

Minutes: Mill of Kintail Museum Advisory Committee

April 17, 2025,

Hybrid Meeting via Zoom and MVCA Office Boardroom

Roll Call

Members Present

- Bev Holmes, Chair
- Darcy Moses, Vice-Chair
- Lucy Carleton
- Diana Jackson (Virtual 11:24 a.m.)
- Kathy McNenly
- Sarah More
- Jill Moxley
- Wendy Bridges

Staff

- Sally McIntyre, General Manager
- Scott Lawryk, Facilities Manager
- Maybe McInnis, Museum Curator
- Kelly Hollington, Recording Secretary

Guests

- Fauzya Moore, Consultant

Members Absent

- Sara Chatfield

B. Holmes called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any conflicts of interest and informed that they may declare a conflict at any time during the session. No declarations were received.

Agenda Review

There were no additions to the agenda.

MAC25/04/17 - 1

MOVED BY: D. Moses

SECONDED BY: S. More

Resolved, that the agenda for the April 17, 2025 Mill of Kintail Museum Advisory Committee Meeting be adopted as presented.

“CARRIED”

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MAIN BUSINESS

1. Approval of Minutes: Mill of Kintail Museum Advisory Committee Meeting, January 29, 2025

There were no amendments to the minutes.

MAC25/04/17 - 2

MOVED BY: S. More

SECONDED BY: K. McNenly

Resolved, that the minutes of the Mill of Kintail Museum Advisory Committee Meeting held on January 29, 2025 be received and approved as printed.

“CARRIED”

2. Mill of Kintail Staff Updates, Report 003/25, S. Lawryk.

S. Lawryk introduced the newly hired Museum Curator, Maybe McInnis to the committee. Two museum summer students will be starting shortly, he noted that one is a current student and one a graduate of the museum program at Algonquin college. He reviewed action items on the workplan including development of the gift shop space and development of a formal script for museum tours. He highlighted staff member, S. Kirkham’s vital role at the Mill of Kintail site.

B. Holmes asked if M. McInnis is local and for credentials and experience. M. McInnis explained they have a degree in Art History, approximately 15 years experience working with non-profit and museum organizations including a local youth program organization and the Textile Museum in Almonte. They highlighted the ongoing support from the curator at the Textile Museum.

W. Bridges asked if the museum will be open 7 days a week for the 2025 season. S. Lawryk confirmed.

W. Bridges asked if there will be 1 or 2 staff members at the museum. S. Lawryk explained that there will usually be 2 staff members at the museum. He noted that during the week, museum staff are supported by operations staff on-site.

3. Presentation: Mill of Kintail Strategic Plan, Fauzya Moore.

F. Moore presented findings of her evaluation of the Mill of Kintail Strategic Plan. She summarized her findings, noting good progress on organizing collections, mounting

exhibitions, and facilities management with challenges in communications, marketing and fundraising. The Museum Advisory Committee survey largely aligns with her assessment, showing moderate to strong support for curation efforts but indicating more work is needed on communications and visitor experience. She highlighted that the museum faces major financial challenges, including the loss of municipal funding, and the MVCA board has decided that another organization should assume management of the collections. Despite these challenges, the museum has returned to pre-COVID visitation levels, roughly 7,000 visitors, which is better than many American museums.

F. Moore emphasized the need for the museum to establish a strong financial footing and to involve the community in Lanark and possibly Ottawa in its management. She suggested forming a fundraising committee to explore potential financial sources and improve communication and outreach efforts. She highlighted the importance of increasing visitation, particularly from Ottawa, and suggested leveraging social media and partnerships with other museums for this purpose. She proposed strengthening the Naismith connection, improving signage, strengthening communications and exploring circuit tourism as potential future strategies. She highlighted the importance of increasing the museum's visibility and rebranding the Mill of Kintail as a Canadian heritage site.

L. Carleton asked if the visitation statistics for 2024 reflect visitors to the site or the museum specifically. S. Lawryk confirmed that the statistics represent the visitor count recorded by museum staff in 2024.

