

**Waynesboro Advocacy Committee
Virginia Museum of Natural History**

4 June 2024, 1:00 PM, Waynesboro Office of Economic Development

Agenda

- I. Welcome, approve minutes from May 2024

- II. Update on activities
 - a. Detailed Design update on funding and continuation

- III. Community
 - a. Community interactions
 - Farmer's Market
 - Groovin' on the Greenway
 - b. Trailer updates
 - c. Grant and project in South River Preserve
 - d. Board Retreat and Strategic Planning for VMNH

- IV. Open discussion

- V. Next meeting, 2 July 2024 if needed (if not then August 6th)

- VI. Adjourn

Waynesboro Advocacy Committee
Virginia Museum of Natural History

4 June 2024, 1:00 PM, Waynesboro Office of Economic Development

Minutes

Attending:

(Present): Len Poulin, Joe Keiper (staff), Marcus James (staff), Jonathan Martin (staff).

(Zoom): Scott Wachter, Mark Buss, Tom Benzing, Maggie VanHuss, Carol Nash, Faye Cooper, Gregg Hitchin, Ryan Barber (staff).

I. Welcome, approve minutes from May 2024

- Tom called the meeting to begin at 1:08 PM.
- The approval for the minutes from the last two meetings has been postponed to the August 6th meeting.

II. Update on activities

a. Detailed Design update on funding and continuation

- The committee introduced Scott Wachter, who provided a brief overview of his expertise and experience, will be supporting VMNH Waynesboro with state, architects, contractors, and subcontractors.
- The remaining funds for the detailed design were received at \$398,000.
- We have submitted the CO2 Form.
- Currently in communication with Glave Holmes regarding the restart process.
- We are revisiting the previous building design to update it for aesthetic purposes.

III. Community

a. Community interactions

- Farmer's Market
 - Mary Poulin is the volunteer coordinator for the trailer.
 - Around 200 visitors, with reports showing visitors from out-of-state.
 - Mary has had success in recruiting new volunteers.
- Groovin' on the Greenway
 - Scheduling timeframes to open the VMNH outreach trailer on Thursdays during Parks and Recreation's Groovin' on the Greenway.

b. Trailer updates

- Implementing new signage to enhance visitor attraction and ensuring the availability of necessary materials and handouts for volunteer utilization.

c. Grant and project in South River Preserve

- Success in procuring \$25k from Dominion Foundation.
- On 06/18/24, Joe will have a meeting to develop content for South River Preserve. After that, he will hand over the work to a contractor for Parks and Rec to create watershed signage and outdoor kiosks for individuals with vision disabilities. Additionally, the plan is to announce the fall foliage and share the success at the next Riverfest.
- Large geological specimens along the Greenway to request an earth history timeline.

d. Board Retreat and Strategic Planning for VMNH

- Inviting the WAC to attend the Board of Trustees Retreat meeting on August 10th at Danville Science Center.

e. other community updates

- Joe to represent VMNH in Grottoes Va on 06/08/24 for the Cave & Karst Expo.
- Wayne Theatre - scheduling science speaker series for the fall.
- Carol Nash discussed the possibility of bringing history and natural history together in an exhibit to receive grant money for 2026.

IV. Open discussion

- The owners of The Inn property on top of Afton Mt. are willing to part with the property for redevelopment.
- The owners have agreed to consider working with the county on submitting a CDBG redevelopment grant for the top of Afton Mt.
- Afton Mt. will improve tourism and amenities for the area.
- Joe and Gregg will be enhancing the VMNH Waynesboro narrative to align with the success and redevelopment campaign of Afton Mt. and the surrounding areas.

V. Next meeting,

- The next WAC meeting is scheduled for August 6, 2024.

VI. Adjourn

- Tom called the meeting to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 PM.