

## **Meeting Minutes**

Date: 3/4/2026

Meeting Start: 6:36 PM

Attendance:

- Executive Director: Candice Blackstone-Larson
- Board Members: Luke Guindon, Ann Fisher, Sue Bertram, Steven Sams, Phil Britton, Andie Johnston, Mary Tilson, Lee Ossenheimer, Tom Dummer
- Board Members Who Joined Remotely: Dick Pierson, Susan Divine

### **Approval of Previous Minutes**

- **Ann Fisher moves to adopt the minutes per the amendment made. The Hiawatha 5-year calendar, also the mention about picking the 2026 Board retreat date was not noted.**
  - **Seconded by: Tom Dummer**
  - **The motion carried.**

### **Treasurer's Financial Report**

- Bell Financial Investment
  - \$117,229.76
- Business Checking
  - \$75,276.99
- Grant Business Checking
  - \$8.09
- Business Money Market
  - \$106,290.49
- 12-month CD for \$100,000 at Incredible Bank
  - \$103,803.06
- Account Totals
  - \$402,608.39
- **Treasurer's Financial Report Approval**
  - **Ann Fisher moves to approve the Treasurer's Report, subject to audit.**
  - **Seconded by: Steven Sams**
  - **The motion carried.**

### **Committee Reports**

- Events Committee
  - Master Artist Event in October
    - Frank Youngman and Seth Bernard will be visiting schools, Great Lakes Recovery Centers, and teaching workshops in October for the Master Artist Series. This has been fully paid for with the Michigan Arts Culture Council grant that was recently awarded.

- Now that this grant has been awarded, this funding can be used for some additional workshops in October for the Master Artist Series event.
    - Square Dance with Hiawatha House Band on June 18th
      - Our landlord has approved Square Dance in the parking lot at The Fold with music by the Hiawatha House Band with Jo Foley calling squares.
      - Sue Bertram spoke to the Marquette Downtown Development Authority, and our event will coincide with active social district hours on 3rd Street. We can put up posters at the commons area in downtown Marquette and send them event listings that will be posted on their website.
  - Membership Committee from Sue Bertram
    - Square Dance with Hiawatha House Band on June 18th
      - We will offer festival volunteer signup at this event.
      - We will be selling merchandise at this event.
      - We are planning to hold a member potluck in the office at this event.
    - The committee is planning to offer a Friday night festival gathering in the food tent for members with music and hors d'oeuvres to encourage community within the membership.
  - Fundraising report from Ann Fisher
    - The committee met on February 26, 2026.
    - The committee is planning for signs along the entry walk at the festival that can be sponsored by community partners with the possibility of combining signs with program ads and possibly having different levels of this sponsorship.
      - Candice Blackstone-Larson is pricing and sourcing signs from multiple local vendors.
    - They discussed upcoming grants.
    - The committee had a discussion about the goal to support local musicians
      - \$27,000 to 119 Michigan music artists.
      - \$55,000 to 20 out-of-state musicians.
      - This data encouraged a reflection on what our goal to be giving out to local musicians each year is.
    - Fundraising at festival
      - Candice Blackstone-Larson is looking at software that would capture email addresses, creating the opportunity to follow up with donors.

- Possibly making an announcement from the main stage, and having Ann Fisher available for a period of time at the festival. She could discuss various ways to support Hiawatha via estate planning, qualified charitable distributions.
  - Current Fundraising
    - We currently have 7 recurring donors.
    - Ann Fisher would like a future discussion on combining donations on the trailer via an 'in memoriam' section.
- Music Selection Committee report from Dick Pierson
  - All performers for the 2026 festival have been selected.
  - Candice Blackstone-Larson is only waiting to get 2 contracts back signed for artists.
  - The committee is working on organizing the performance order of the artists at the festival.
  - The committee already has some artists under consideration for the 2027 festival.
  - They are working on creating a process for determining the members of the Music Selection Committee.

