

Introduction

On 1 April 2014, the Institute for Senior Professionals (ISP), Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC), received a letter from the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida (to be known as the “Museum”). The letter, addressed to Jock Patterson, Chair of the ISP, and signed by Gordon King, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Heritage Museum, requested that the ISP create a Strategic Plan to move the Museum to future levels of historic preservation. In addition the Museum requested support in redefining guiding documents and to focus the Museum’s Board of Trustees to meet the challenges of building a regional heritage services center (Appendix A).

The request was entered as an agenda item in the 15 April ISP meeting for discussion. The ISP authorized an exploratory meeting between the ISP project team (Don Bohler, Lead; Dick Harp; Dick Schoditsch; Loyal Weaver; Fred Pryor; and Mike Dwyre. Tom Ballasch was added later) and members of the Board of Trustees and staff members of the Museum. The meeting was held on 29 April at the Museum in Valparaiso and resulted in a decision to move forward with a recommendation to the ISP to conduct a study of the Museum. The recommendation was presented to the ISP Directors on 20 May 2014 and was approved.

The study preceded with 29 interviews of members of the Trustees of the Museum Board, staff and volunteers; NWFSC active and former staff members; Okaloosa County Commissioners; Okaloosa School District Staff; a member of the State of Florida legislature; and others (Appendix B). In addition, a document search was executed among the files at the Museum and NWFSC.

In proceeding to recommend further actions to the Museum, the ISP is aware of the Museum’s recent (January 2015) Strategic Planning activity and the determined actions taken by its Board of Trustees (BOT) to convert its Planning results into sound Strategic Plan Implementation Actions (Appendix C). The ISP team would like to congratulate the BOT for its continued, aggressive action within this framework.

The ISP team members wish to thank all those who contributed to the study. All contacted by the ISP team readily agreed to discuss the Museum’s operations and

its positive contribution to the community. All were open and candid, and their insights and learned opinions contributed greatly to the body of knowledge that has formed this report.

Background

The Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida (Museum), incorporated in 1969 as the Historical Society of Okaloosa and Walton Counties, Inc., began operations in 1971 as the Historical Society Museum. It operated from a number of interconnected buildings formerly occupied by the Okaloosa-Walton County Community College (OWCC), the forerunner of the present NWFSC and the Valparaiso State Bank at the mailing address of 115 Westview Avenue, Valparaiso, FL 52578 (the OWCC began operations in 1964 and moved to its NWFSC Main Campus location in 1971). This curious collection of buildings and land plots occupied by the Heritage Museum is owned by Ruckel Properties, City of Valparaiso, Valparaiso Realty, NWFSC and the Heritage Museum. The Historical Society Museum changed its name to its present designation on 16 October 1993 and was granted Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) tax exempt status.

Because of its broad mission (Appendix D) and disparate support mechanisms, there are numerous stakeholders including the Museum staff, Board of Trustees, members and volunteers; Okaloosa County Commissioners; City of Valparaiso; Okaloosa County School District; Museum program and event participants and vendors; and members of the community who take pride in having such a facility in their community.

The present by-laws of the Museum permit 20 Trustees on its BOT. At present, there are 16 Trustees (Appendix E) who attend to Museum needs through a series of committees (Appendix F). There are 2 staff members consisting of a full time Manager and a part time (12 hours/week) Education Coordinator; Gina Marina and Crystal Brown, respectively. It was evident to the ISP team that both staff members are qualified, enthusiastic and effective in their jobs. They enjoy excellent reputations within the Museum service area and they contribute numerous volunteer hours in excess for which they are compensated.

Staffing

Michelle Severino, the last Executive Director, assumed her position in 2006. Her salary, medical and dental benefits and retirement plan were paid by an Okaloosa County Commission yearly contribution of approximately \$60,000. In November 2010, Michelle tendered her resignation. Following her resignation, the County Commission, under the pressure of economic downturn, cut its contribution to \$24,000 in 2011 and then to \$12,000 in 2012. The contribution settled to \$8815 in FY2013 and continues at that level. Gina began working 20 hours per week as a part time Manager in July 2008 and became a full time Manager in October 2008.

Volunteers at the Museum form an important cadre of manpower within the operations work force. The Gift Shop, for example, is a dependable source of revenue and is operated solely by volunteers. Other volunteers have, over time, been responsible for the IT function within the Museum as well as other important elements of the membership functions. At this time, there are 4 volunteers who work in the gift shop and on other elements of Museum management. On the average, they provide 60 hours of support per month to the Museum. There are 2 project volunteers who provide 10 hours of support per month.

Finance

The fiscal year for the Museum runs from October through September. At this time, in the Spring of 2015, the FY 2014-2015 budget is \$105,000. Last year a proposal of gradual budget growth was adopted by the BOT, with the budget rising from \$97,000 in FY2014 to \$120,000 in FY2020.

