



Town of Collierville

A regular meeting of the Collierville Heritage Commission was held January 12, 2022 at 5:00pm at the Morton Museum of Collierville History, located at 196 N. Main Street, Collierville, Tennessee.

The following members of the Heritage Commission were present: Taylor Stamps, Skeeter Rutledge, Jennifer Cordell, John Moore, Michael Davidson, Annette Key, and Mayor Stan Joyner. Absent were Betty Edmunds, Mary Alice Brock, Charles Hall, and Ginny Nanney.

Staff member present was Museum Director, Kate Renner.

Mayor Stan Joyner called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM October 13, 2021

Mayor Joyner asked if there were any corrections or additions to the October 13 meeting minutes. As there were no corrections or additions, Mayor Joyner called for approval of the Heritage Commission meeting minutes.

Ms. Cordell made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Moore seconded. All were in favor, none were opposed. Motion was approved.

MUSEUM REPORT

Ms. Renner introduced herself as the new Director of the Morton Museum. She started in the position mid-November 2021. Her first priority is resuming in-person events and programs and boosting overall attendance to the Museum.

Ms. Renner stated that Maureen Smith, Collections and Special Projects Coordinator, had her last day with the Museum on January 5, 2022. The Museum is currently accepting applications for this position and hopes to have it filled as soon as possible.

Ms. Renner stated that the Museum is excited to welcome Jamie Boelter as the new Visitor Services Coordinator. Ms. Boelter started in the position January 11, 2022.

Ms. Renner welcomes new appointments to the Heritage Commission – Annette Key and Michael Davidson (student liaison).

Ms. Renner shares that Town Administrator, James Lewellen, has requested that the Heritage Commission begin to convene six times per year effective immediately, rather than four times per year.

The 2022 meeting dates are: January 12, March 9, May 11, July 13, September 14, and November 9, 2022. Each meeting will take place 5:00 – 6:00PM at the Morton Museum (196 N. Main Street).

Ms. Renner reports great attendance for the Contemporary Club's annual Home Tour and Gift Gazebo, which brought 600+ people through the Museum on December 11, 2022. Other December events, such as Story Time with Santa and the Iris Orchestra concert, were also well attended.

Upcoming Events

Ms. Renner stated that a new exhibition of artwork by artist and educator Shamek Weddle has just opened in the Community Art Gallery hallway at the Museum. This exhibition will be on view through the end of February. The next Community Art Gallery exhibition will be photographic works by Houston Cofield, on view March – April 2022.

Ms. Renner stated that the Museum will also host an exhibition titled *Beebe & Clegg: Their Enduring Photographic Legacy*. The exhibition features 20 black-and-white photographs taken by Lucius Beebe and Charles Clegg who documented train history. This exhibition will be on view February 22 – May 28, 2022.

Ms. Renner further stated that an opening reception for *Beebe & Clegg: Their Enduring Photographic Legacy* will take place at the Museum on Thursday February 24, 2022, 5:00-7:00PM. Heritage Commission members are strongly encouraged to attend.

Ms. Renner stated Story Time continues to take place at the Museum every Friday, 10:30AM. Ms. Renner has delivered Story Time calendars to local preschools and children's stores in an attempt to boost attendance.

Ms. Renner announced that the Lunch and Learn series will resume in February 2022. The Spring 2022 series, consisting of four events, will take place February 10, March 10, April 14, and May 12, 2022. A Fall 2022 Lunch and Learn series is expected to take place in August, September, October and November.

Ms. Renner stated that Spotlight Saturday events will also resume in Spring 2022. These events are a great opportunity for visitors of all ages to enjoy the Museum through hands-on activities.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mayor Joyner referenced the October 13 meeting minutes for unfinished items of business.

Mayor Joyner called for a discussion regarding programming for the Museum's 10th Anniversary. Mayor Joyner asked if Commission members had anything pressing to discuss on the matter at this time.

Ms. Renner stated that the Museum will curate a special exhibition in Fall 2022 highlighting the Museum's 10th Anniversary. Ms. Renner asked if any Commission members had suggestions about specific objects in the Collection that might be displayed in this exhibition. Mr. Stamps suggested that excerpts from the Collierville Herald archive might be a nice resource to incorporate in the exhibition. Mayor Joyner supports this idea.

Mayor Joyner recommended we use this exhibition to promote awareness about the various awards and recognitions that the Museum has received over the past 10 years, as many people are not aware of the work being done. Ms. Renner agrees.

Mayor Joyner inquired if there is an inventory of items in the Museum's collection that are available to the public. Ms. Renner stated that the Collection is partially available to view on the Museum's website. Ms. Renner invited Commission members to check out this resource.

Ms. Cordell recommended that we revisit the 10th anniversary exhibition and programming at the March meeting.

