

CULTURAL ROUNDTABLE

Minutes of April 25, 2016

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The Cultural Roundtable held its regular meeting on Monday April 25, 2016 at the Town of Minto Council Chambers. Roundtable members in attendance were Mayor George Bridge, Councillor Jean Anderson, Chair Andrew Gowan, Peggy Raftis, Meghan Raftis, Caitlin Hall, Willa Wick, John Cox, and Brooke McLean. Members of staff present were Business and Economic Development Manager Belinda Wick-Graham and Administrative Assistant Cally Mann. Guests in attendance were, Gregory Smith, Janice Hindley, Chad Martin, Wayne Martin, Bob McEachern, Delanie Toner and Mark MacKenzie.

Chair Andrew Gowan welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

The Committee reviewed the previous meeting minutes.

Motion

Moved By: Peggy Raftis

Seconded By: Willa Wick

THAT The Cultural Roundtable approve the minutes of the February 22, 2016 meeting.

CARRIED

Mayor Bridge described that the County has recently added support for the County Museum and Archives in the form of a person to help with outreach programs and that as a result the County had conducted a review of the Palmerston Railway Heritage Museum. He also highlighted the fact that Minto's railway heritage will be highlighted at the IPM within the Town of Minto space in the County of Wellington Showcase.

Janice Hindley, the Administrator with the Wellington County Museum and Archives thanked Bob McEachern for the fantastic tour of the Palmerston Railway Station. Hindley provided the Roundtable with the Palmerston Railway Station Report. A copy of this report is attached as Schedule A. Mayor Bridge noted that there should be a subcommittee to help complete these objectives. He also mentioned that with Pearle Hospitality starting on the Elora Mill project it will once again be a tourist destination and the Train Station would be a tourist spot for train enthusiasts. Bob McEachern was confident that the three main rooms (ladies waiting room, main waiting room and the telegraph room) would be ready for the IPM in September. Chair Gowan complimented Janice on her proposal, stating it was well written with clear objectives. Anyone interested in sitting on the subcommittee is encouraged to send their information to Belinda Wick-Graham.

Recommendation:

Moved By: Meghan Raftis

Seconded By: John Cox

THAT The Council of the Town of Minto creates the Palmerston Railway Heritage Museum as a Sub-Committee to the Cultural Roundtable.

CARRIED

Gregory Smith presented his 'Flipping the Iceberg' concept to the Roundtable. The group discussed what age group would benefit the most from this workshop, including the 'link' group who is entering grade 9, and the grade 9-12 students, Smith noted that the ideal age group is grade 8-9. Mr. Paul Richards, Principal at Norwell will be contacted to gain his input on this

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program as well. Smith mentioned the Optimist and Rotary clubs as possible funding contributors to the program which is a 1 day program at the cost of \$75 per person.

Mark MacKenzie discussed the Local Heritage Marker Program. This program goes beyond the house plaques to provide larger plaques to add the history of the building, person, event, etc. The cost of these plaques range from \$1400.00 to \$2000.00, and private owners would contribute to this amount. It was suggested that markers are added on the online cultural maps indicating the historical spots and adding additional historical information. The Roundtable discussed the recommendation process, deciding that the recommendation would be sent to a subcommittee and then the subcommittee's recommendation will be sent to the Cultural Roundtable for final consideration.

Recommendation

Moved By: Meghan Raftis

Seconded By: John Cox

That the Council of the Town of Minto creates a Local Heritage Marker Ad Hoc Committee made up of representatives from local historical societies to develop the a Local Heritage Marker Program.

CARRIED

Chair Gowan informed the Committee that the Volunteer Portal has some volunteer opportunities being added and has gained some interest as volunteer applications have started to come in. He also complimented Peggy Raftis on a wonderful job with the Cultural Roundtable pamphlets and noted that these will be mailed out to residents soon.

The Community Group meeting had a great turn out with approximately 30 people attending. Reva Cooper's presentation on Recruiting, Retaining and Recognizing Volunteers was well received and Roundtable members heard some positive feedback about the event

The Volunteer Seminars have 10 people registered for the series thus far from Minto and five from Wellington North. The first seminar takes place May 4th in Mount Forest at 6:00 pm.

