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**Niagara Historical Society**

**128TH Annual General Meeting**

**Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 6:06 pm**

**MINUTES**

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**Our Vision**: ***A museum with expanded experiences that connect and engage people with the past, being the heritage champion for ALL who value Niagara-on-the-Lake, its history and culture.***

1. Welcome and confirmation of a quorum - **Mona Babin** 
   1. Total attendance was 15 members including 4 Directors.
   2. Staff present: Sarah Kaufman (Managing Director) and Amy Klassen (Director of Finance & Marketing)
      1. This fell just below a quorum.
      2. The bylaws allow for a motion from the Executive to accept the attendance as a quorum.

**Motion (Mona Babin, Alex Topps)**

**To accept those present as a quorum.**

**Passed.**

1. Approval of the Minutes of the 127th Annual General Meeting - **Mona Babin**

**Motion (Alex Topps, John Sayers)**

**To approve the minutes of the 127th Annual General Meeting of October 13, 2022.**

**Passed**

1. President's Report - **Mona Babin**

This past year has been very exciting and productive. I would like to thank all Board Directors for their enthusiasm, dedication, and hard work (Alex Topps, Ted Rumble, Sandra Aversa, George Webber, Paul Harber, Jim McArthur, Tim Johnson, Stewart Hall, Ben Buholtz, Laurie Harley, and Councilor Nick Ruller).

At the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum, we are very fortunate to have the hardest working and most productive staff. Led by Managing Director and Curator Sarah Kaufman, our full-time team includes Amy Klassen, Shawna Butts, and Barbara Worthy. Thank you for making this organization better every day.

**Key Accomplishments**

**Community**

* Sarah Kaufman was elected to the Board of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce, and most recently appointed Treasurer. Congratulations Sarah. And I know her expertise is valued in the industry which is why she was awarded top 40 under 40 this year.
* Our Tiny Museum was present at several events in town and provided residents, guests, and tourists a quick outlook of what we have to offer.
* We continue to be member focused and I hope you attended one of our many events, including Band in the Barn and the Heritage Garden Party.
* As was announced recently, we are thrilled and fortunate to have Sean Simpson as the campaign chair for our expansion project. We are very excited about the future of the museum. If you want to chat about our project, please approach Sarah, myself, or any member of the board. We’d love to tell you all about it.

**Outgoing Board members**

A few board members are leaving this month. Serving on the Board is an honour for all board members.

First, I would like to thank Ted Rumble. Ted joined the board 6 years ago and served as Secretary for a total of 4 years, Treasurer for one year, and Director at large for one year. He took his role very seriously and spent countless hours writing, and editing minutes, researching, and actively participating in all meetings. He took over as lead for our Famous and Infamous program, is part of the Membership & Operational Fundraising Committee, the Finance Committee, and has served on the Executive for years. Ted also took the helm to ensure the Ordnance Boundary Stones were preserved and represented the museum with presentations to council. He will be missed both on the Board and the Executive, but we are grateful that he will continue to be involved as a volunteer.

I would like to thank Jim McArthur. Jim joined the board 5 years ago and, as a Director at Large, participated in fundraising efforts and supported our events. You might have been fortunate enough to have your History in the Vineyard meal delivered by Jim! 2 years ago, Jim took over as Plant and Planning Manager and has been diligent in making sure our building was safe for our staff, volunteers, guests, and visitors. Jim leaves the board one year early due to work requirements. Thanks, Jim, for your dedication and support. You will be missed.

I would like to thank George Webber for his 3 years on the board. George served as Vice-President and was Chair of the Governance Committee as well as the Membership & Operational Fundraising Committee. George’s lent his expertise in human resources throughout his tenure. He will continue to volunteer with the Museum, and we are grateful for that. You will be missed at our regular meetings.

I would like to thank Laurie Harley for her time on the Board. Laurie joined our team last year and was the board liaison for our inaugural Heritage Garden Party this past August. Thank you so much for your time and expertise. Laurie leaves the board to focus on other opportunities.

I welcome our new board members Paul Mace, Charley Scrivener, Linda Fritz, and Pauline Miller and look forward to working with you.

Personally, I am grateful for your continued support and look forward to seeing you at the museum or one of our upcoming events.

1. Town Representative Report - **Nick Ruller** 
   1. No questions.
2. Finance and Administration Committee Report and 2024 Budget presentation - **Amy Klassen** for Sandra Aversa
   1. See report.
   2. 2023 Financial Statements highlights.
      1. Ran a surplus last year which went to the capital campaign.
      2. Project based grants did well last year.
      3. Also received the last of COVID-19 funding which went to operations.
      4. Anticipate small surplus this year.
      5. Financial Statements now separate Operational and Capital funds.
   3. 2024 Projections
      1. Budget passed by board.
         1. Will ask town for 6% increase in annual grant.
      2. Three fundraising events are planned for this year, including polo, the Heritage Garden Party, Band in the Barn.
      3. We are hoping to hire a third student this summer funded by a Young Canada Works grant.
      4. Building maintenance costs are increasing, budgeting more in 2023.

