

AGENDA  
**VALDEZ MUSEUM & HISTORICAL ARCHIVE ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
July 17, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

II.ROLL CALL

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES from May 2025 meeting

IV. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

V. NEW BUSINESS (vote)

1. Approval of financial report

VI. RESOLUTIONS (vote)

1. The forming of committees

VII. COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS (see attached)

1. Strategic Planning Committee (Gary)

2. Policy Committee (Martha)

3. Marketing Committee (Martha)

VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & PRESIDENT REPORTS

1. Executive Director Report (see attached)

2. President Report

IX. BOARD OF DIRECTORS BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION (when needed)

XI. Return from executive session when we have one

XII. ADJOURNMENT

**Next Meeting August 21, 2025**

**VALDEZ MUSEUM & HISTORICAL ARCHIVE ASSOCIATION, INC.  
MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**May 15, 2025- Meeting Time 12:00**

**Valdez City Council Chambers– 212 Chenega Ave. & Zoom**

Mission Statement

*The Valdez Museum preserves, presents, and interprets the heritage and culture of Valdez, the Copper River Basin, and Prince William Sound, Alaska.*

1. Call to Order/Roll Call: Present: Gary Minish, Margaret, April Vasher-Dean, Jim Shirrel, Karen Allred, Emma Brainerd, Amber Dennis, Martha Barberio
2. Introduction of Guests: None
3. Public Business from the Floor: None
4. Board Education Moment (Emma 10 minutes) Emma shares about her first exhibit, Rarefied Light, here 'til September 8. Amber Dennis mentions the visibility of being promoted on this exhibition's marketing materials. April Vasher-Dean suggests Gary Minish submit to next year's exhibition.
5. Approval of the Minutes for April 17, 2025, Jim Shirrell moves to approve. Linda Guthrie states that the Native Gallery meeting is June 12<sup>th</sup> rather than August 12<sup>th</sup>. Karen Allred moves to approve as amended. Minutes unanimously approved.
6. Action Items
  - a) Vote on Secretary: Karen feels vote should proceed at next meeting and it is only interim until January when we elect new officers, and she supports the nomination and moves to table action item until the next board meeting. Gary Minish suggests moving this action item to later in this meeting. Meeting time is discussed.
  - b) Resolution for forming Ad Hoc Committees
7. President's Report
  - a) With input from Karen Allred and April Vasher-Dean, Gary Minish decides to forgo a June BOD meeting since there is a BOD strategic planning retreat the same week. The policy committee is working through updating policies.
8. Executive Director's Report

We are moving forward with Free Residential memberships and will begin promoting this post Annual Appeal and other marketing campaigns.

Amber Dennis reports on Valdez Fire Department co-promotion, her marketing presentation at Valdez Small Business Week and how participants were then invited to tour the museum and

learn about our archival services and new business memberships, print advertising in this season's guides, increasing consignments from local makers.

Margaret Nordstrom reports that she saw all of the Lescoe books in Whittier. Amber was told they were out of print.

Amber reports that we have a board supported booth at the Valdez Fly-In. Karen Allred is working with Faith on activities. Martha arrives. Amber reports that raffle is set to launch at the Fly-In, we have gifts for Annual Appeal and Amber shares a list of contacts for board to reach out to and share details of Annual Appeal.

Amber reports that membership levels were low with similar benefits and the new membership benefits are streamlined, sliding scale, and explains the new free memberships and business memberships with more networking and community building opportunities as well as saving staff time and postage with digital membership cards.

The discussion returns to **action items**. Martha states that there are two nominees for Secretary, including Rich Dunkin and Karen Allred. Karen Allred announces she may be remote for the foreseeable season and declines her nomination. Martha had asked Karen Allred to be secretary since no one was doing it and then Rich Dunkin threw his hat in the ring and wanted to make sure she wasn't feeling forced to decline. Karen points out that the position will need to be elected again in January. Martha states that the policy says officers must be present during the vote. Margaret reads the policy that does not say the candidate must be present. Martha reports that not following bylaws can be grounds for funds to be held back from the city and that it's great that we're reviewing bylaws now. Karen Allred states, for the record, that this body has frequently referenced and followed its bylaws.

A vote is held by secret ballot. Gary Minish announces five votes for Rich Dunkin and one vote for Margaret Nordstrom. Rich Dunkin is now the board secretary until January 2026.

- a) Resolution for forming Ad Hoc Committees- BOD members determined that we had to make a resolution to form a committee.

