

Oakland County Historical Commission

7:00pm, July 14, 2025

BOC Conference Room

- I. Roll call: Egbo, Walls, Mutch, Richardson, Milne, Arwady, Murphy, Decker.
Absent: Campbell.
- II. Additions/changes to this agenda – none. Motion made and seconded to accept the agenda- approved.
- III. Approve Minutes from May 12, 2025 – motion made and seconded to approve; approved.
- IV. New Business
 - a. Oakland County Flag – Egbo: BOC to create a new flag in time for America 250 next year; OCHC should have a voice on the committee and support the BOC in this process. Decker will contact Dave Woodward about joining the BOC flag committee.
 - b. OCHS Summer Social Planning – Oakland County Historical Society is the new name for former Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society. Summer Social is July 26 & 27, 12pm-4pm. Decker is not available to set up; two tables, tent, and bin of OCHC materials will be in the mansion basement, maybe set up on Friday, instead of Saturday, if possible. Who can help: Walls, Egbo, Mutch is a maybe; Milne can take a shift; Arwady is a maybe; Murphy can take a shift; Campbell TBD
 - c. Circuit Court History – America 250; Judge Warren picked Circuit Court History as the project; Egbo is on the history committee. Decker can help with research.
 - d. Underground Railroad in Pontiac – Darrow & Peck Subdivision, Deeds (Decker) – Egbo is helping someone research a possible Pontiac enclave that provided safety for freedom seekers between 1850-1860; Decker found some land records related to Crockett in this subdivision (1850 deed from Weeks to Crockett), can look at census neighbors for 1850 to see who lived around him
- V. Old Business
 - a. Decker's Presentation to BOC – Report: Presentation was well-received; Decker to send recording to OCHC members
 - b. Juneteenth – Report: Well-attended and lots of people came by the OCHC, event cut short by weather. The 1877 book was a big draw; Egbo suggests putting them in a binder alphabetically to make it easier to find each Twp.; Richardson suggests having a couple copies of them
 - c. May Preservation Month Social Media Engagement – was good; can we put together a posting schedule in time for America 250, could highlight history of the county – population growth; try to tie county history to national picture without being overly academic, maybe how did Oakland County's

Revolutionary War veterans get here, their families moving from the east coast to this area; aim for 4 posts/mo., could we get an intern to help with this? Could each community provide images/info and post to our page? Richardson and Decker suggest picking a theme for each month (such as January = Winter in Oakland County; February = Ice Harvest; March = Roads)

- d. 5 Year Plan – Awards Program, Workshop Planning, Website, Youth Engagement, Data Collection on Historical Sites are some goals
 - i. Awards program – need to flesh out Pewabic tile awards
 - ii. Workshop – probably not for 2025, aim for 2026; should OCHC be a session presenter at next Local History Conference? Need to figure out what our topic would be...
 - iii. Website – need to identify improvements we can make, such as a better finding aid directory, as well as visitors and tourism, and directing them to points of interest in the county, make a Storymap with ArcGIS?
 - iv. Youth Engagement – Richardson suggests a poster contest to drive interest; Murphy suggests schools might have students do this for America250 anyway; Deckers suggests an AI-prompting contest that will give you an *accurate* answer about Oakland County history (we experimented with Claude.ai and got “Pastoral Pursuits,” a meditation on sheep farming in Oakland County, and also an Oakland County sheep rap)...and for our 5 year plan in general, be thinking about how we could teach people to research and present history with AI— maybe this could be a workshop topic for us
- e. Purchasing items – n/a
- f. Membership renewals – Decker will figure out which ones need to be renewed
- g. OCHR Update: Last meeting 3/20/2025, next meeting July 17, 2025, 1pm; Decker to meet with Steve Sanders re: server contents

VI. Committee Reports

- a. At Risk Properties
 - i. Rochester High School – no update
 - ii. Roosevelt School – no update
 - iii. Davis House – no update
 - iv. Pickering Barn – disassembled
 - v. Payne/Waugh Cemetery – no update
- b. Map Project – revisit next month
- c. Website – see five year plan, revisit next month
- d. Poster Project – Great Migration (1915-1950) poster: looking for cultural expertise on the text (Decker to work with Mike McGuiness, OCHC members

can also suggest community members to weigh in); are permissions needed to use the images? County to redesign with their branding

- e. Preservation – Byers Farm marker application awarded, Oxford Marker Program

VII. Tabled Items – tabled

VIII. Announcements/Adjournment

- a. Cemetery and History Coalition Meetings – Report from 6/25 Meeting – tabled
- b. Summer Ice Cream Social – OCHS – July 26-27

Meeting adjourned at 8:59pm.