

THE FRIENDS | ROYAL SASKATCHEWAN MUSEUM

**Friends of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, July 20, 6:00 pm
WebEx Online Meeting**

In Attendance:

2020-21 Board Members:

Nathaniel Day	Iuliia Khimchak
Katrina Ackerman	Harold Bryant
Andrea Johnson	Kevin Bassendowski
Joan Beisel	Carol Bachynski
Hun Lee	Jennifer Schwager
	Robert Vancise

Absent:

Jordan Archibald

RSM Members:

Robert Poulin (new Board Member)	Bernice Richard (new Board Member)
Peter Menzies (Executive Director RSM)	Ray Poulin (Head of Research and Collections)
Barb Neal	Jonathan Tremblay
Ida, Calvin & Abigail Sadowski	Margaret Skeel
Leah Zap	Colin Carbno
	Larry Hesterman

1. Call to Order by Nathaniel Day (President) at 6:05 p.m.
2. Video Conference Protocol
 - Nathaniel welcomed all guests attending, and thanked RSM members for their past support . Craig will be monitoring the chat box for inquiries/questions and will be handling any email issues. Please indicate your presence in the chat box.

3. Changes to and adoption of July 20, 2021 AGM Agenda

- Iuliia notes the governance committee update will be discussed prior to the election of new board members. The approval of the constitution will need to be considered as a separate item and is not just part of the governance committee update. It will be placed in under section 9 as a decision item.

MOTION to approve the amended 2021 AGM Agenda as presented.

Moved: Iuliia Khimchak, Seconded: Andrea Johnson

Motion Carried.

4. Introduction of all members present.

5. Review/Approval of September 16, 2020 AGM minutes

Correction: Item 7, b, ii – date range should read 2019-2020.

MOTION to approve the September 16, 2020 AGM corrected minutes.

Moved: Nathaniel Day, Seconded: Harold Bryant

Motion Carried.

6. FRSM President's Report – Nathaniel Day

- Nathaniel indicates the President's report was circulated in advance. Nathaniel thanks his fellow board members during a challenging year dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted our operations. We are looking forward to a return to normalcy. Matthew McGillis resigned from his position as acting executive director effective June 30 – we thank him for his work and service to the organization. The friends formed a sub-committee to search for a new executive director and after an extensive search, we welcome Craig Perrault as our new executive director.
- This year, the friends formed a communications committee to bring attention to the need to address the pending issues with the existing RSM building and annex. We saw good success with the committee – awareness was raised, including an article published in the Leader Post on February 5th. We also met with members of the Opposition to help bring public awareness to the issues.
- Board Member Robert Vancise is completing his sixth and last year – we would love to bring him back, but we are prevented by the term of our constitution. He was a great mentor to me and provided outstanding support to our Board. The Board has provided a token of appreciation to Robert.

- Thanks to all our volunteers. We are very fortunate have such passionate and dedicated people. Special thanks to the museum staff who do so much to share the story of our province's history. I am very inspired by their dedication and passion. As the outgoing President, it's been an honor to serve and I look forward to the year to come.

7. Royal Saskatchewan Museum Director's Report – Peter Menzies

- Peter notes he provided a written report in advance. COVID-19 impacted us -- for the first quarter of 2020-21, we essentially were all working from home, but we did do some online programming. I am proud of the team who spearheaded this work. We opened on July 17, 2020 for four days a week under 62 distinct conditions – this was reduced to three days a week in the fall except four on long weekends. Visitation was greatly reduced with only 25,000 visitors. Previous year had 175,00 visitors. We were unable to open the T-Rex facility in Eastend at all.
- The Boardroom was renovated this past year, and it is currently being used as an office and lunchroom. As of Labour Day, it will return to Boardroom use. We invested in a 3D printer which is an incredible asset for purposes such as re-creating exhibit pieces such as dinosaurs. This will be critical in the launch of the new Paleo gallery.
- The RSM staged a successful orange shirt day presentation with the aboriginal community and elders and we broadcast it throughout the province to 37 classrooms. We are the provincial museum, but our reach is sometimes challenged. This was a wonderful way to reach some of our communities that have been difficult to reach.
- We are starting installation on the new home exhibit and will launch it on Earth Day April 22, 2022. It will be both educational and attractive to the public.
- Research continued, although we could not get to the field. There is no shortage on the backlog of research work. Dr. Evelyn Siegfried retired -- she was important in maintaining our Aboriginal collections, something we are hoping to expand in the future. Dr. Glen Suitor delivered our work with respect to the seven songs for nature project. Cory Sheffield did work with identifying a new species of bee – he named the species after astronaut Colonel Chris Hadfield. This attracted national attention to our work, consistent with our efforts to raise attention for the RSM. Dr. Ryan McKellar received a \$180,000 grant to continue his work on fossils.
- We are working with SaskBuilds on the very outdated facility which houses our collections – we are now out of space for 11 of 18 collections. We currently must turn away collections that people wish to donate to us – we are hoping there will be increased support within the government to help us deal with the existing building issues.

- Staff did an excellent job adapting. On Saturday, we had 500 to 600 visitors which is our biggest total since February 2020. Priority is always safety for visitors and staff. Expect about 11,000 visitors in July, about half of a normal year. Sincere thanks to the friends for their support through the years.

Question Larry Hesterman: are there requests from other museums for display materials?

- There are some requests, but not many, because most places were shut down due to COVID. If other institutions have 3D printers, we can send them instructions to recreate an item.

Question Abigail Sadowski: Are we renovating or building a new building for RSM?