The budget growth plan adoption was accompanied by general discussions of revenue sources; however, there were no specific growth values assigned to the revenue sources yielding the required revenue. Additional discussion, however, addressed the possibility of revenue line item targets upon adoption of a new strategic plan. Realignment of the plan to budget has not yet occurred. The FY 2014 revenue line items, by percentage, for the \$97,000 budget were as follows:

Revenue Sources

Events/Fundraising	38.5%
Membership	15.7
Sponsorships/Donations	14.9
Public/In-house Programs	14.7
In-Kind Services	5.8
Gift Shop	5.3
Curatorial Services	2.7
Admissions	2.4

Expenses

Payroll	52.0%
Events/Fundraising	7.2
Insurance	6.2
Utilities	6.2
Professional Fees	5.9
Cost of Programming	3.4
Gift Shop	3.1
Employee Benefits	3.1
Telephone	2.4
Other items	10.5

As the Commission has offered no guarantees for future funding, the ISP team notes that the FY2014 and future budgets show no anticipated revenue from Okaloosa County. However, an annual \$8815 contribution continues to be made and the Commissioners have adopted the policy of funding the Carver Hill, Baker Block and Destin Fishing museums at the identical, annual amount. In an attempt to clarify the County Commissioners' position regarding the restoration of future funding the Museum requested of the County Commissioners on 2 January 2015 an increased level of funding to restore funding lost in previous years (Appendix G). The Commissioners have indicated that a response will be forthcoming after the 1 May budget review.

With the loss of significant county funding, it is impossible to reconstitute the filling of the Executive Director's position. Present income levels have placed the Museum on "life support".

The Museum employs the services of Carr Riggs Ingram (CRI), a certified public accounting firm. Gina provides daily bookkeeping entries using Intuit's QuickBooks. CRI provides weekly bookkeeping services each Wednesday in the Museum offices and provides an Accountant's Compilation Report for the BOT at the end of the calendar year. CRI prepares the IRS Form 990, the tax document that the Museum files each year with the IRS.

Operations

The Museum operates a number of programs that emphasize heritage education and remembrance, community quality of life, fund raising and wholesome, family entertainment, as well as collection and preservation. (Appendix H). The ISP team believes that no other organization within our region operates the number and variety of historical education programs as does the Heritage Museum. All events showcase the Museum with the exception of the Corn Hole Tournament – a pure fundraiser at this time.

The ISP team found that the amount of revenue earned varied greatly by with the event in 2014 (and previous years), from \$700 net profit from The Bikers Blast from the Past and \$6300 from the Night at the Museum to \$13,000 from Saturday in the Park (Appendix I). There is no evidence that any cost benefit analysis was performed on any event.

The Museum also works to showcase those events of wide interest not directly related to fundraising. The ISP team found that the Museum has led the way in recognizing and educating the community about the centennial anniversary of Okaloosa County. The Museum recently opened a centennial exhibition and all of its 2015 events are linked to centennial activities. Recently, as a VIVA 500 activity in remembrance of the 500th anniversary of the founding of the state of Florida, a 100-year time capsule exhibition was placed at the Museum. Last year, (FY 2013-2014), the Museum directly touched the lives of almost 25,000 individuals through its various events and programs, including among them approximately 2000 Okaloosa school children and 125 home schooled youngsters.

The Museum maintains a significant library of documents including maps, deeds, photographs, manuscripts, books, newspapers, obituaries, oral histories, family genealogies and early editions. In addition, as part of a robust program of acquisition and curation, the Museum maintains an artifact collection of relevant, historical interest. Last year, 75 new items of historical significance were accessioned last year and preserved for future access and study and approximately 100 historical points were researched upon individual request. The Collections Committee is presently executing a program to acquire digital scanning hardware for early edition preservation and accession.

During the study over the past 9 months, the ISP team found that the Museum suffered from lack of name recognition, although within the City of Valparaiso, recognition, as expected, was good. The City of Valparaiso, in fact, provides the Museum's Web service, electricity, facility use and event services. Gina has created and maintained outstanding relations with the Bay Beacon and Northwest Florida Daily News and the WAAZ and WJSB radio stations in Crestview, and coverage has been excellent.

Museum membership stands at 214 at this time, a figure that is arguably low for an organization that has supported the area for almost 45 years. Memberships can be purchased at different levels, from \$15 to \$1000 but membership is largely at the lower levels with only 15% of the memberships greater than \$50. There are only two memberships at the \$1000 level. Philanthropic or civic motivation to produce high level memberships seems to produce average results. The ISP team heard many times that "people who should care, don't care."

The ISP team's experience with similar organizations reveals that the influence of the non-profit heritage arts and education is multiplied several fold in indirect contacts from the direct contacts made. The impact of this cultural development as has been repeatedly shown to attract talented citizens, build vibrant communities, expand tourism and develop private-public partnerships.

Northwest Florida State College

The relationship between the Museum and NWFSC has been intimate, long lived and deserves a separate section. The association began formally in 1971 when the Museum was created and moved into buildings that had been previously occupied by the OWCC, the predecessor to the NWFSC.

