

Museum Advisor Board Subcommittee - Fundraising and Community Involvement Minutes
September 2, 5:30 p.m.
Greeley History Museum

Meeting to be digitally recorded; transcribed by Sarah Saxe

Call to Order: 5:36pm

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Mike Weiland, Joe Lesko, Gary Alexander, Georg Junne, Emma Pena-McCleave, Laura Reeser, Adrian Sdano, Flo Mikkelson

Staff Members Present: Holly Berg, Katie Ross, Sarah Saxe

Community Members Present: Erma Woodfin, Betzy Valdez, Yoana Rivera

- Discussion of past and current obstacles experienced in trying to gain greater community involvement at Greeley Museums
 - o Museum staff discussed experienced obstacles
 - Staff shared that in the past they have tried to go out into the community and gather stories and collaborate on exhibits, but the relationships built seem temporary. Relationships die off, and sustaining communication has been difficult.
 - Staff have had student workers/interns in the past, but maybe we could have a DEAI (diversity, equity, accessibility, inclusion) intern. George Junne suggested potential department heads at UNC who might be interested in creating a for-credit program. World Languages and Culture division or History division would be good areas to explore. Tap into UNC's cultural centers too, to get students community-focused experience while simultaneously helping museums in their goals.
 - Staff wants to do a better job of collecting artifacts/collections that are more representative. We won't collect stories that have already been told, but use staff time/resources to collect from underrepresented communities. Language has been a barrier. Staff lack ability to translate Spanish oral histories, and therefore these audio files aren't used in exhibits. George Junne suggested to reach out to UNC professors to get students to translate. Yoana Rivera suggested reaching out to IRC to potentially utilize community navigators for translation help.
 - Many people don't know we have a museum/we are foreign to much of the community. Yoana Rivera suggested staff give presentation to IRC clients showing what community resources we have to offer.
 - o Group discussed obstacles from community's perspective
 - Building trust is key. Community members won't want to collaborate or share their stories with museum staff who are essentially strangers. Especially with immigrant and refugee community who have experienced so much trauma. Museum staff need to spend more time, slow down, and focus on building trust.
 - Suggestion was made to have staff go to more community events/festivals to have personal, one-on-one connections.
 - Suggestion was made to create a database of prominent Greeley families of all ethnicities who we could approach with specific asks for artifacts/stories.
 - One suggestion was to, when approaching new communities for collaboration, stress the opportunity to share what that community is proud of/highlight it in the museums' collections/exhibits. The counterargument was made that staff aren't doing people any favors by asking people to donate to the museum- community members don't see this as a gift/favor because they don't have strong connections to the museum.

- The point was made that time is running out – the population is changing. We need to connect and represent these perspectives now.
- Group discussed the need for the advisory board, staff, and community members to be on the same page in terms of language, attitude, and approach to improving diversity. Suggestion made for diversity and anti-racism training which Sarah Saxe will pursue for staff/board members.
 - The lens staff/board are looking through to develop exhibits and collections is not a BIPOC lens, we need to see from other perspectives when we approach new projects.
 - Museum needs to make sure we are including positive representations of BIPOC community members too, not just the negative.
- Group discussed the need for community surveys, data, and feedback on community wishes
 - Sarah Saxe shared that CPRD has put in a request for a city-wide community needs assessment, to hopefully be conducted in 2022, to better inform us of what community wants/expects from its museums and cultural entities.
- Group discussed temporary fixes to the Main Gallery
 - Holly Berg presented ideas for temporary improvements/corrections to the Main Gallery to be implemented soon. Ideas included sticker decals and overlays to go over glass/cases in main gallery that call attention to stories that haven't been told or highlight past errors in interpretation.
 - Long term goal is to gather feedback and collaborate to make more permanent/ long-term changes to the Main Gallery and show equitable representation in all exhibits/collecting habits.
 - Next meeting idea – ask community members to go through main gallery with post-it notes to write down ideas for corrections/improvements. Staff and community group will then collect feedback and come up with a plan for a temporary fix.
 - Staff also plan to work with community member Erma Woodfin to more appropriately/sensitively introduce audience members to the KKK uniform and blackface images on display in the Unmentionable exhibit.

Next Meeting: TBD

Adjourn: 6:54pm

Prepared by:

DocuSigned by:
Sarah Saxe
9D9D232D796044A...

Preparer:

Sarah Saxe

Date:

9/17/2021

Approved by:

DocuSigned by:
Mike Weiland
573141B69E344E4...

Board Chair:

Mike Weiland

Date:

10/7/2021