Gary Minish proposes that we develop a committee description that we would attach to the resolution to form a committee provided by Martha Barberio. Martha suggests voting this down and she will bring back a revised version and finalize a recommendation for a new version in policy meeting and Karen Allred motions to postpone the resolution for amendment to be presented at July meeting. Jim Shirrell seconds. Margaret Nordstrom calls for clarification about whether the revised version will be a template we can use for various committees. It is. Motion unanimously carries.

Amber Dennis asks who has not attended the boards and commissions training with Sherri Pierce and Karen Allred suggests we could ask her to do a specific training with this board.

## 9. Committee Reports (15 minutes)

- a) **Advocacy (Karen)** Karen presents an exercise to imagine our interactions with the public extending beyond the one interaction to the ripple effects. Engage with advocacy emails as you can. How can we get our message out without sounding alarmist? Is it writing an article for the Copper River Record? She acknowledges Caren Oberg sharing information and

resources. She mentions free workshops available to board members. Mike Walsh from Foraker has offered to give us our own strategic advocacy workshop.

b) **Marketing (Martha)** What Amber said.

c) **Finance (Jim)**

- i. Approval of Financial Reports (from auditors) The accounting system we have needs training in place for staff to use the tools we have. Our actuals had not been entered since January and now that has been corrected. We have a clean audit. We have not had an exit meeting with our auditor; we need to review that with them to make a recommendation and review our audit. We are working to get the system updated to be able to compare budget to actuals. Martha shares that each time they meet, there have been levers and procedures not relayed or passed over to the new ED. It's concerning to me that the budget numbers weren't entered in the beginning of the year if that's always been done before. Karen Allred asks to discuss this concern in an executive session. Jim Shirrell suggests this is beyond the finance committee. Gary Minish states that what we need to wait for July when we have a populated budget. Martha motions to approve the financial statements. Jim Shirell is concerned about the message sent when we don't approve it; this is a postponement. Martha removes her motion and moves to postpone approval of financial statements for May and June at the next meeting. Jim Shirell seconds. Motion unanimously carries.

d) **Native Gallery (Linda)** No news is good news

e) **Board Development (Gary)** This committee is being reviewed by policy committee

f) **Strategic Planning (Gary)** Staff and Board will meet with facilitator Karen Kirk in June.

g) **Policy Review Ad hoc Committee (Martha)**

10. New Business Martha points out that new business is usually at the beginning of the meeting. A discussion ensues about committees using a simple format and submitting reports the week before the board meeting. Karen Allred says going forward, her committee will submit a report ahead of time. April Vasher-Dean points out that everyone will have to read them ahead of time in order for this meeting to be shortened.
11. Business from the Floor Amber asks if people have been entering their volunteer hours and will include the link more often.
12. Adjournment, Martha moves to adjourn. Linda Guthrie seconds. Unanimously adjourned.

**Next Meeting: TBA**

**ITEM TITLE:**

Strategic Planning Committee report

**SUBMITTED BY:** Gary Minish

**FISCAL NOTES:**

Expenditure Required: n/a

Unencumbered Balance: n/a

Funding Source: n/a

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Disseminate Museum Planning Report from Karen Kirk to board members and staff.

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

Karen Kirk has provided a report of the activities and results of the Strategic Planning Retreat on June 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>. The Retreat was well attended and successfully produced an updated group of primary goals for the Valdez Museum Strategic Plan.

**ITEM TITLE:**

Policy Committee Report

**SUBMITTED BY:** Martha Barberio, Chair Policy committee

**FISCAL NOTES:**

Expenditure Required: N/A

Unencumbered Balance: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Receive & File

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

The **Policy Committee** of the Valdez Museum and Historical Archive continues its work to review and update key organizational policies to ensure they are current, clear, and aligned with best practices.

The Committee has completed a comprehensive review and revision of the **Museum's By-Laws**, which will now advance to the **Valdez Museum Corporation** for final approval. This update reflects necessary clarifications, structural improvements, and governance adjustments that will strengthen organizational oversight.

In addition, the Committee remains actively engaged in reviewing the **Personnel Policy**. This work is ongoing, with the goal of modernizing the policy to reflect current employment laws, staff needs, and operational standards.

**ITEM TITLE:**

Marketing Committee Report

**SUBMITTED BY:** Martha Barberio, Chair marketing committee

**FISCAL NOTES:**

Expenditure Required: N/A

Unencumbered Balance: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Receive & File

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

This report is on behalf of the Marketing Committee, highlighting the success of two recent fundraising initiatives: the **Split the Pot Raffle** and the **Annual Appeal**.