The ISP and NWFSC cooperate within the framework of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), originally signed in April 2009 and due to expire on 30 June 2015 (Appendix J). The MOU is general but focuses on the anticipated relocation of the Museum from its present position in Valparaiso to the Main Campus of NWFSC, a relocation that has been under serious discussion between the two parties for well over a decade.

The ISP team concentrated on this important MOU connection to the NWFSC and the form that any future MOU might assume. Team consensus was that a future MOU should also explore possible education and other links as a natural connection through common mission elements. Therefore, to assist the Museum to the maximum extent, the team determined that this report should contain a model MOU (Appendix K) for use by the Museum in extending and enhancing its future relationships with the NWFSC.

The ISP team examined in depth the idea of relocation of the Museum to the NWFSC as opposed to renovating its present location or teaming with another entity with a more closely aligned education mission, such as the University of West Florida. It was judged that the NWFSC was the more natural location for a relocation venue; that it would provide desired foot traffic in addition to intern possibilities. This focus on the Main Campus would bring benefits to NWFSC as well, showcasing the college to the young people who had the occasion to visit the relocated Museum. The Main Campus is also the location of the Collegiate High School, the #1 high school in Florida at the time of this writing, which could be provided with Museum hand's-on community service opportunities, Capstone project (senior independent study) topics and intern prospects.

At the present time, the Learning Resource Center (LRC) of the NWFSC stores some Museum artifacts for preservation and its staff is amenable to additional preservation storage should the need arise. Although NFWSC has been unable to identify excess space for housing Museum functions, NFWSC continues to maintain willingness to accept siting of a new Museum facility on the Main Campus, possibly SW or SE of Building A.

The NWFSC continues to support the Museum in a variety of ways and all NWFSC staff members interviewed were positive and helpful. However, the message articulated over and over again was clear. In order to facilitate relocation to the Main Campus, the Museum must demonstrate a stronger, sustained revenue stream as well as the ability to raise capital. In addition, the Museum must have on staff a qualified Executive Director – in addition to the Manager’s position. One former NWFSC staff member suggested that the Director’s position might be part time and that a number of proven and qualified people to fill such a role could be found in our area. The last point of the NWFSC message is that the Museum must have a stronger IT component and a more complete and agile Web presence.

Findings

During the course of this review, the team members met numerous times to discuss findings and recommendations. Their consensus comments follow.

Financial

The principle finding, strongly supported by all individuals interviewed, is that the Museum requires a stronger revenue stream. Relocation, given that the College has determined that there is no existing useable space on the Main Campus, would occur under the new construction template of a \$300/ft². However, no relocation plan of any kind, even rental of used commercial space, is feasible without a stronger revenue stream.

As previously indicated, there is lack of branding and the membership of 214 seems low when compared to Valparaiso's population of 6500 and Okaloosa County's population of approximately 200,000. The team noted that this level of membership produces a revenue of approximately \$15,000 and that at this relatively low level, membership constitutes "low hanging fruit."

All available financial documents were reviewed. While there was no intent to provide an audit level evaluation, the review suggests that there are a number of minor elements that are confusing and misleading.

The financial review concurs with that already known by the BOT: net income continues to drop with operating reserves adequate for only 2 years.

Grants

The world of non-governmental agencies is a domain of grants and the team is aware that there have been few successes in the Museum's recent years. The competition for grant money is intense and applications require dedicated, talented resource commitments. The team congratulates the Museum in the formation of a dedicated Grant Committee and the recent grant award by the State of Florida's Division of Cultural Affairs for \$10,500.

Board of Trustees and Staff

At present there are 16 Trustees of the 20 allowed by Museum by-laws, evenly divided between those with educational and business backgrounds. The ISP team believes that while the present BOT is talented and energetic, it is inadequately involved at the “donor” level. Consensus is that there is inadequate connection to individuals in the community who should care enough to contribute – but who don’t. The team believes that all BOT members must be familiar with the Museum service area and schooled in the challenging task of raising money.

The BOT acts a working board, an adjunct to the management and operational activities of the Museum. The ISP team believes that the BOT has taken on a significant number of the operational activities of the Museum, activities that would have been performed in previous times through the coordinated actions of the Executive Director and the Manager. With only the Manager’s position staffed, the BOT and volunteers take on a more important role, becoming by necessity more of an operations adjunct to the Manager.

The operations staff consisting of a permanent Manager and a part-time Education Coordinator is capable and productive. The ISP team noted that both members have performed admirably in this challenging environment and both generously volunteer hours in excess of those for which they are compensated.

Within the context of relocation, the NWFSC opinion heard is loud and clear: a Executive Director is an absolute requirement. One NWFSC source interviewed suggested that the Museum search for a part-time Director and indicated that there were a multitude of qualified applicants, retired in the area, who could be identified for that job. No one interviewed expressed the opinion that hiring an Executive Director negated the need for a Manager.

The team felt that a Director could serve multiple needs in strategic planning, community outreach, sponsorship development, volunteer development and fund raising, taking a considerable load from the Manager’s and BOT’s tasks

Operations

The ISP team notes that Museum in-house visits of 2000 Okaloosa school children in 2014 resulted in a revenue stream of \$14,000. The ISP team met with the Okaloosa School District leadership to explore expanding the number of in-house visits and received willingness from the District to support an increase. The ISP congratulates the Museum for incorporating this program growth structure into the Strategic Plan Implementation Actions.