Belinda Wick-Graham brought two applications for the Cultural Enhancement Grant for the Committee to review, the first being for the Harriston-Minto Agricultural Society and the second for the Minto Clifford Public School.

Recommendation

Moved By: Peggy Raftis

Seconded By: Brooke McLean

THAT the Council of the Town of Minto approves Cultural Enhancement Grant CEG1 from the Harriston-Minto Agricultural Society for \$500 to add stilt walker entertainment to the 2016 Fall Fair.

CARRIED

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Wick-Graham noted that the Youth Council has hired Gabriella Leropoli as the Community Youth Resiliency Worker; she will be the new contact and has been invited to the next meeting.

Brooke McLean provided the Committee with an update on the Library. There was a busy March Break and there have been many programs added, including technological programs to help with the use of computers and iPads. She also noted that the Library has five mobile internet hot spots and five iPads for people to borrow.

Caitlin Hall reminded the Committee that the Farmers' Markets start dates are June 3rd and 4th and that there is lots of interest from new vendors. There are 11 spots in Minto on the Butter Tart and Buggies Trail, with 10 in the Township of North Wellington and eight in the Township of Southgate. She also mentioned having programs available to help integrate the Syrian Refugees that have been brought to Minto.

Willa Wick mentioned that she is looking to change the displays at the John Webb Gallery.

John Cox is very busy within the Chamber of Commerce with the 'Save Your Energy' lunch and learn with Westario on April 26th, the Achievement Awards on April 27th, and the Mayor's Breakfasts on May 6th, 13th and 27th.

Meghan Raftis informed the Committee about the Youth Theatre auditions on May 17th at 7:00 p.m.

Peggy Raftis reminded the Committee about "Bell's Reunion" opening date of May 7th. The fall production "Frozen Dreams" is slated to start mid-November, and a possible one-act Christmas show is being considered.

Bob McEachren relayed that the Palmerston Railway Heritage Museum recently acquired a conductor's rail cap and is conducting Grade 10 tours of the Station.

Belinda Wick-Graham commented that the Minto Arts Council's Main Street & Memories exhibit is ending April 27th and that the Juried Art Show is opening May 5th. The last two Film Fests have been well attended and the final Film Fest is on May 18th. The WOWSA is putting on a Canadian premiere of the documentary 'Dream Girl' on June 9th at the Norgan Theatre and there will be a live stream of the opening in New York, New York with a Q&A with the Director and Producer of the film. Bob McEachren is working with Wick-Graham on the Palmerston Railway banners to be installed downtown Wick-Graham also noted that the Palmerston Legion contacted her about putting Veterans banners up in Palmerston.

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Next Meetings:
May 24th
6:00 p.m.
Launch It Office

June 14th
6:00 p.m.
Launch It Office

Cally Mann
Recording Secretary

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Schedule A

PALMERSON RAILWAY STATION REPORT

On March 29, 2016, staff from the Wellington County Museum and Archives were invited to tour the railway station and meet with Warden George Bridge and Bob McEachern to discuss future plans for the station, outbuildings, and the park. WCMA staff was asked for their advice and assistance to move forward and meet the objectives for the station as set by the Town.

In our opinion, the station, boxcars, crew building and surrounding park are wonderful treasures that hold unlimited potential in terms of cultural tourism and recreation for not only the Town but for the County. The railway station houses a tremendous collection of archival material (paper, photographs, microfilm, books) and artifacts (objects) not only related to the railway but to a wide variety of subjects connected to Palmerston's history, as well as Minto's and the County's history.

We believe that to develop the station, its outbuildings and boxcars to their full potential would be a three to five year process. The WCMA is available to **assist** with advice, expertise, sharing resources, designing space and programmes, and letters of support for grant applications that the Town may submit.

This report contains staff suggestions based on our visit to the Palmerston Railway Museum.

Stage 1: 2016: Objective

- Open the three main rooms (ladies' waiting room, main waiting room, telegraph room) as an operating museum showcasing Palmerston and Wellington County railway history circa 1920s(date has not been determined yet) for September 2016 so that tours from the IPM can come through and experience the heritage site.