J. Moxley asked if there is a donation box at the museum. S. Lawryk confirmed that there is a donation box, but it requires updated improved signage. J. Moxley highlighted the importance of encouraging visitors to donate.

L. Carleton asked F. Moore for about a comment regarding the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI) visit to the museum. She clarified that, to her understanding, the CCI was merely checking in and did not offer any comments on the condition of the collection.

D. Jackson commented that she was present during the CCI visit. She noted that CCI made informal comments expressing their positive impression of the condition of the artifacts relative to other museums in the province.

S. Lawryk noted that MVCA has applied for a formal visit from CCI in 2025 to evaluate the condition of the collection. The application has been recognized, confirmation of visit will be determined in May.

J. Moxley asked if there is availability for funding through CCI. S. McIntyre explained that MVCA connected with CCI initially in 2023 and has continued communications and to explore available opportunities. She commented that CCI is pleased to endorse the museum and offer technical support; however, they have not provided any avenues for financial assistance.

K. McNenly asked what avenues MVCA has researched for funding opportunities. S. McIntyre explained that MVCA previously explored opportunities with federal organizations with no success. She noted that the Museum is in competition for funding with many organizations in the Capital region.

J. Moxley commented that greater effort is needed to increase the volunteer base for the museum. S. McIntyre explained that MVCA had previously reached out the community to form a fundraising committee but received no applications. She noted that the MVCA Board is looking for increased community support and volunteer base and asked if any MAC members could assist with fundraising.

L. Carleton expressed her support in improving community engagement and volunteerism and highlighted the importance of attending community events.

M. McInnis commented that they have interest in attending community events to improve community engagement and relationships and to solicit volunteers. They asked members of the committee to notify them of upcoming community events to consider attending. They asked for support from the committee by attending events and providing information as it relates to the collection. They highlighted the potential for collaboration with the Textile Museum and other local museums in various areas including volunteer engagement and joint grant applications. They expressed their interest to the Lanark County Arts and Heritage Committee in joining their Marketing and Joint Projects Committee.

J. Moxley commented that there is a need to develop a budget specifically for the museum. S. McIntyre explained that the visitor services category of the MVCA budget outlines specific allocations related to the museum program, along with facility rentals and other services.

4. 2025 Museum Work Plan, Scott Lawryk.

S. Lawryk reviewed the 2025 Museum Work Plan. He explained that most of the tasks relating to moving items within the museum is complete. He suggested an on-site meeting with M. McInnis and committee members to coordinate the exhibit design.

L. Carleton explained that members of the committee and volunteers have formed a working group. At a recent meeting the working group developed a list of ideas on how to support the museum and to develop an exhibit for 2025.

L. Carleton commented that she has developed a draft tour script to provide to M. McInnis for review and further development.

M. McInnis noted that work on the gift shop will commence in following weeks. D. Jackson expressed interest in assisting with the development of the gift shop.

B. Holmes suggested that M. McInnis share their availability with the committee members to schedule time to collaborate on the various aspects of the museum. Members of the committee agreed to connect with M. McInnis.

W. Bridges asked if M. McInnis' main office will be at the Museum or at the Gatehouse. M. McInnis responded that they will be primarily in the Museum assisting with tours.

5. Corporate Strategic Plan, Report 3491/25, Sally McIntyre.

S. McIntyre provided background regarding the update of MVCA's Corporate Strategic Plan. She noted that the board emphasized a need to focus on core mandate and modernizing asset management. She explained that MVCA lacks the capacity to manage the museum long-term and have received Board direction to find another entity to manage the museum collection. She explained that there are plans to develop a framework to solicit interest from potential management organizations. She highlighted the current focus of improving the museum's marketability. She noted that the Museum has 3-years remaining of municipal funding to enable the transition.

ADJOURNMENT

MAC25/04/17 - 3

MOVED BY: D. Moses

SECONDED BY: S. More

Resolved, That the Mill of Kintail Museum Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned.

“CARRIED”

The meeting adjourned at 12:08 p.m.

K. Hollington, Recording Secretary