As previously indicated, revenue has varied widely among the Museum events from year to year. The ISP team found little evidence of cost benefit analyses performed on events or programs.

The team understands that the Museum has created a Sponsorship structure for its programs and congratulates the Museum in its efforts to integrate it throughout all of its programs by way of its Strategic Plan Implementation Actions.

Although the ISP team has no artifact and document acquisition and curation expertise, it is clear that the Museum faces a formidable challenge in these areas. The storage area for collectable items is overflowing but it is not clear that all items have been appropriately cataloged. In addition, the collections include a large number of early, historically relevant documents that are fragile and may (or may not) need to be digitized for preservation or access. The Collections Committee has begun a digitization activity involving the use of hand held scanners.

State Funding

The ISP notes the relative ease with which the Museum was able to secure an arts grant of \$10,500 this year (Florida Department of State, Department of Cultural Affairs) and suggests that a stronger funding relationship with the State would be beneficial.

The ISP team met with Senator Don Gaetz in September last year to explain its interest in the Museum. The Senator revealed that in the last legislative session, every request for support by every Museum within the state was approved. He recommended that museum request for support be put on The Florida Council on the Arts project list. The Senator asked for ballpark figures of what monetary

support would be requested and the ISP informed him that this information would derive from future Museum planning.

Recommendations

The BOT and Staff is to be congratulated on the renewed level of activity at all levels within the Museum. The recent Strategic Planning Activity and the tasks that have flowed from the Activity are signs of needed revitalization.

The ISP team has concluded that the Museum is in a fragile financial condition, operating with decreasing cash reserves. Its most immediate need is to survive. The Board needs to consider means to aggressively improve revenue through memberships, gifts, sponsorships, grants and program expansion.

The team recommends that all elements of the Strategic Plan Implementation Actions have firm goals that can be measured to gauge success. Many of them do not have goals and are therefore ineffective as management tools.

Some other specific recommendations are:

- Because the number of members is intimately connected to branding, gifts, sponsorships and volunteers, the team recommends an increase to the Museum's annual membership growth goal from 10% to 30%. The team believes strongly that additional membership should be sought through an aggressive marketing campaign that includes a redefinition of the perks, awards and benefits of the different levels of membership.
- The team believes that it cannot overstate the value of volunteers to the Museum and encourages the BOT to aggressively recruit support in that area by adopting volunteer goals not presently included in its Strategic Plan Implementation Actions. Volunteers, though presently in small in numbers, are valuable because they can leverage management hours without additional, direct cost.
- Challenge grant income efforts by setting a goal of having at least one active grant working at all times.

- Because of the value of the Museum's relationship with the NWFSC, the model MOU contained in this report should be executed to ensure continuous MOU coverage beyond 30 June 2015. If adequate time does not permit to execute the model MOU, the existing MOU should be extended. NWFSC has indicated a willingness to do so, if necessary.
- Should a future, stronger revenue stream permit, request consideration be given to a part-time Executive Director to leverage solutions for strategic plan implementation, fund raising, additional program revenue and volunteers.
- Emphasis should be given to filling BOT vacancies. And while it is duly noted that the BOT is well served by the services of its Treasurer, in light of the team's financial review, the ISP recommends that the Museum search for an additional Board Member with bookkeeping experience.
- The team recommends that the Executive Committee create, as a fundamental management tool for BOT review, a basic comparison of estimated labor hours and expense investment versus expected revenue.
- The ISP recommends that the Museum expand its interest and ability in securing state funding through the Florida Council on the Arts by creating a Florida Funding Committee within the BOT and enhancing the related activity in the Strategic Plan Implementation Action. Although relocation may not be an immediate Museum objective, funding requests for new facilities requirements definition may well be appropriate for Council funding consideration. The team also recommends that the Council be approached to catalog Museum documents whose content may already be preserved.
- Until agreement is reached for consistent and adequate support from Okaloosa County, annual requests for funding support should be made to the Okaloosa County Commissioners and this tasking should be made an element of the Strategic Plan Implementation Actions.

- A separate brochure describing the process of Museum bequest gifting should be prepared by competent legal counsel and made an element of the Strategic Plan Implementation Actions. It should describe how transfer to the Museum of cash, securities, or other property can be made through estate plans, whether by will or living trust.

- In light of the quantity of printed material, *in situ*, preserved or in need of some degree of preservation, the ISP team recommends that the Museum determine the need for additional storage space at the College that may be required. Ideally this would be an area on campus that would allow indexing, display, research or review.

- The Museum's information technology presence requires a strong and agile Webpage implementation. Improvements have been recently made but more are needed. The ISP recommends a dedicated Webmaster when additional revenue stream permits.

