

**Town of Normal
Children's Discovery Museum Foundation Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 12, 2019
12:00pm
Children's Discovery Museum Classroom (3rd floor)**

Present: Elise Albers, Samuel Gray, Ben Harmon, Terry Ogunleye, Paul Scharnett, Mitch Stebel, Sarah Sturgill, Rob Widmer

Staff: Beth Whisman, Amy Pitzer, Rachel Carpenter, Andrew Huhn, Sue Wang

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Ben Harmon at 12:05pm. (Gina Mandros was out ill). Welcome to new member Samuel Gray, lawyer with State Farm.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve minutes from September 10, 2019 meeting by Rob Widmer, seconded by Mitch Stebel. Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report:

Ms. Wang presented the financial report with a new format. She pointed out the Town/Foundation hopes to be reimbursed this coming year under the new administration for the grant that was approved under previous administrations. Terry Ogunleye moved to approve the report and was seconded by Mitch Stebel. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Committee Leadership - Ben Harmon presented that there are openings on the executive team as a new Vice Chair will be needed. Gina Mandros' term as chair will be expiring in March.

There are many committee positions open and Gina Mandros has presented a list of potential appointments. If someone is interested in changing or adding a committee assignment, please contact her by the end of the year.

Volunteer and Events Coordinator Amy Pitzer presented information on all the committees for board members to commit to in the upcoming year. Fiscal year runs through March 31st. She explained the room for growth on all committees, but specifically on each event including the Doctors in Concert, Pushcart Derby, Medici Craft Beer and Jazz Festival, Breakfast Celebration, and the Day of Play. There is room for growth in all events with regards to sponsorship and attendance. Board members should be signed up for a committee by the retreat in January.

Exhibits- There is a need for refurbishment of the Fresh Market soft spot in the toddler area. The total cost is about \$3,300.00. The Imagination Playground (big blue blocks) needs to be

moved to a new space to make room for the medical exhibit. The best area is some extra room in the Agricultural area. To move things around it will cost no more than \$5,000. Beth requested approval for the projects totaling \$8,300.00. Motion was made by Paul Scharnett and seconded by Samuel Gray. All voted in favor of the expenses. In the future, the board plans to include a budget line item to allow for smaller exhibit expenses.

Cost estimates for parts of the Healthy Me exhibit are coming back higher than anticipated. The design firm reports the final project might require additional funding for its current inception. Museum Executive Director Beth Whisman is meeting with the design team to reduce where they can and she plans to report back to the Exec/Finance Committee next month.

New Business:

The Museum is adding back (as has been in the past) another Development Coordinator which the Foundation pays half of the salary and the town pays the other half. That will start in April 2020.

Board retreat was very successful last February and would like to plan another for this coming February. The executive team will decide on a date and let the board know. Discussed whether to use a facilitator like last year, majority liked the idea of a facilitator.

End of the Year Appeal and annual reports will be going out to donors soon. Annual reports are mailed to anyone who donated over \$100 and appeal sent to anyone who has donated in the past 3-5 years. Annual report is already posted on the Museum's website.

Discussed repeating the 25th Anniversary Breakfast Celebration under a new name for next year. Most agreed that was a success and worth repeating next September 2020.

Executive Director's Report:

A new Exhibit Director was hired, John Dolan. He is from IWU and very experienced and used to working with youth. There were over 40 applications for the position.

The air cannon will be reinstalled by Christmas break.

The Underpass for which the Town recently received a federal grant will be helpful to the CDM and will make travel safe for all attendees especially the schools that have to park on the south side of the railroad tracks. On 11/18/19 there will be a city hall meeting which Treasurer Mark Jontry will attend to support the building of the underpass. Beth requested anyone interested in attending go and support the motion. The Foundation wrote a letter of support in the original grant application.

Admission to the museum will increase by \$1.00 in January due to the upcoming increases in the minimum wage. Field Trips will also see an increase the next year.

Rachel Carpenter presented that a major grant which supports the preschool STEAM education program will be dramatically cut from about \$40,000 to about \$15,000 next school year. IPCF will continue to support with its \$7,000 grant but that leaves about \$44,000 not covered next year for the overall program. This program provides early childhood education to about 700

preschoolers who would not otherwise be able to visit the museum or have in class STEAM programming. This reduction in funding would probably cut the Unit 5 children and Bloomington Childcare Center children from the current program. Rachel requested board assistance in finding any grants which would help support this program in order for it to continue next fall.

Adjournment:

Mitch Stebel motioned to adjourn the meeting and Rob Widmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously and was adjourned at 1:03pm.