Issues to be addressed in Stage 1

- **Clear the space in the main waiting room of all items** including the five large display cases; the vertical and lateral file cases; framed art and prints on the walls; gift shop items; the large artifact on the floor; the slanted oak desk from the post office; tables and chairs; etc. Everything needs to be cleared out and stored and then selected items will be returned based on the design plan.
- Prepare a visual design of the interpretive areas showing where the stove, chairs, benches, trunks, suitcase, display cases, baggage carts, etc. would be placed for best traffic flow. It is critical that the interpretive plan be focused and clearly defined.
- TV monitors featuring looped DVDs are an excellent way to show scanned images of photos, documents, movies, artifacts strictly relating to the railway.
- Sounds of the train whistle and the conductors calling out "all aboard" or other announcements can be set with a motion sensor.
- Obtain quotes to replicate the bench in the main waiting room and the bench seating in the ladies' waiting room.

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- Electric baseboard heaters in waiting rooms should at least be painted out in a colour that blends into the walls.
- Remove the window blinds from the waiting rooms.
- Source mannequins and clothing
- Create a dedicated gift shop area.
- Consolidate all research material into the research/genealogy room.
- Identify from inventory which relevant artifacts will be displayed. It is important that non-railway material is cleared out of the rooms and that the focus is kept very narrow.
- **Clear out the space in the telegraph room** including the removal of the “modern” table and chairs. Develop a visual design for the space and determine which artifacts are relevant to that room and will be displayed based on what that room is interpreting ie. telegraph office, ticket sales.
- Inventory artifacts from the three rooms that will be on display.

Stage 2: 2017/2018: Objectives

Objective 1: Develop a dedicated research room in the existing computer room

Issues to be addressed:

- **Clear the space** of all unused, obsolete equipment.
- Inventory, store and possibly transfer archival material to the WCMA with copies provided to Minto for the research room.
- Digitize relevant collections, starting with railway history material, with the goal of making the railway collection available online. Collections on other subjects should not take priority until the railway collection has been digitized first.
- Determine the purpose and scope of the research room. Will it contain or provide access to railway history, Minto history, property history, genealogy? The design of the room will come from the stated purpose and scope.
- Temperature and humidity controls required if original archival material is stored in this room (ie. newspapers, books, photographs, microfilm, etc.)
- Prepare a visual design for the space based on the purpose and scope. Appropriate shelving, work tables and chairs need to be sourced.

Objective 2: Determine Operating Framework

Issues to be addressed:

- Determine whether or not the Railway Station will operate seasonally (ie. May through October like the WCMA's Barn); the weekly hours of operation or will it be weekend only, and admission (ie. admission by donation and set fees for special events/programmes?)
- Funding sources
- Staffing levels/Governance ie. committee

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- Partnerships
- Collection policy and procedures for donations
- Consider a Business Plan

Objective 3: Develop public and school programming

Issues to be addressed:

- Which schools are attending now and what is provided to them?
- Develop curriculum based school programmes for elementary and high schools
- Set admission fee for school programmes
- The railway station and park hold tremendous potential for family/public programmes. Special Railway weekends/festival, scavenger hunts, morse code demonstrations, handcar races, guest speakers, costumed interpreters for special days, hands-on activities, music, downtown walking tours, etc. Consider what other area railway museums provide and adapt great ideas to the Palmerston site (Doon Heritage Village, Markham, St. Thomas, etc.)

Objective 4: Develop the Cook Car, Box Car and Crew Station into public sites with exhibits and activities connected to those offered at the Main Station

Issues to be addressed:

- Clear the Crew Station space of all items, and store or transfer non-railway artifacts and material.
- Inventory railway artifacts and material into the collection database.
- Determine a visual plan for the space.
- Select relevant artifacts for display based on the interpretive purpose of the space.
- Determine how the Box Car and Cook Car will be used.
- Accessibility into the Cars.

Thank you for the opportunity to tour the Palmerston Railway Museum and Park, and we look forward to assisting you with this project.



Janice Hindley
Administrator, Wellington Place, Museum and Archives