Appendixes

A – ISP Letter of Request

B – Interviewees

C – Strategic Plan Implementation Actions

D – Mission

E – Trustees

F – Committees

G – County Commissioners’ Letter of Request

H – Programs in a Nutshell

I – Program Revenue

J – Existing MOU

J – Model MOU

Appendix – A

ISP Letter of Request



115 Westview Avenue
Valparaiso, FL 32580

Tel: (850) 678-2615
Fax: (850) 678-4547

March 27, 2014

Mr. Jock Patterson
Chair
Institute for Senior Professionals
Northwest Florida State College

Dear Mr. Patterson,

I am Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida and we are seeking assistance from the Institute for Senior Professionals. This is a request to the ISP to help our Museum create a Strategic Plan that will move us to required, future levels of historic preservation. We would like your support in helping us redefine our guiding documents and to channel our enthusiasm to meet the challenges of building a regional heritage services center.

The Museum incorporated in 1969 and opened in its current location, the original campus of Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC), in 1971. There has been a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2008 with NWFSC and the Okaloosa County Commission, the focus of which is to relocate the Museum to the Niceville campus of NWFSC. This document is due to expire June 30, 2015.

Since 1999 the Commission provided the salary and benefits for the Executive Director at a value of approximately \$60,000 per year. However, in November of 2010, the Commission stopped funding the Executive Director position and drastically reduced funding and other support. The 2014 contribution of the Commission is anticipated to be \$8,815.00 and we do not know what to expect next year. It is in this atmosphere of uncertainty that the Museum is working to provide robust, quality of life and educational services through the collection and preservation of historical materials in the coming years.

In summary, we request your assistance to revise our Strategic Plan to address our financial challenges, continue to improve the quality of our work and make plans for relocation and integration of the historic collection and library archives to the College. It is there that we envision our museum's growth as a center for entertainment, research, and learning as we strive to service the educational growth and quality of life needs of our area.

I have attached some relevant documents for your review. Our Board will be happy to meet with you to provide additional information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Gordon King

Gordon King
Chairman, Heritage Museum Assoc., Inc.

Appendix B – Interviewees

Carol Apfel – Trustee, Museum
Bruce Arnold – Mayor, Valparaiso
Frank Berthé – Trustee, Museum
Nathan Boyle – Chair, Okaloosa County Commissioners
Crystal Moore Brown – Education Coordinator
Don Collins – Trustee, Museum
Steve Czonstka – Chair, Trustee, Museum
Don Gaetz – Senator, Florida
Trey Goodwin – Okaloosa County Commissioner
Ty Handy – President, NWFSC
Janice Henderson – Staff, NWFSC
Cliff Herron – Past Staff, NWFSC
Mary Beth Jackson – Superintendent, Okaloosa County School District
Henry Kelly – Staff, Okaloosa County School District
Lynn Ketter – Trustee, Museum
Gordon King – Ex Officio, Museum
Gina Marini – Manager, Museum
Donna Miller – Trustee, Museum
Catherine Nolan – Trustee, Museum
Harold Peek – Trustee, Museum
Diane Plank – Trustee, Museum
Bob Richburg – Past President, NWFSC
Judy Byrne Riley – Citizen
Tony Shipley – Trustee, Museum
Anne Southard – Staff, NWFSC
Heyward Strong – Commissioner, Valparaiso
Randy White – CFO, NWFSC
Jill White – Past President, NWFSC
Kelly Windes – Okaloosa County Commissioner

Appendix C

Draft Strategic Plan Implementation Actions

Maximize opportunities for increased revenue to include a robust and innovative fundraising program

- Leverage BOT contacts and fundraising capabilities
 - Each Trustee submit 4 potential new sponsors/donors with contact info
 - Finalize sponsors/donors lists and distribute to BOT
 - Consolidate lists and assign to Trustee 2 contacts to solicit w/Sponsor Packages
- Partner with county education programs
 - Attend Okaloosa School Board meeting to discuss Education in Centennial Year
 - Invite School Board Superintendent or Member to attend BOT meeting
 - Coordinate with Home School parent organizations and Charter Schools
- Leverage private sources for Museum advocacy (champions)
- Maximize grant opportunities with county/state/businesses
 - Compile list of ten possible new agencies which might be potential grantors
 - Contact Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation as possible source
- Expand membership and retain existing memberships
 - Increase membership 10% each year using solicitation benefit events
 - Use Chamber of Commerce programs & phone calls for member recruiting
- Retain and expand State/County/Local government funding and involvement
 - Use Florida Cultural Alliance & American Assoc. for State & Local History for contacts
 - Invite Okaloosa BBC, Florida legislators, Congress, Senate and Federal agencies to tour
- Evaluate existing fundraisers and create new ones
 - Conduct at least one fundraiser per quarter
 - Increase to at least one fundraiser every two months

Recognition of the Museum as the premier heritage and learning institution in northwest Florida

- Increase the museum's visibility and brand recognition
 - Use Blue Room to host Chamber of Commerce events and other agency meetings
 - Invite Okaloosa BBC, Florida legislators, Congress, Senate and Federal agencies to tour
 - Participate in at least two community expositions or show events each six months
 - Conduct at least a monthly newspaper, radio, TV or other media event/article
 - Schedule reports by OPR on progress in achieving Strategic Goals at Qtrly BOT meeting
- Institutionalize sound quality of work procedures
 - Use FL Cultural Alliance plus American Assoc. for State & Local History for procedures
 - Develop Procedures Manual
- Increase Website, Twitter & Facebook capability and visibility
- Increase staff and technology expertise
- Improve/protect/expand facility
- Analyze staffing needs to include funding

Appendix D – Mission

Our mission is to collect and preserve material culture pertaining to the region's history; to interpret its economic and social history – including the relationship between the region's human population and its natural resources – through exhibits, educational programs, and research; and to provide public access to its collections for research purposes.

