



City of Manitowoc

610 N. 8th Street
Manitowoc, WI 54220
www.manitowoc.org

Meeting Minutes

Rahr-West Art Museum Board of Directors

April 1, 2026

4:00 PM

RWAM

Pursuant to Section 19.84(2) and (3) of the Wisconsin Statutes, notice is hereby given to the public, to the Herald-Times-Reporter, the official newspaper of Manitowoc, and to those news media who have filed a written request for this notice that a meeting of the above-referenced will be held at the date, time and location listed above.

Notice is hereby given that a majority of the Common Council of the City of Manitowoc, or a standing committee of that body, may be present at this meeting to gather information about the subject matter over which they have decision making responsibility.

This meeting will be conducted both at the Rahr-West Art Museum and via Zoom to maximize opportunities for residents to attend. Zoom link is listed below.

Those wishing to make public comment should email gvadney@manitowoc.org or call 920-683-3091 with their comment no later than 11:00 a.m. CST the day of the meeting.

The above governmental body will meet to discuss and possibly take action on the agenda items set forth below.

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call:

Present: Jim Day, Christopher Able, Catherine Egger, Angie Cerkas, Courtney Hansen, Natasha Khan, Cassie Lapean, Andrew Dunbar (zoom), Matt Schliesman, Larry Shimon, Greg Vadney,

Absent: Angela Myers, Patricia Zimmerman, Diana Bolander, Katherine Halla

3. Public Comment: None

4. Approval of March Minutes: Motion to approve: Catherine Egger Second by: Chris Able Unanimously approved.

5. Review Financial Accounts: Reviewed no questions.

6. Reports

- **President Report:** Reminder if you are interested in joining any sub committee please see Greg, and if you know of any potential RWAM Board Members talk to Greg and encourage them to apply on the City of Manitowoc Website.

- **Membership and Marketing:** See attached document
 - Video Testimonials are completed, currently being edited
 - Greg is continuing to research corporate memberships vs. corporate sponsorships.
 - David Roberts opening April 12-August 2
 - Eric Wind, Watch collecting Date changed to June 7th.
 - New possible marketing opportunities on WBAY Website, being researched.
 - Committee discussed more exhibit information being listed on Website
 - Wisconsin Art Destination has received another Gem Grant and planning on continuing the “Visit 3 get a T” promotion for 2026.
 - Museum member swap happening on May 15-17th with Manitowoc Co participating museums.
 - Next meeting: April 27th 12:00noon

- **Education:** See attached document
 - Summer Schedules are complete and being released soon
 - Yoga Classes for Teen, Adults and Families
 - Possibly using the East Lawn in July
 - Voces Creatives: first of four classes is complete.
 - Next meeting: April 28th 4:00

- **East Lawn**
 - April meeting discussions on the commissioning of the art piece for the East Lawn.
 - Fundraising discussions for this commission.
 - This will be a multi-year project, planning to have educational program and visits to the creation site included in this process
 - Greg is working on contracting with a new East Lawn landscaping service.
 - Fencing update: We have several fencing panels that can be used for the replacement of the one damaged this winter, Greg is communicating with buildings and grounds and the city attorney on next steps.

- **Collections:** See attached document
 - Collections committee is currently working on a collection development plan.
 - Committee unanimously recommends accessioning the following Bruno Ertz Sketch into the permanent collections as it enhances our existing collection of works by Bruno Ertz.
 - **Motion to accession: Matt Schliesman Second: Jim Day Unanimously**

approved by the board.

- Next meeting: April 21, 4:00PM
- Director: See attached report
 - Voces Creativas: Our Grant-funded bi-lingual art program started Sunday March 29, this is a WI Arts Board sponsored program and will continue monthly through June, showcasing Hispanic art and artisanship provided to a Spanish speaking and English speaking audience.
 - Due to major snowstorm on March 15-16 Greg was unable to attend the Governor's Conference on Tourism.
- Friends Committee
 - Report by Friends President Sandy Egbert
 - Friends are working on their summer bus trip planning to the Trout Museum and the Richardson Art Center.
- Foundation
 - Next meeting April 28th

7. Old Business: Strategic Plan Review preparation for the next months

- Review of 2020 strategic themes and accomplishments
- Environmental scan update
- SWOT analysis completed with RWAM board, staff and friends
- SWOT analysis with Foundation on 4-28
- Survey and targeted interview results
- Strategic themes
- Action steps
 - Permanent Collection
 - Marketing and Outreach
 - Membership
 - Education Programming and Partnerships
 - Revenue Diversification
 - Events?
- Measure and metrics
- Conclusion-recommendations for plan maintenance
- More to come

8. New Business: Discussion about Proxi vote and if that is an option for the RWAM Board, since attendance seems to be an issue at times.

