MANDAN Historical Society

Board of Directors Special Meeting

Thursday November 7, 2019

Location: Keitu Engineers & Consultants, Inc. Conference Room; 1403 27th St NW, Mandan

Present: President Bob Porter, Vice President Walt Russell, Secretary Kathye Spilman, Treasurer Bill Engelter, MHSoc Directors Bob Barr & Joel Winckler

Absent: None

The meeting was called to order by President Porter at 5:00 p.m. Quorum was present.

Officers’ Reports

President’s Report: President Porter introduced Sharon Huettl, who has volunteered to serve on the Board of Directors. With the authority granted to him under the current Society bylaws, Porter formally appointed Sharon to fill the open Director position until the next annual general membership meeting.

Secretary’s Report: Minutes from the April 2019 meeting were presented. Motion to approve was made, seconded and approved without corrections without dissent by voice vote.

Minutes from June 2019 Special Board of Directors’ meeting were presented. Motion to approve was made, seconded and approved with one correction without dissent via voice vote.

Minutes from July 2019 Board of Directors’ meeting were presented. Motion to approve was made, seconded and approved without corrections without dissent via voice vote.

Treasurer’s Report: Treasurer Engelter reported a checking account balance of $13,146.12 with a pending check for $1200 for payment for the museum ceiling grid installation contractor. Kathye Spilman presented a detail breakdown of the spend for the museum construction including funding source assignment. A motion to repay Kathye $352.61 spent beyond her $800 donation to the museum construction project was made, discussed and approved by voice vote without dissent.

Motion to approve the Treasurer’s report was made, seconded and approved without dissent.

Committee Reports

Nomination Committee: No report.

Membership Committee: Report tabled.
Buildings & Grounds Committee: Treasurer Engelter reported the total cost of the entire building currently stands at $32,209.09 sans volunteer labor costs. He met with the representative of the State Insurance department to bind coverage for the “building only” replacement cost of $40,000.

Bob Porter reported the interior of the building is essentially complete; ceiling tiles and 4 LED light units are in, the floor boards and door trim has been painted and installed. A donated heavy shelving unit has been assembled in the closet. The installation of the closet altered the ceiling lighting plan, leaving a dark area in the northeast corner. After discussion of alternatives with the electrical contractor, a track lighting system was installed in front of the east wall.

Bob Barr, Bill Engelter and Bob Porter packed up the Society’s artifacts from the display cases and book cases and moved all the items and furniture to the new building. Items in a back-storage area including a file cabinet plus the three display cases remain to be moved. This work is scheduled for late November. Once moved, the items need to be sorted, organized and staged in the new area as displays, discarded, or containerized and placed into storage.

Discussion ensued on other tasks necessary to be ready for the museum opening Memorial Day 2020. Bob Porter volunteered to work with Kathye on a display to tie in acknowledgement of the Tostiven family to their financial contribution. Sharon Huettl will focus on an exhibit on the American Legion Post/military veterans. Kathye suggested the initial use of the south gallery wall be use to group the photos in the collection into a “Mandan Timeline.” Bob Barr will take the lead on organizing and displaying the pottery collection. Purchase of new decorative fabric for the display cases was also discussed, suggestions made and spending authorized. Past displays will be supplemented and updated to fill the remaining space.

Alternative for placement of the display cases was discussed, highlighting the need to prioritize wall space for graphics and informational panels. Several options were proposed.

Kathye reported Steve Hirsch of the Railroad Museum Board approach her as to possible shared internet/WiFi. She said current plan was to source videos from on-site media. Bill Engelter suggested using someone’s phone with an unlimited data plan as a portable hot spot. While likely not suitable streaming capacity for video streaming, it would avoid the monthly expense.

Communication & Public Relations Committee: Kathye reported she made the presentation on Mandan-area cemeteries at the October 2019 meeting of the Westerners in Bismarck. Bob Barr introduced her at the meeting.

Donations & Acquisitions Committee: Sharon asked about the status of the Mandan Pioneer newspapers that were formally in the Mandan Library and given to the Mandan Historical
Society. They are currently in storage at one of the local businesses which is not allowing access to them. Kathye reported that she is not sure the actual newspapers were given to the Society; and despite repeated attempts, the ownership status has never been able to be confirmed. Were the papers given custody of the newspapers, or both custody and ownership. A short discussion ensued as whether or not consideration has been given to move the papers to the new museum space. General consensus from the Board member present was the new museum would host more traditional displays. Discussion turned to seeking funds to digitize the newspapers and make them available to the public. This effort would require the bound copies of the newspapers to be taken apart, and likely not suitable to be bound so ownership/permission for the project again hinges on ownership. To scan just one daily edition of the papers in inventory from approximately 1920 to 1960 would require about $420,000. Further discussion was tabled.

**Endowment Committee:** No report available.

**Grant Committee:** Kathye responded there were several grant application deadlines approaching at the end of the month and seeks permission to apply. Motion made, seconded and approved via voice vote for her to proceed for any and all grants on behalf of the Society.

**Old Business**

While no formal RSVP yet (deadline March 1, 2020), Bob Barr reported that we should expect the ND Pottery Collectors Association to accept our invitation for lunch in June 2020.

**New Business**

A conversation has been initiated with the Mandan Middle School staff to explore options to improve the exhibit of the Central School Bell on display there. The school staff has formally joined the effort. Discussion ensured as to scope, concept, timeline and cost. Kathye would like to explore options for grant money to finance the project. Verbal approval to proceed was given.

**Next Meeting:** To be at the discretion of the President in the early February 2020 timeframe.

Motion to adjourn at 7:20 p.m. made, seconded and approved via voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathye Spilman
Secretary

Approved: TBD