Appendix E

Board of Trustees

Carole Apfel, Trustee

President, M.C. Apfel Company, Inc

Anne Bauer, Trustee

VP-Finance, Okaloosa Gas

Frank Berté, Trustee

President, Destin Interactive

Don Bohler, Trustee

Retired VP, Central Europe, Lockheed-Martin

Juli Anne Boretsky, Trustee

Assistant Professor of History, NWFSC

Don Collins, Vice-Chair/Finance

Senior Vice-President, First Florida Bank

Steve Czonstka, Chair

Retired USAF Officer, Air Force Association

Carrie Ely, Trustee

Lighting Consultant, Gulf Power

Marie Hallion, Trustee

Collegiate Professor, University of Maryland

Lynn Ketter, Trustee

Professor of Teacher Education, NWFSC

Gordon King, Ex-officio

Vice President of Operation, Okaloosa Gas

Catherine Nolan, Trustee

Archaeologist, Colorado State University

Harold Peek, Vice-Chair Membership

Attorney at Law

Jean Paul Pentecouteau, Trustee

Historic Architect, Colorado State University

Diane Plank, Secretary

Retired Educator, Community Volunteer

Kenya Wolff, Trustee

Assistant Professor, NWFSC

Appendix F – Committees

Executive

Finance

Collections

Exhibits

Education

Grants

Membership

Marketing

Relocation

Gift Shop

Centennial

Steering

Events

Corn Hole Tournament (28 February/3 October)

Saturday in the Park (25 April)

Night at the Museum (25 July)

Biker's Blast for the Past (19 September)

Yule of Yesterday (12 December)

Appendix G

County Commissioners' Letter of Request



115 Westview Avenue
Valparaiso, FL 32580

Tel: (850) 678-2615
Fax: (850) 678-4547

January 2, 2015

Dear Commissioner Windes,

Thank you for meeting with members of the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida's (HMNWF) Board of Trustees (BOT) Executive Committee on October 27, 2014 at the Board of County Commissioners' Office. This letter responds to your recommendations.

Since its founding in 1971, the HMNWF has demonstrated its unequaled ability to appropriately reflect the overall heritage and culture of our area. Past County support has been invaluable to the Museum's mission of collection, preservation, interpretation and exhibition of our various collections. The Museum has served as an archival and repository facility for historical objects and documents accessible to the public for study and research. With a focus primarily on education, the Museum remains an invaluable cultural resource, entrusted by the citizens to preserve our past for the future.

The County's support of the Museum has drastically fallen over the past years. County fiscal year funding was reduced from \$50,000 to \$8,815. The County-funded Director's position was eliminated as well as critical Information Technology support. In response, the Museum diverted its energies to fundraising efforts to include more special events and corporate sponsorships. We continue to seek novel ways to promote attendance and participation. Night at the Museum, the Biker's Blast for the Past and Corn Hole Tournaments were added as fundrais

ers while existing community events, like Saturday in the Park and Yule of Yesterday, were recast to emphasize fundraising. The "Eglin & Vietnam" exhibit at Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC) and the creation of "Paradise

Gardens" with the Valparaiso Garden Club are recent innovations to promote education, public awareness, and collaboration with various local agencies. Looking for further innovation, the Museum has requested a study from the Institute of Senior Professionals (ISP) at NWFSC to enhance strategic planning.

In 2013 a special committee of the Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative awarded the Museum custody of the Okaloosa Viva Florida 500 Time Capsule for the next 100 years. That decision validated the precept that the Museum has the most comprehensive collection of exhibits and programs in our area displaying and teaching about artifacts relating to our heritage and ethnography. More than 25,000 guests visited our facility in 2014 and we expect more this year as we celebrate Okaloosa County's Centennial.

The Centennial presents a unique opportunity for the Museum to demonstrate its value to the community. The BOT has responded as the organization best positioned to be the Okaloosa county lead for Centennial-related activities, by tailoring Museum activities and programs in 2015 to promote and teach Okaloosa County history and heritage. The Museum has also designed a Centennial Logo to be displayed on various items and apparel to be sold in the Museum's Gift Shop. This is also an opportunity to revitalize the dormant Okaloosa County Museum Cooperative founded in 2010, so that all museums can benefit from this historical event. These proposed activities

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offer special opportunities to provide volunteer involvement, educational possibilities, public awareness, and a vibrancy to attract visitors, tourists and new residents. A listing of these activities "2015 in a Nutshell" is attached.