### **Ad Hoc Committees**

- Investment planning committee from Tom Dummer
  - A meeting is not yet scheduled.
  - Tom Dummer would like our Bell Financial allocation to be up for discussion.
  - Lee Ossenheimer would like trailer and equipment maintenance to be kept in mind on the topic of the investment planning committee.
- Board Eligibility Requirements Review Committee from Sue Bertram
  - The group met and will have another meeting to finalize the details of their discussions.
- Music Selection Committee proposal to develop oversight plan with BOD & Music Selection Committee involvement from Sue Bertram
  - Sue Bertram, Candice Blackstone-Larson, Dick Pierson, Sarah Gimpl, and John Gillette met to discuss the process that the Music Selection Committee uses from start to finish to choose music artists for the festival.
  - John Gillette provided a PowerPoint that explains the current process used and is working with this ad hoc committee on a proposal to give the Board a final approval vote on each main stage music artist.
  - The Board is not interested in becoming part of the music selection process, other than having a final vote before signing music artists.
  - Susan Divine asked if the Music Selection Committee is still using the chart that was used in the past that helps determine the categories for the

music artists, and compare it with the music from recent festivals. Dick Pierson explained that they do not currently use this chart in this way, although they still have it available within a spreadsheet document.

### **Old Business**

- Board Committee Assignments
  - Sue Bertram started the discussion to ensure all Board members join a committee and asked all Board members to participate.

### **New Business**

- Artists In The Round Fee Increase Proposal
  - Increase application fee to \$245 for 2026.
  - Limit to only ONE complimentary weekend provided per booth.
  - Rather than include 1 free parking pass, offer them 1 parking pass at 50% off this year.
    - With this plan, they will pay for their own parking pass for the 2027 festival. This change can let them know that this change will be coming. We need to make parking changes with the upcoming park changes.
  - Continue to include 1 camping tag this year but offer it at 50% off for the 2027 festival.
  - **Ann Fisher moves to approve the proposal to increase the Artists In The Round fees to \$245, and change the Artists In The Round compensation package by making the proposed changes to the parking pass and camping tag.**
    - **Seconded by: Steven Sams**
    - **The motion carried.**
- ATM Necessity
  - We take checks, cards, Venmo. Vendors take digital forms of payment, and the need for an on-site ATM has changed.
  - The only area that may be negatively affected by eliminating the on-site ATM machine would be the Young Artists Corner. They should be notified of this change.
- Food Vendors Application Changes
  - Not ready yet.
- Marquette Rockestra
  - Marquette Rockestra would like to use The Fold for rehearsal for their upcoming show on May 16th. Dan Truckey would be the person to open and close the space.
  - **Sue Bertram moves to allow Dan Truckey to open and close, and the Marquette Rockestra to use The Fold for their rehearsals with no fee.**
    - **Seconded by: Tom Dummer.**
    - **The motion carried.**
- 2026 Board Retreat
  - Sue Bertram and Candice Blackstone-Larson suggested that we start scheduling the annual retreat for the fall.

- At a future time, all Board members will decide on an October date to hold the annual retreat.
- Steven Sams is requesting to have Benesch added to the approved list of community partners.
  - No objections from any Board members.
- **Tom Dummer moves to request that Hiawatha send a card and flowers to Bonnie Holland.**
  - **Seconded by: Steven Sams**
  - **The motion carried.**
- Candice Blackstone-Larson is working to get business cards printed for the Board as well as postcards that list events and jams that can be given out to help raise awareness and promote the events.
- Candice Blackstone-Larson will release a press release announcing the most recent grant once the email of final confirmation arrives.

### Festival

- Tourist Park
  - Candice Blackstone-Larson reports that the meeting with Tourist Park concerning the construction has been postponed.
- One access point on Thursday of the festival
  - Candice Blackstone-Larson proposed possibly having only one access point to the park starting at noon on Thursday, closing the Powdermill Road entrance and asking for all traffic to come in the back entrance.
  - Dick Pierson pointed out Stenberg Brothers and ABO Tent Events have trailers that are too large to enter through the back gate, and need to enter through the Powdermill Road entrance on Thursday.
  - Candice Blackstone-Larson emphasized that one access point is a strain on traffic staff and early entry staff because of the lists of approved entrees being shared between the two entrances, and all of the different staff communication involved in the process.
- First-Aid
  - Candice Blackstone-Larson had a meeting with Mike Kates, Care Team, and Security to discuss streamlining incident reports and how all areas involved work together.
  - All groups involved would like to streamline their incident reports and protocols to consolidate the incident report process and work together more closely.
- Online ticket programs
  - Candice Blackstone-Larson is still looking closely at ticketing vendors to use for the 2026 festival ticket sales.
  - Implementing one of these options could possibly provide advantages like fundraising software and capturing festival attendee information to help us follow up with them after the festival.

**Meeting Adjournment**

- Sue Bertram moves to adjourn the meeting.
  - Seconded by: Steven Sams
  - The motion carried.

**Meeting Ended: 8:38 PM.**

**Next Regular Board Meeting - April 1, 2026, 6:30 PM.**