**Split the Pot Raffle:**

The **Split the Pot Raffle** proved to be an effective and engaging fundraiser, drawing strong participation from the community. The raffle not only generated important unrestricted revenue for the Museum and Historical Archive but also helped increase public awareness of our mission. Ticket sales brought in \$1,515. The raffle's success was enhanced by Amber Dennis's targeted social media and website promotion, in-person outreach and everyone working together.

One chance of winning	73 / 10000	\$1,460
Additional donation	4	\$55

<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>\$1,515</b>
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**Annual Appeal:**

The **Annual Appeal** has also been successful this year, with donations surpassing previous years’ totals. Our messaging—centered on the importance of preserving and sharing Valdez’s rich history—resonated strongly with donors. A combination of direct mail, email outreach, and personal thank-you follow-ups contributed to this positive outcome. Importantly, we also saw several new donors, reflecting growing community support and engagement with the Museum’s work.

**Donations**

Type	Amount	Raised
One-time	23	\$5,030
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>\$5,030</b>

**Conclusion:**

Both campaigns have strengthened the Museum’s financial foundation while deepening our relationship with the community. The Marketing Committee will continue to build on this momentum by exploring additional outreach opportunities and donor engagement strategies in the coming year.



## Executive Director Report July 2025

### **What has been accomplished/is going well?**

- Working with staff to implement goals set by BOD retreat
- Working with Carl to implement new payroll & scheduling systems, as well set up the budget for 2026
- Meeting with globus to provide more high-end land tours next year

### **What obstacles/challenges/hurdles need to be addressed to move forward?**

- Payroll and daily deposit concerns
- Addressing staffing issues due to hourly workers returning to school or moving
- Re-imaging staff roles with Faith's resignation
- Continuing to provide a high level of programming and tours with Faith's resignation and insuring success moving forward

### **Recommendation/Request for Board Action**

- Need to reassess the amount of time required to pull together the BOD agenda and

reports now that everything is being delivered to me

Caren Oberg, Curator of Collections and Exhibitions  
Collections and Exhibitions  
Board Report June-July 2025

**Positive accomplishments**

- Collected oral history from Al Ludart, the “Shrimp Whisperer”
- Guided coach tours for cruise ship passengers, sharing our history and wildlife with 190+ guests since May
- Steady research and development of the Fall exhibition, “Valdez at the Movies”

**Negative or unaccomplished**

- Leaks from overhead fans in the Old Town Valdez Museum (OTVM) which led to heat being turned off until late July to prevent further leaks, and Pods and artifacts being moved. Collection is safe, OTVM is open to the public, Maintenance is highly responsive, and a fix is planned for late July. But it has been disruptive.
- My providing guided coach tours is a catch-22. These tours help our bottom line, and I enjoy giving them. However, every tour is a half-day away from other work. As a result, I have had less time to devote to collections management and refreshing exhibitions than I had hoped for this summer.

**Need BOD assistance**

- Board members on the Collections Committee: I need more assistance refining the updated Collections Policy so that it can go to the full Board and eventually the City. We may need to schedule a few meetings over a short period (say four meetings over six weeks) to complete this task.

Emma Brainerd

Collections and Exhibitions

Board Report June-July 2025

**Positive Accomplishments**

- Digitized 46 pictures from Miles Bros. Collection + digitized 20 glass plate negatives.
- Planning exhibit design for Fall Exhibit “Valdez at the Movies”
- Conducted coach tours for our cruise ship passengers, shared Valdez history and wildlife information with over 200+ guests since May. Made wildflower guide for fellow tour operators based on guest questions.

**Negative or Unaccomplished**

- 19+ Boxes of Dan Lawn papers is taking longer to reconcile. Our next step is that we must now contact the Alaska Resources Library and Information Services (ARLIS) concerning legal and environmental papers in the boxes. This is ongoing

Marketing Department

**What Museum goals or objectives does your recent work support?**

Marketing is currently focused on visibility, visitor experience, store sales and working with new retail services lead.

**What has been accomplished/is going well?**

- Fundraising on new Zeffy platform
- Increasing consignments/ inventory and attention to merchandising
- Adding signage

**What obstacles/challenges/hurdles need to be addressed to move forward?**

- Consistency in customer service/operations (being addressed through cross training)
- Inventory too low to maximize potential, accuracy of inventory/ sales reporting
- Website Trouble Ticket submitted RE: events not publishing to home page

**Recommendation/Request for Board Action**

- I recommend we have an I Heart Valdez Membership coffee/brunch or happy hour event to promote new membership packages.

Submitted By: Amber Dennis