The HMNWF continues to create social outreach for our community by tailoring programs and tours to meet the needs of educators and groups such as Boy & Girl Scouts, daycare centers and many others, as well as providing special tours for Children in Crisis, Boys & Girls Clubs and the Autism Center.

The BOT contends that Museum activities, by their association and integration within the communities' educational systems, are highly desirable and beneficial community services. And, in particular, the Centennial activities are distinctly unique. The Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida will conduct activities and programs during the Centennial Year that are not replicated anywhere else. They are essential services of a vibrant community which will benefit the county and its residents during this celebration and for years to come.

The HMNWF needs your help. To summarize, with reduced County support, the HMNWF has increased emphasis on fundraising. However, the HHNWF believes that expansion of its educational programs is of the greatest community value. Thus, the BOT urges the County to revise its funding plan for the four museums in the 2014-15 budget. We are asking that the HMNWF allocation for fiscal year 2014-15 be supplemented to \$50,000 to augment our staff and our ability to promote community awareness of our capabilities, expand the cadre of the our core educational programs and restore viability and functionality to the HMNWF information technology support programs. Please help the Museum preserve the past --- to build our future.

Respectfully,

Steve Czonstka

Steve Czonstka
Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida
Board of Trustees - Chairman

Appendix H

Programs in a Nutshell

Appendix H
**2015 in a Nutshell - Okaloosa Centennial
Events, Programs & Exhibits**

Home Schools Days & Hands-On History - *Celebrating the Centennial*

A fun history lesson presented each month for students ages 5-12.

History Sandwiched-In

Bring a sandwich, enjoy your lunch and listen to a free history lecture.

“The Centennial – Okaloosa County”

Exhibit opening.

Valentine’s Victorian Tea

Hot tea, traditional refreshments and a delightful education program.

Corn Hole Tournament (Spring & Fall)

Fun and fabulous fundraiser with raffles & cash prizes.

39th Saturday in the Park and 5K Run/Walk

Annual heritage festival showcasing the Museum & celebrating culture & history.

Mother’s Day Victorian Tea

Hot tea, traditional refreshments and a delightful education program.

Night at the Museum – Okaloosa’s Past Comes to Life

Guided tour combining Theatre & History with a food & wine tasting and silent auction.

Chronicles of the Centennial – Summer Camp

Week long fun education program for children ages 5-12.

Biker’s Blast for the Past – Exploring our Heritage

Motorcycle fundraiser with raffles & prizes.

Haunted Heritage Tours – Okaloosa’s Spooky History

Halloween history education program & mini festival.

Holiday Victorian Teas

Hot tea, traditional refreshments and a delightful education program.

Yule of Yesterday

A traditional holiday celebration with Christmas choirs and festival activities.

Heritage Alive! Craft Classes: Offered throughout the year to keep Heritage Alive!

**Traditional Basket Weaving/Pine Needle Basketry/Fiber Rush Weave/Chair Caning
Knitting/Crocheting**

Exhibitions

“Paradise Gardens” – A Pollinator-Friendly Garden

“Northwest Florida County Lines – *The Evolution*”

“Practice Gear – *The Medical Collection*”

“Eglin AFB & The Vietnam War” at NWFSC Learning Resource Center

“Fruit of the Loom – Weaving”

“The Centennial – Okaloosa County 2015”

Appendix I

Program Revenue

Saturday in the Park

2014: 12,948.34

2013: 18,677.40

2012: 14,374.66

2011: 13,047.48

Night at the Museum

2014: 6,282.82 (introduced 2 nights)

2013: 5,762.00

2012: 3,494.49

2011: 1,840.77

Biker's Blast

2014: 672.06

2013: 3,829.08 (year Helen Back sponsored)

2012: 405.32

Yule of Yesteryear

2014: 941.09

2013: 286.61

2012: 575.55

2011: 907.52

Corn Hole

2014: Oct. 553.48 & Feb 883.31

2013: June 128.00 & March 478.00

Yard Sale

2014: 511.52

2013: 500.65

2012: 501.25

2011: 676.50

Appendix J
Existing MOU

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

Northwest Florida State College Board of Trustees,

AND

Heritage Museum Association Board of Trustees and the Okaloosa County Commission

Whereas the college trustees, the trustees of the Heritage Museum and the Okaloosa County Commission agree that the location of the Heritage Museum on the Niceville Campus would be advantageous to both the museum and the college, and

Whereas the three parties agree that the timeframe for such a location might be in the 2012-2013 timeframe, if space is available on the Niceville Campus, and

Whereas the parties agree that, in the event of a lease, the cost of leasing facilities at fair-market value, as well as the cost of utilities, insurance and maintenance are the responsibility of the Heritage Museum, and

Whereas the parties agree that in the event of construction, the funding of the construction cost of a new facility on the campus, as well as the cost of utilities, insurance and maintenance is the responsibility of the Heritage Museum Board of Trustees, and

Whereas the parties agree that any facility built on the Niceville Campus would have to conform to the State Board of Education's facilities requirements and

Whereas all parties agree that the Board of Trustees would have location and building design approval, and

Whereas all parties agree that a detailed lease would need to be developed for use of facilities, provision and value of in-kind services, and the use of land for the construction of a facility, and

Whereas all parties agree that the failure of the museum to enter into a lease agreement or a construction agreement with the College for a facility by June 30, 2015 would negate this agreement; and

Whereas all parties agree that availability of space will be determined by college administration and recommended to the Board of Trustees,

Now Therefore all three parties adopt this Memorandum of Understanding and pledge to work cooperatively to make the location of the Heritage Museum a reality on the Niceville Campus.