- Expansion, renovation of the annex or building a new building are options. There have always been plans to expand the current building but there has been some opposition from certain stakeholders.

Question Sadowski family: Could the annex be moved to a different location, such as the CBC building?

- The CBC building option was closed when the provincial archives went there. So the archives will always be growing, and they will consume that space. Sooner or later a decision must be made – the annex is a heritage building. The RSM is also a heritage building but additions may require less governance.
- One way to sell a new facility is having an enhanced public/interactive aspect. The price tag of the new Royal Alberta museum was \$375 million – it allowed a much greater and richer experience for First Nations collections. That would be part of our vision. We have built a cocoon within the site to protect our First Nations collection, but we need to have a more culturally acceptable approach. There are Treaty 4 and 6 objects held in Alberta which we would like to repatriate.

Question Abigail Sadowski: How are we going to get kids/young people back in RSM programming?

- We will have a discussion next month on public programming. We've been open nine days, so it's a process we are working through. People seem skilled at maintaining distance. The public is more likely to attend, the more secure they feel – the fewer people there are, the more people will want to come, which is a bit of an oxymoron. We will look in August at when we might relaunch public programming. If we have to adapt, then of course, we will.

Question Abigail Sadowski: If the gift shop had a virtual presence with curbside pickup, would this help increase sales?

- Peter defers to Craig on the question of the gift shop, but notes we did upgrade the website significantly.
- Craig indicated staff is small and since we buy in bulk, we need to be mindful as we leave COVID-19 in terms of what we are capable of doing and expectations. We need to be careful not to compare ourselves in terms of service delivery to someone like an Amazon, as there are staffing, ordering and timeline considerations. But it's definitely something we need to understand in terms of direction, limitations and possibilities, and these opportunities will be evaluated.

8. Executive Director's Report – Craig Perrault

- Will keep my report brief in recognition of my brief tenure in the role. I've spent my time meeting staff/stakeholders and gathering thoughts for the road ahead. I really want to commend Barb Neil and Matt McGillis on what they were able to do keeping the operation running. Thanks to all the Board members and the Friends of the RSM, as well as the members, sponsors and partners. It takes a joint effort and all these partners really helped the organization sustain and prosper during the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Question Abigail Sadowski: Dismayed to see the low numbers on the membership side. What do we see as a sustainable model to get people back in the museum?

- We need to build a strategic plan that will look at innovate fresh ways to recruit members. We want to sit down with the public and great users such as yourself. I look to trying to get that conversation started over the coming weeks and months.

9. Friends of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum Board of Directors Committee Reports

a. Audit and Finance Committee – Robert Vancise

- The workplan for 2020-21 was uneventful – we need to finalize a new operating agreement with the Museum. This will impact our policies.
- The Board has not yet approved the year-end financials. Audit and Finance Committee has reviewed and is recommending approval. We had an excess of \$190,000 but this was inflated due to government subsidies – there were \$110,000 in wage subsidies as well as the revenue from the Scotty sponsorship. Overall, the true loss was about \$20,000.
- Revenues in gift shop were down \$260,000. Significant decrease in expenses year over year partially due to the leaving of the previous executive director. There was also a decrease in gift shop expenses.
- Thank everyone for their fiscal responsibility. We have an overall liquid cash position of \$229,000 which is a healthy balance sheet to work with the RSM and the community. We fared well and it is a strong testament to the team.

MOTION to approve the Draft Financial Statements for 2020-2021 as presented.

**Moved: Robert Vancise, Seconded: Andrea Johnson
Motion Carried.**

MOTION to appoint the auditor, Dudley and Company.

**Moved: Robert Vancise, Seconded: Iuliia Khimchak
Motion Carried.**

b. Governance Committee – Iuliia Khimchak

- 2020-21 was very fruitful for the Governance Committee. We revamped the orientation for new directors. We also identified learning opportunities for Board Members.
- The big thing within our workplan was updating the constitution. The last time that happened was 2011. The new constitution will modernize the organization. Initial draft on the constitution was approved by the Board in April. Our focus was on bringing clarity. We added a Vice President’s role formally in the constitution – we also made a lot of changes to the section on the committees of the Board
- We have now an opportunity to create additional committees, such as the communications committee which was very successful. We also have done work to the objectives in the constitution – we are renewing the operational agreement with the Museum. If this results in any changes impacting the constitution, we will bring them back to the Board for approval.
- Special thanks to the committee to bring our constitution up to best practices and that something I am very proud of.
- Under section 5.3, there is an introductory sentence that is missing. I would propose the constitution be amended with the following introductory sentence: “The office of a Director shall be vacated upon the occurrence of any of the following events . . .”

MOTION to approve the amended new constitution as presented.

**Moved: Katrina Ackerman, Seconded: Nathaniel Day
Motion Carried.**

10. Election of new Board members:

- Iuliia noted the pending departure of two Board members, Robert Vancise and Katrina Ackerman and the process to identify the skills needed for the Board.

**MOTION that we accept and elect the proposed slate of new Board
Members: Bernice Richard, Michael Poulin, Joan Beisel and Jordan
Archibald**

**Moved: Iuilla Klimchak, Seconded Andrea Johnson
Motion Carried.**

**MOTION to extend Iuliaa Klimchak for a second three-year term on the
Board**

**Moved: Kevin Bassendowski, Seconded Andrea Johnson
Motion Carried**

- Nathaniel also recognizes the work and service of Katrina, a retiring Board member after three years of service.

11. Other Business

12. Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn Nathaniel Day. Seconded: Andrea Johnson at 7:16 p.m..

Minutes prepared by Ron Podbielski