each committee to develop their own.**

**A value statement should be:**

**The things you hold valuable to the organization**

Amending articles to create a more manageable sized board:

- Membership votes at the annual meeting for the officers and the board. This is in the articles and we do this.
- Amend everything and restate them: decided to cover some basic questions

Break

Covered some basic questions about the articles

1. Official name and location
2. Mission statement
3. Composition of the governing body

4. membership – incorporators and members paying dues and paid jan 1 and life membership dues to be determined at annual meeting
5. corporate powers
6. corporation term – shall continue for 50 years—we have 12 years until we are no longer an entity
7. Officers and how elected --- voting or non voting membership, which do we want? Should we have a nominating committee?

Does it say  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the board or members to amend the articles?

- Charlie: membership should elect the board by yeah or nay to a slate at annual meeting (no number required)
- Directors elect their own officers
- Articles amended by  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority of board
  
- Make this a public society and paid dues make them a member

### **How many board members do we want?**

4 rural quadrants, 9 at large  
quorum would be 7

how do you fill vacancies:  
by appointment of board vote

term limits:  
none

annual meeting:  
keep the same  
standard quorum

how many meetings:  
4x year

amendment :  
need  $\frac{3}{4}$  of board to pass

must get the articles passed, then we can pass the bylaws

next vote on the collections policy:

- scope of collections – what do you want to collect
- acquisitions procedure – who decides and how records are kept
- care and preservation – how cared for and used
- loans and public access – who can borrow items

- deaccession – how to dispose of unwanted items

Melissa to plug in a template to use for collections policy and we will review/vote

When deciding on the new board:

- Discuss among those that normally show up
- Who wants to do what?
- Propose in email/letter to all the board members
- Never have a quorum, difficult to get together, here is a proposal for our solution
- Requires a meeting of the board membership to elect/select those people

Get the draft, write an article for the Chronicle and hold a meeting of the membership to talk about it and then vote by the existing board

Berry – take articles and publish in newsletter and paper, hold a membership meeting and get new board

New board then works on bylaws

## **PART TWO**

Strategic plans include

- General goals with specific objectives
- List of action steps to reach each objective
- Delegated responsibility for each step
- Establish time frame for each step
- Staff and financial resources necessary
- Measure what you did

SWOT Analysis

Strengths =

- Working committees
- Size of collection
- Great properties
- Open membership
- Good storytellers – we know our story
- Very committed core group of volunteers

Weakness=

- Membership size
- No professional staff
- Aging membership
- Lack of community awareness
- No educational programming or events/activities
- Financial resources
- Running out of room
- Dispersed locations

Opportunity=

- Space to tell a story (REA)
- Harriman-Nielsen acreage to consolidate museum and machinery collection
- REA Plant
- New ways to tell our story
- 100 year old immigration story (Harriman Nielsen and letters)
- Admiral Leahy along with Algona/Eldora POW and Sullivan Brothers
- Old Stone House/Maysville/REA
- 75 years of REA Plant

Threats =

- Aging population/aging out
- Locations and maintenance of individual sites
- Maintaining a collection that is pertinent to a new generation
- Fear of technology
- Deterioration of collections
- Unable to have interactive exhibits
- Lack of emotional storytelling in our displays/exhibits

(keep one for original, and keep one for educational use-handled)

### **Finances**

Resources limited

Operating Budget is \$23,000 for normal yearly activities

### **Facilities**

Machinery exhibition hall/space

Space for museum

### **Collections**

Space for museum

### **Programming**

-None-

no unified vision

no new membership drive

Charlie: machinery hall – s/b with museum – and machinery should be a niche market

What kind of museum do we intend to be?

What about the land for sale where Millwright was at?

What about the Harriman Nielsen north end?

**Assignment:**

- We need to identify site
  - Determine from fairboard what they will pay for the building
  - What kind of capital campaign would go along with building a new museum?
  - We want a new museum – need to discuss possible design, financing
1. a capital campaign to build a new museum and machinery hall on property we own
    - a. takes care of space, machinery, and collection care
  2. we need to decide what story we want to tell/vision
    - a. what about taking a chronological approach to our exhibits
    - b. the story of land, the story of people, of industry, of education, of culture
    - c. are we telling the story of people of Franklin County
  3. our collection is one of our strategic issues
    - a. can't show it properly, can't care for it, can't exhibit it because of space and can't tell the story because no one to research it
    - b. how will we handle deaccession?

**List of stories we want to tell:**

Immigration and settling

Agriculture and small farming

Rural electricity

Railroads creating communities

Industry – maytag, hemp plant

1800's

settled

civil war

railroads

1900s

world wars

CCC – Beeds Lake

Ferris Nursery

2<sup>nd</sup> wave of immigrant population

**What are the big ideas we want to have in our strategic plan?**

- Organizational ineffectiveness
  - Reorganizing the board – addressed today
  - Delegation of responsibilities
  - Each board member is a member of a committee/energize the committees
  - Determine vision
- Lack of museum and display space
  - Build new building
  - Paring down our current collection
  - Offsite storage options for not just machinery, but all collections
  - Build new building w/storage room for collections from main museum

- Lack of funding that allows growth
  - Membership drive – revitalize and get new members
  - Capital drive/campaign
  - Endowments
  - Programming
  - Grants
  - City/county funding
- Visibility and awareness– including marketing, networking, getting the word out
  - Events
  - Challenge every board member to bring in a new member and a new donation every year
  - Multimedia

**New museum spaces:**

- Exhibit space for small and large items
- Ofc/admin space
- Research library
- Education – conference room, Amphitheatre, presentation hall (or lobby space for all of it)
- We could work with a local architect and bring in a museum specialist to consult with the local guy
  - At least 3 million to build this
  - Who in Iowa has done this lately? Where did they get the money?

**Make a list of all of the major issues**

Think in large general terms like financial stability, collections care, future exhibition and programing

Determine if they are really strategic

What are the consequences if the issue is not addressed

If there are no major consequences – the issue is not strategic

Organize the issues from highest to lowest priority

**Timeline:**

Get restated articles and bylaws and collection process done by Dr. Stewart in a months time

This group will look at it before the January board meeting and figure out how to present it to the full board