Mr. Stamps stated that he would like the exhibition to discuss long-time Collierville residents and their contributions to the Museum. Mr. Stamps shared that this would show non-residents what a priority giving back is to Collierville residents and that the Museum would not be possible without that support. Ms. Cordell agreed.

Mayor Joyner stated that the Morton family's contributions, and Bess Morton's love for the historic church site, should be represented in the exhibitions. Ms. Renner shares an aside that Mr. Morton is currently writing an autobiography that could be helpful.

Ms. Renner stated that the exhibition might include quotes from community members who have donated items to the Museum addressing why they chose to share these items, why they trust the Museum with their care, and what the Museum means to them. This could encourage other community members to consider donating items to the Museum's collection in the future.

Mayor Joyner asked if there will be an event tied to the exhibition. Ms. Renner stated that there will be an opening reception for the exhibition that doubles as a "birthday party". The Museum is also considering a closing reception. Ms. Renner states that in addition to these receptions, the Anniversary will be highlighted throughout all events and programming in Fall 2022.

Ms. Renner inquired about the Equestrian related exhibition mentioned in the October 13 meeting minutes. Mayor Joyner stated that Heritage Commission member Betty Edmunds, not present for this meeting, was the impetus behind the concept. Mayor Joyner recommended this topic be revisited at a future meeting when Ms. Edmunds is present, possible May. Ms. Renner shared that the Museum's exhibition schedule is already booked through Spring 2023, so there's no rush on this.

NEW BUSINESS

Annual Commission Appointments

Mr. Stamps made a motion to have Ms. Edmunds return as Chair and Ms. Brock return as Vice-Chair. Ms. Cordell seconded. All were in favor, none opposed. Motion was approved.

Ms. Renner volunteered to act as Secretary, a role traditionally assumed by the Museum Director. All were in favor, none opposed. Motion was approved.

Commission and Museum Goals

Mayor Joyner shared that Town Administrator, James Lewellen, requested that the Heritage Commission identify 2-3 goals for 2022 and what is hoped to be accomplished at the remaining five meetings of the year.

Ms. Cordell stated that time was needed to produce these goals and that it's not something that could be decided today, especially considering three Commission members were absent. Ms. Renner recommends revisiting this at the March meeting and providing Commission members with time to brainstorm.

Mayor Joyner mentioned staffing turnover has been a concern in the past, and that a broad goal for the Museum (not the Commission) would be better employee retention. He would like to see that improve.

Ms. Renner thanked Mayor Joyner for recognizing staffing as a challenge for Museum administration. Ms. Renner stated that she is working hard to attain a raise for the Collections and Special Projects Coordinator position in the coming fiscal year, which would assist with retention. Ms. Renner also stated that she is reevaluating the roles for the Collections and Special Projects Coordinator position, as the current workload is not cohesive and makes it difficult to find a qualified and interested candidate. Mayor Joyner suggested that changing roles for that position could reveal volunteer opportunities.

Ms. Renner seconded Ms. Cordell's request to revisit goals at the March meeting. Ms. Renner stated that suggestions about overall goals for the Museum are welcome any time, but requested that discussion at the next meeting be focused on goals for the Heritage Commission itself and what Commission members hope to achieve through their appointment.

Potential Items for Accession

Ms. Renner presented a diploma from Miss Holden's Seminary issued to Miss Pinkie Forrest Mitchell in 1884. Miss Holden's Seminary operated on South Rowlett Street from 1881-1893 and offered instruction to both boys and girls in Collierville. Pinkie Forrest Mitchell was a lifelong Collierville resident and is buried in Magnolia Cemetery. Ms. Renner stated that the actual diploma is still in the care of the donor, Alan Wilson (great-grandson of diploma recipient), and so an image of the diploma was provided to Commission members. Ms. Renner stated that a similar diploma from Miss Holden's Seminary is already in the Collection, but that the new diploma in question is in better condition.

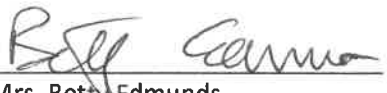
Ms. Key inquired where the diploma would be displayed in the Museum if accepted into the Collection. Ms. Renner clarified that although the diploma could potentially be on display in the Museum at some point, the Museum does not promise donors that their item will be displayed. If the diploma is accepted into the Collection, the Museum will house and care for the item. Mayor Joyner asked if there was a motion to accept the diploma into the Collection. Mr. Stamps made a motion to accept. Ms. Key seconded. All were in favor, none were opposed. Motion was approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Joyner asked if there was any additional business to be discussed. Commission agreed that nothing further needed to be addressed at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business or discussion, at approximately 5:47pm, Mayor Joyner adjourned the meeting.



Mrs. Betty Edmunds
Chairman, Heritage Commission



Kate Renner
Director, Morton Museum of Collierville History