9. Adjournment 5:05 PM Motion Jim Day, Second Angie Cerkas

In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the City of Manitowoc will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs, or activities. If you need assistance or reasonable accommodations in participating in this meeting or event due to a disability as defined under the ADA, please call the City Clerk's office at 920-686-6950 or the City's ADA Coordinator at (920) 686-6990 or e-mail cityattorney@manitowoc.org at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting or event to request an accommodation. For additional assistance, individuals with hearing or speech disabilities can call 711 and be connected to a telephone relay system.

RWAM MEMBERSHIP & MARKETING MEETING NOTES

Monday, March 23, 2026

ATTENDING: Erika Crystal, Judy Corrado, Amy Gehrig, Matt Schliesman, Greg Vadney, Tricia Zimmerman

MEMBERSHIP

1. Greg reported that the member video testimonials are being shot “today.”
2. From the ongoing dialogue regarding corporate memberships and sponsorships –
 - a. Greg continues research into corporate memberships and sponsorships, and what arrangement would make the most sense for the RWAM and this community.
 - b. He recently met with Kaysun. A wide range of considerations were discussed, including the company desiring employees to have access to our member perks: special events, reciprocal admissions with other museums, discounts for classes, etc.
 - c. In talking with other museums, use of museum space for company events is a popular benefit, as is a museum recognizing a corporate sponsor’s milestones in some way.
 - d. Greg also found that museums merging sponsorships and membership tend to direct the funds into sponsorships to support exhibits versus into membership, or splitting a given company’s support.
3. Tricia asked if we are tracking membership coming out of our annual youth art exhibits. Per Greg, membership patterns can certainly be examined to see if there is any bump at this time.
4. Committee returned to an earlier topic – “soft-selling” memberships to visiting guests through carefully developed collateral located near or in exhibit areas. There are low tech and higher tech ways to plant the idea for membership as guests are moving through the museum. More to follow.

MARKETING

- 1 We are fast-approaching the April 12 opening of the David Roberts installation, which will run into August. We are the first stop for this new touring exhibit, a fact that some prospective visitors will find compelling.
- 2 The museum is working with our standard media partners for marketing David Roberts. Possibly being added to the mix will be an advertisement on the WBAY website. We are still exploring producing a poster for this exhibit.
- 3 A discussion followed about the amount of information available about this exhibit (and other major exhibits) on the website. The consensus is that more copy and images are needed, perhaps with an internal link from the basic information to a deeper dive into why a given exhibit is significant, and what guests can expect when they visit.
- 4 The Eric Wind “Art of Conversation” event has been moved to Sunday, June 7. It is expected to draw large attendance.
- 5 Greg shared an update on Wisconsin Arts Destinations.
 - a. The JEM grant is continuing.
 - b. The 2025 “Visit 3 and Get a Tee” promotion was successful. Something similar is being developed for this year.
 - c. The RWAM had good participation from guests who first visited museums in the state’s southeast corridor and then chose to drive north.
 - d. The RWAM was lauded by the visitors both for its exhibits and charm, as well as how easy we made the redeeming aspect of the promotion (obtaining the tee shirt).

OTHER

1. The “Museum Member Swap” dates for 2026 are May 15-17. Participating are these five local institutions – Wisconsin Maritime Museum, Hamilton Wood Type Museum, Pine Crest Historical Village, Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center, Rahr-West Art Museum. During this event, a member of one of these organizations will be given complimentary access to all.

THE NEXT M&M MEETING is scheduled for Monday, April 27, 2026 @ Noon.

Notes by Schliesman

Rahr-West Art Museum

RWAM Education & Exhibits Committee

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

4:00pm @ Rahr-West Art Museum

AGENDA

1. Committee business:

- None

2. Programming Updates :

- **Summer Classes:** The schedule is almost finished and will be released soon. Sonia and Michelle will be teaching one class per month during summer since programming is cut back due to summer schedules being busy.

Some classes being offered this summer are:

Yoga with Lauren from Waves Studio. There will be three kinds of classes offered:

- Family: (ages 3-12) and a parent or guardian must attend with children \$20 per class
- Teen Class: \$20 per class
- Adult Class: \$25 per class

If weather permits we would like to hold summer art classes in July on the East Lawn.

There will be a Bingo class where students will draw the pictures on the card followed by a game of bingo to end the class.

