

**OWOSSO HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**February 10, 2020**  
**Curwood Castle**



OWOSSO HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
THE CURWOOD COLLECTION

**Call to order:** Chair Elaine Greenway called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**Present:** Chair Elaine Greenway, Vice-Chair Dave Acton, Commissioner Mark Erickson, Commissioner Sara Adams, Commissioner Steven Flayer, Commissioner Gary Wilson, Ex-officio Commissioner Josh Adams

**Absent:** Commissioner Paul Rogers, Commissioner Heather Jacobs

**Others Present:** Albert Martenis III (Executive Director), Denice Grace (Head Docent), Linda Beeman

**Review and approval of agenda:** Commissioner Flayer made the motion to approve the agenda with the addition of a discussion item: “whether or not to conduct a press event to officially announce the hiring of Albert Martenis III as Executive Director of the OHC”, seconded by Vice-Chair Acton, ayes all, motion carried.

**Review and approval of the OHC 1/13/20 minutes:** Commissioner Flayer made the motion to approve the minutes for the 1/13/20 OHC meeting as presented, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, ayes all, motion carried.

**Welcome new Commissioner:** Chair Greenway welcomed Gary Wilson to the Commission. Commissioner Wilson said he was pleased to be back on the Commission and that he had enjoyed the 12 years he had previously served.

**Review OHC account balances and other financial information:** ED Martenis has reviewed the previous 24 months of OHC finances and is doing an analysis of those to present to the Commission at the March 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Review budget vs. actual spending from July 1<sup>st</sup> through January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020:** this will be reviewed on March 9<sup>th</sup>

**Review January 2020 income and expenses:** This will be reviewed on March 9<sup>th</sup>

**Review January 2020 check register:** This will be reviewed on March 9<sup>th</sup>

**Visitor comments:** Linda Beeman was acknowledged, welcomed as a visitor, and Chair Greenway commented that the Commission was looking forward to tonight’s

agenda item during which she will report on grants that could be available to the Commission.

**Communications received:** No communications received

**Old Business (updates):**

1. **Recommendation on renting the Castle grounds to Aviator Jane:** Aviator Jayne owner Mandy Pidek would like to rent the castle lawn to hold a vendor event. Denice sent Josh the current lease and usage policies to give to her. July 11th or the 18<sup>th</sup> are the possible dates. The 18<sup>th</sup> is the Cruise the Pits event along with downtown sidewalk sales. If she decides to pursue having the event, she will provide insurance, per the OHC policy. If there is an updated rental policy in effect at the time of the event, the new policy will be followed, and a contract will be signed that reflects the new policy.
2. **Progress on Gould House capital improvement bid packages:** ED Martenis will meet with Deb Hebert to discuss the process of creating and sending out bid packages. Commissioner Adams will forward to ED Martenis an estimate that was received on new boilers for the Castle (this estimate is for information only; no commitment has been made to the contractor that supplied the estimate).
3. **Archiving update:** Commissioner Flayer updated the Commission on how the archiving has progressed so far.
4. **Minute-taker update** – Denice is taking on this role. The Commission authorized the purchase a small digital recorder for her to use in this role.
5. **Status of new router installation for the Castle:** The City's IT technician, Jeff Kish, has received the router and will install it as his schedule permits.
6. **Painting donation date and arrangements:** The date of the donation has been moved to Saturday, February 15 at 1 p.m. Commissioners and Curwood Festival Board members have been invited to attend. Denice will contact local media outlets and will talk to the owners of the Curwood House Bed and Breakfast about booking a room for the person coming to deliver the painting.
7. **Add OHC to the list of Curwood Festival service groups:** Chairman Greenway reported that the Agreement with the festival has been signed and so this initiative has been completed.
8. **Pipe freezing prevention at the Gould House:** ED Martenis reported that he has set the heat level and heating air flow at the Gould House to ensure that the pipes in the kitchen will not freeze until a more permanent solution is achieved.

**New Business:**

1. **Update on Executive Committee meetings with the Executive Director:** Vice-Chair Acton reported that the Executive Committee meeting focus has been to support ED Martenis during his onboarding process and to help him set priorities over 30, 90, and 180-day time windows. Executive Committee meetings are held each Monday morning from 8 to 9 a.m. at the Gould House. The Executive Committee members are Chair Greenway, Vice-chair Acton, Commissioner Adams, and Commissioner Erickson.
2. **Policy and process review on renting facilities:** Commissioner Flayer presented the draft policy and process for renting OHC facilities. He reported that he, Chair Greenway, and Denice created the draft. He asked each of the Commissioners to review the draft and be prepared to discuss it at the March 9<sup>th</sup> OHC meeting. After Commission approval it will go to the City attorney for review and approval and then to City Council for final review and approval.
3. **Obtain input on committee structure:** the following decisions were made:
  - A. **Archiving & Acquisitions Committee:** Commissioner Flayer suggested combining the Archiving and Acquisitions Committee with the Education and Exhibitions Committee. Commissioner Flayer volunteered to chair the combined Committee and Commissioner Adams volunteered to chair an Education subcommittee.
  - B. **Preservation and Community Development Subcommittee:** Commissioner Wilson volunteered to chair this new subcommittee. This subcommittee will provide a process for dialog and collaboration for people purchasing and/or working on historic properties in Owosso. The subcommittee will host talks and demonstrations on how to do restoration work and/or how to get it done through knowledgeable contractors.
  - C. **Facilities Committee:** Commissioner Erickson volunteered to chair the Committee. This Committee will lead and facilitate capital improvements to the properties enabled by the millage approval.
  - D. **Social Media Committee:** Commissioner Adams volunteered to chair this Committee. The Committee will manage the website and Facebook. Head Docent Grace will do the Facebook posting.
  - E. **Governance:** Vice-Chair Acton volunteered to chair this Committee. It will be responsible to create and maintain the OHC Strategic Plan. Chair Greenway and Commissioners Adams and Erickson agreed to be on the Committee.
  - F. **Finance and Philanthropy:** Chair Greenway volunteered to chair this Committee. It will manage the membership and capital campaigns. Vice-Chair Acton, and Commissioners Erickson and Adams agreed to be on the Committee.
  - G. **Volunteers:** No Commissioner volunteered to chair this Committee. Until such time as a Commissioner volunteers, Head Docent Grace will line up volunteers as needed. The Commission agreed that the OHC needs to adapt as necessary to attract younger volunteers. Executive Director Martenis suggested that experienced volunteers could recruit and manage teams of younger volunteers.