NWFS Board of Trustees


Heritage Museum Association

See letter attached
Okaloosa County Commission

Attest: , Executive Director

Appendix K

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
Between
Northwest Florida State College Board of Trustees
AND
Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2009, the NWFSC Board of Trustees (the College) and the Heritage Museum Association Board of Trustees (the Museum), entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) stating that it would be advantageous to both the College and the Museum for the Museum to relocate its physical facilities to the Niceville Campus of the College, and

WHEREAS, the MOU between the parties set forth the basic terms and conditions of such relocation, and

WHEREAS, said MOU would be negated in the event a lease or construction agreement with the College for a facility was not consummated by June 30, 2015, and

WHEREAS, intervening economic and other factors have precluded the Museum from entering into a lease or construction agreement with the College, and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the parties to continue their mutually beneficial relationship,

NOW THEREFORE, the MOU dated March 17, 2009, is amended as follows:

A. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this MOU is to set forth general principles and mutual understandings regarding the eventual temporary transfer and/or storage of certain perishable documents and historical artifacts from the Museum to the College and construction of a suitable building for Museum purposes on leased College property.

B. STATEMENT OF MUTUAL BENEFIT AND INTERESTS:

The Museum is in need of land to construct suitable facilities to enable it to store, curate and exhibit its various historical documents and artifacts, and provide classroom space for educational purposes for local students and research facilities for use by College staff, students and various historical and genealogical groups. The College has land on the Niceville Campus suitable for a museum site and space in several buildings to both store and exhibit documents and artifacts. The College has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Museum and has recognized the educational value it provides to the community and to the College students. Faculty members serve on the Museum board, and the College currently provides archival storage for some key Museum documents and is willing and

able to store larger artifacts, as the conditions in the current Museum facility are not adequate for preservation. The College supports the Museum's efforts to relocate to its Niceville Campus in order for the Museum to improve its facilities so as to preserve its unique collection and to attract visitors and scholars.

Specific Benefits to the College include:

- There would be a cooperative arrangement between the Museum and the College whereby the arts and social sciences programs could utilize the materials at the Museum for teaching and research purposes.
- Various artifacts could be cataloged and arranged into topical exhibits such as local area nature, pioneer arts and Indian arts to be displayed in the College Gallery, thereby attracting visitors and generating interest in the College.
- A partnership with the Florida State Museum could be developed, thus making state grants available and attracting travelling historical exhibits to be shown locally.
- A vibrant, active Museum could become an educational resource in Northwest Florida for local area elementary, middle and high school students, thus drawing positive attention to the College and its many courses and programs of instruction. With proper advertising, the Museum as a tourist attraction could also draw favorable attention to the College and further enhance its image as a place of higher learning and continuing education.

C. THE COLLEGE SHALL:

1. Work with the Museum to identify an appropriate location on the Niceville Campus on which to construct a Museum building.
2. Cooperate with the Museum in finding an appropriate location(s) on the Niceville Campus in which to display and/or store documents and artifacts.
3. Cooperate with the Museum in finalizing a lease for the designated property and designing a facility appropriate for both College and Museum objectives.

D. THE MUSEUM SHALL:

1. Work with the College to identify the most appropriate location on the Niceville Campus on which to construct a Museum building.
2. Cooperate with the College in finding an appropriate location(s) on the Niceville Campus in which to display and/or store documents and artifacts.
3. Cooperate with the College in both finalizing a lease for the designated property and designing a Museum facility.
4. Make every effort to acquire sufficient funding to design and then construct a Museum facility at the earliest possible date.

E. IT IS MUTUALLY UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED BY AND BETWEEN THE PARTIES THAT:

1. MODIFICATION. Modifications within the scope of this instrument shall be made by mutual consent of the parties by written modification, signed and dated by all parties, prior to any changes being made.
2. TERMINATION. The original Memorandum of Understanding between the parties dated March 17, 2009, and expiring on June 30, 2015, is hereby specifically amended to expire on _____, or at such date as may be mutually agreed upon in writing by the parties hereto.
3. PRINCIPAL CONTACTS: The principal contacts for this agreement are:

Northwest Florida State College Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida

4. COMMENCEMENT/EXPIRATION DATE: This instrument is executed as of the date of the last signature and is effective until terminated.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this agreement as of the last written date below.

Northwest Florida State College

Heritage Museum of Northwest Fla.

DATE

DATE