**MOTION: (Mona Babin, John Sayers)**

**To appoint Bridgman & Durksen as our auditors for the 2023 fiscal year.**

**Passed**

1. Membership & Operational Fundraising Committee Report - **Mona Babin** 
   1. As reported.
   2. No questions.
2. Physical Plant and Planning Committee Report - **Jim McArthur** 
   1. As reported.
3. Publications & Communications Report - **John Sayers** 
   1. As reported.
4. Governance Committee Report - **George Webber** 
   1. As reported.
5. Capital Project – Planning & Logistics Committee - **Alex Topps** 
   1. As reported.
   2. Ted Rumble asked when construction is likely to start.
      1. Alex Topps replied that we are expecting to break ground summer 2024.
      2. Construction is likely to take 18 months.
      3. Entirely dependent upon success of our fundraising.
   3. David Murray asked what percentage of the anticipated costs will be raised before breaking ground.
      1. Alex Topps replied that we expect 80% donated or pledged before breaking ground.
      2. Sarah Kaufman commented that the Board will not authorize breaking ground until adequate funds are in place.
      3. Alex Topps said that we cannot go to tender until full financing is available to complete the project including donations, pledges, and financing.
      4. Mona Babin pointed out that the total costs include hard and soft costs.
6. Capital Fundraising Committee **Sarah Kaufman/Peter McKinley** 
   1. Canada Cultural Spaces grant application on hold.
      1. They wanted to see a greater commitment from the Town.
      2. They also wanted to see the fundraising campaign further along.
      3. We will eventually re-submit.
   2. Town contribution
      1. The museum grant comes from the new Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT)
      2. The MAT committee has just begun meeting, so we will hold off applying for an increased grant until they are up and running.
      3. Lorraine Joyner asked how much from town has committed so far.
         1. Sarah Kaufman answered - $500,000, ($100,000 per year for 5 years).
7. Managing Director's Report/Collections Report - **Sarah Kaufman** 
   1. See report.
   2. Highlights:
      1. Our current exhibition *Bound and Determined* has been extremely popular after a very successful opening.
         1. Shows that presentations of black history are very well received.
      2. This fall our new exhibit will focus on portraiture (portraits to selfies).
      3. Our virtual exhibits have also been popular.
         1. Recently added a new exhibit, *Hitting Rock Bottom,* dealing with the history of the fishing industry in Niagara.
      4. Museum attendance has bounced back to pre-Covid numbers.
      5. Tiny museum had its first full year, funded by a Trillium Foundation grant.
         1. Over 3000 visitors so far this year.
      6. Volunteers
         1. Thanked over 100 volunteers whose support is invaluable.
         2. Six volunteers were recognized with Ontario Volunteer Service Awards
            1. David Hemmings, Dick Coyne, Mona Babin, Richard Merrit, Ted Rumble, Ken Schander.
         3. Bus tours for volunteers to the Art Gallery of Ontario and to Dundurn Castle were popular.
      7. Building Maintenance
         1. We are hiring a part time maintenance coordinator to help with building maintenance, which has been done mainly by staff and uninsured volunteers up to now.
      8. Collections - 34 donors, 154 pieces donated.
      9. Research requests are increasing – 163 this year, similar to pre-Covid numbers.
      10. Digitization of collection progressing well. Members will eventually be able to access online.
      11. We continue in the role of Town Historian and are currently working on assisting the Municipal Heritage Committee (MHC) with heritage designation of properties.
      12. Municipal Heritage Committee
          1. Alex Topps is the Museum representative on the MHC.
          2. David Snelgrove, who also sits on the MHC, thanked the museum staff for ‘invaluable’ reference material helping with designation of heritage properties in town.
8. Report from the Nominations Committee - **David Hemmings** 
   1. We had twenty candidates this year to fill four vacancies on the Board.
   2. Thanked John Sayers and Lorraine Joyner for their work on the committee.
   3. New nominees – Linda Fritz, Paul Mace, Charley Scrivener, Pauline Miller
   4. New Board
      1. Executive
         1. Mona Babin – President
         2. Alex Topps – Vice President
         3. Sandra Aversa – Treasurer
         4. Paul Mace - Secretary
      2. Directors
         1. Ben Buholtz
         2. Pauline Miller
         3. Stewart Hall
         4. Paul Harber
         5. Tim Johnson
         6. Linda Fritz
         7. Charley Scrivener
      3. Council Representative – Nick Ruller
   5. Mona thanked Nick for his involvement and consistent help on the Board.

**MOTION: (David Hemmings, David Murray)**

**To accept the new slate of Directors for 2023/2024**

**Passed**

**MOTION: (Mona Babin, Alex Topps)**

**To accept the new slate for the 2023-2024 Nominating Committee**

The new slate is: David Hemmings (Chair), Lorraine Joyner, John Sayers, Ted Rumble, George Webber, Jim McArthur.

**Passed**

* 1. Mona thanked members of Nominating Committee and introduced new directors.

1. Adjournment

**MOTION: (Liz Surtees, Judith Sayers)**

**To adjourn the meeting.**

**Passed**

Meeting adjourned at ­­­­­­­­6:56 p.m.