

Waynesboro Advocacy Committee
Virginia Museum of Natural History
5 March 2024, 100PM by Zoom

AGENDA & MINUTES

I. Welcome, approve minutes from February

II. Update on activities

a. Detailed Design update

- Fish working group

b. Follow-up on funding request

III. Community

a. Lecture Series

b. Trailer updates and plans

c. Community interactions

- DAR 14 March 2024
- Roundtable of Waynesboro 14 March 2024
- Riverfest 29 April 2024
- Volunteers

IV. General Assembly

a. Budget

b. Next steps

V. Open Discussion

VI. Next meeting, 2 April 2024

VII. Adjourn

ZOOM INFO:

The next Waynesboro Advocacy Committee meeting on **Tuesday, March 5 at 1 pm** will be an **all-virtual meeting**. The February meeting minutes are attached, and the Zoom link is below. You will be sent an agenda as the meeting approaches.

Virtual Meeting Access:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82635428925>

Meeting ID: 826 3542 8925

Passcode: 672933

If you run into any issues accessing the Zoom, please feel free to contact Zach Ryder at zachary.ryder@vmnh.virginia.gov.

MINUTES

Attending: Mark Buss (acting Chair), Carole Nash, Faye Cooper, Maggie VanHuss, Len Poulin, Greg Hitchin, Joe Keiper (staff), Jonathan Martin (staff), Ryan Barber (staff)

Mark began the meeting at 100pm, and asked for a motion to approve the minutes from February's meeting. Maggie motioned to approve, and Len seconded. The vote to approve was unanimous.

Joe gave an update on Detailed Design:

- The fish working group meets by zoom next week.
- DEB cannot predict when the remaining ~\$400,000 we need for completion of detailed design will be available. Jonathan described the financial acrobatics the state uses to fund planning vs construction. We are hopeful that the funding picture clears up early in the new FY.
- Len articulated that he feels the ROI for the project is too low, and it's time to restructure our messaging. We should emphasize the fact that VMNH-W will create a building block for new industries with STEM oriented students. We should be more aggressive with revenues and visitation.
- A messaging discussion ensued.
 - Be direct (Len) and be as "squeaky" but as positive as you want (Mark).
 - Alter message showing VMNH-W is just good for the local economy but for the whole state.
 - Faye suggested branching out. This led to discussion on asking all board members to ask their legislators to be co-patrons of any future funding requests in the GA.
 - Len suggests that we continuously hit legislators and citizens with our messaging.
 - Joe and Len will prototype new messaging at their upcoming presentation to DAR on 14 March 2024.
- Mark noted the budget was scheduled to be passed at the end of the current week.

- Ryan Barber, for comparison, noted the VMNH-Martinsville timeline was preplanning in 1993, with detailed design completion in 2000 (the building opened in 2007).
- Carole noted that Universities are looking to be “more efficient.” With potential partnerships identified, perhaps University Presidents can write letters of support. It’s not just about community engagement, but perhaps business departments can study the operation of VMNH-W. Len noted that University Presidents are influential.

Upcoming presentations:

- DAR, 14 March (Joe and Len)
- Roundtable of Waynesboro, 14 March (Joe)
- Riverfest (27 April 2024)
- Continuation of the Wayne Theatre Lecture Series

In open discussion, Joe indicated that we will work with Waynesboro P&R to submit a proposal to Dominion, connecting the museum lot to the Greenway via interpretive signage and other means.

Mark asked for a motion to adjourn, and Maggie provided one which Len seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 1:58PM.

Next meeting is 2 April 2024 in Waynesboro.