- **Voces Creatives update:** First workshop will be Sunday March 29. It will be

from 6-8pm via zoom. All classes will be held on zoom Sundays, however most will be held 1-3

3. Exhibitions Update:

Members/County Show: Happening this summer. August 23-September 13. Museum members as well as Manitowoc County members are welcome to apply to have artwork exhibited during this show

Tablesetting: Applications to be part of the Tablesetting exhibit will be due April 19th

4. Education Fundraising:

Working on putting together a letter to send up to individuals who may be interested in being an Education Sponsor

5. New / Old Business: none

6. Next Meeting: April 28, 2026

The Collections Committee met on March 17, 2026 to review a potential donation to the permanent collection.

The Committee unanimously recommends accessioning the following work into the permanent collection as it enhances our existing collection of works by Ertz, a Manitowoc native with connections to the Rahr family.

Bruno Ertz Sketch



- This sketch by Bruno Ertz is offered as a donation by Marilyn Bloom.
- Inscription on Envelope reads: *Geo. Olsen. Sketched by Bruno Ertz on the Rapids way of Manitowoc River – out for a Sunday stroll thru the woods and meadows.*
- Graphite on paper, signed and dated in lower right corner 4/12/1930

About Bruno Ertz (1873-1956)

- Born March 1, 1873 in Manitowoc, WI (1873-1956), died June 20, 1956
- Exhibition at Rahr-West in August 1962 and November 1977

- Works are in Charles Allis Museum, Milwaukee

Bruno Ertz was a largely self-taught artist who specialized in painting watercolor miniatures of birds, butterflies, and insects for which he received national recognition. He moved to Milwaukee in 1885, and opened a studio in the Iron Block building for a brief period in 1892. During the Depression he worked at the Milwaukee Public Museum as a Federal Art Project employee. He strove for such perfect realism in his subjects that he studied insects under a microscope before painting them.

Ertz works in the collection:

There are 52 works in the collection by Bruno Ertz. There are three drawings, but none are of figures.



1956.002.001 Painting



1956.002.002 Drawing



1961.079 A Greeting Card



1961.079 B Greeting Card



1977.033.001 Painting



1978.043.001 Painting



1978.043.002 Painting



1978.043.003 Painting



1978.043.004 Painting



1978.043.005 Painting



1978.043.006 Painting



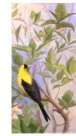
1978.043.007 Painting



1978.043.008 Painting



1978.043.009 Painting



1978.043.010 Painting



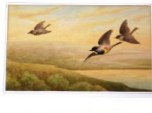
1981.009 Painting



1984.011.001 Painting



1984.011.002 Drawing



1984.011.003 Painting



1984.011.004 Painting



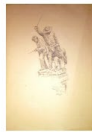
1984.011.005 Painting



1984.011.006 Painting



1984.011.007 Drawing



1984.011.008 Drawing



1986.001 Painting



1986.003.001 Greeting Card



1986.003.002 Greeting Card



1986.003.003 Greeting Card



1986.003.004 Greeting Card



1986.003.005 Greeting Card



1986.003.006 Greeting Card



1986.003.007 Greeting Card



1986.003.008 Greeting Card



1986.003.009 Greeting Card



1986.008 Painting



1986.009.001 Painting



1986.009.002 Painting



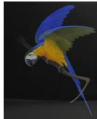
1986.009.003 Painting



1988.007.001 Drawing



1988.007.002 Drawing



1992.001 Painting



1992.005.001 Painting



1992.005.002 Painting



1992.005.003 Painting



1992.005.004 Painting



1994.005.002 Painting



2006.005.001 Watercolor



2006.005.002 Watercolor



2007.005 Painting



2008.004.001 Painting



2008.004.002 Painting



2015.003.001 Drawing



2019.001 Painting

TO: Rahr-West Art Museum Board of Directors
FROM: Greg Vadney, Director
DATE: April 1, 2026
SUBJECT: Director's Report

EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

Youth Art Series: Big East Conference Ruth West Gallery	April 4 – April 14
Youth Art Series: Eastern Wisconsin Conference Ruth West Gallery	April 18 – April 29
Antiquity Unveiled: David Roberts' Artistic Expedition, 1838-1839 John West Gallery	April 12 – August 2
Youth Art Series: Roncalli Schools Ruth West Gallery	May 6 – May 17
Brandom Terres-Sanchez	May 10 – June 21

VOCES CREATIVAS

Our grant-funded bi-lingual art program *Voces Creativas* started on Sunday, March 29. The Wisconsin Arts Board sponsored program will continue monthly through June, showcasing Hispanic art and artisanship provided to a Spanish speaking and English speaking audience.

GOVERNORS CONFERENCE ON TOURISM

Due to the major snowstorm on March 15-16 we were unable to attend the Governor's Conference on Tourism.