Commissioner Flayer suggested awarding recognition prizes to long standing volunteers that reach measurable milestones.

Commissioner Adams suggested that the Commission create junior Commissioner positions to facilitate bringing in younger volunteers. The Volunteers Committee and its future will be a topic of discussion at the March 9<sup>th</sup> OHC meeting.

4. **Update on pursuit of Grants:** Linda Beeman provided a report on available grants. She has been talking to the MCACA (Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs). The OHC qualifies as a nonprofit Arts & Cultural organization and may qualify for up to five grants (of which it can receive a maximum of four). MCACA is using a new system which Linda will have to learn and the new system requires uploading three years of financial records to apply for the grants. This only needs to be done once. There is a meeting on March 31<sup>st</sup> in Saginaw on the new system and Linda and ED Martenis will attend. The OHC needs to address the fact that none of our properties are handicap accessible, as this may be an inhibitor to obtaining grants. The following are possible grants:
  - a. Organizational Support: a \$60,000 grant, with a 1-1 match. It goes live March 1<sup>st</sup> and is due June 1<sup>st</sup>. Awarded August 1st
  - b. Capital Improvements: a \$100,000 grant, with a 1-1 match. It goes live March 1<sup>st</sup> and is due June 1<sup>st</sup>. Awarded August 1st
  - c. A mini grant for Art projects or a mini grant for professional development which could pay for the OHC ED to go to the Midwest Museum Alliance conference in Milwaukee July 2021. A \$100,000 grant, with a 1-1 match. It goes live March 1<sup>st</sup> and is due June 1<sup>st</sup>. Awarded August 1<sup>st</sup>
  - d. New Leaders: for people aged 14-30. A \$4000 grant, with a 1-1 match. It is for projects or collaborations that are led by a young person who is connected to an established youth professional council. ED Martenis suggested we could partner with someone in the Shiawassee Young Professionals Council to take care of this requirement.
  - e. Operational Support: A grant of an amount to be determined is from October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021. More information is needed on this grant. It is for new projects started after October 1, 2020 only.
5. **Purchase authorization for commercial vacuums:** Commissioner Erickson made a motion to purchase new upright and handheld commercial vacuums for the Castle, seconded by Commissioner Flayer, ayes all, motion carried.
6. **New Commissioner candidate(s) identification:** Commissioner Erickson suggested that we work to fill the three open Commission positions with millennials and/or Generation Z people (40 years old or younger). Commissioner Adams suggested that we could also consider creating a junior Commissioner position and fill it with high school age person. Ex-officio Commissioner Josh Adams suggested that we ask ED candidate Betsy Galloway if she is interested

in becoming a Commissioner (Vice-chair Acton will follow up with her).

7. **Press Event for the Official Announcement of the Selection of Albert Martenis as the Executive Director:** After discussing alternative approaches, it was decided that there will be a joint press event for which the Independent, the Argus-Press, and Tom Manke will be invited. This event will be held during the week of February 17<sup>th</sup>. Vice-chair Acton will contact the appropriate people at the media outlets and coordinate with ED Martenis and the Commission on a day and time, and the expectation is that as many Commissioners as possible will attend.

**Visitor Comments:** No visitor comments

**Commissioner Comments:**

1. Chair Greenway clarified that she would conduct the OHC meetings, and that Vice-chair Acton will work with ED Martenis to prepare a draft agenda and send it via email with financial and other appropriate information in a Commission meeting packet. The packet is to be sent as soon as possible prior to each Commission meeting.
2. Commissioner Erickson led a discussion about a suggestion to change the date on the “gateway” signs from the incorporation date of 1859 to the establishment date of 1836. The Commission agreed that the 1836 establishment date is more appropriate, and Commissioner Erickson will communicate this agreement to City Manager Henne, with the expectation that City Manager Henne will work with Agnew Graphics to make the change to the three signs.

**Adjournment:** Commissioner Adams made the motion to adjourn at 8:06 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Erickson, ayes all, motion carried.