

**Historical Society  
United States District Court, Northern District of Iowa  
Special Meeting / Open House**

**February 25, 2020, at 9:00 AM**

**Attendees:**

Judge C.J. Williams, Timothy Hill, Peter Deegan, Melissa Carrington, Rich Murphy, Hilary Naab, Molly Rach, Bart Hayes, Dave Mink, Robert Phelps, Judge Mark Roberts, Judge Jane Kelly, Judge Mike Melloy, and Judge Paul Kilburg.

Historical Society members held a special meeting / open house with Bart Hayes, independent design contractor and part of the original design team eight years ago, and Dave Mink Production Director from KidZibits of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The group conducted a walk-through of the History Center to determine what is working, what is not, and to provide recommendations for updating the current space.

Split Rock Studios, the original design firm for the History Center, was unable to take on this redesign project. Bart Hayes, now an independent contractor, was lead on the original Split Rock team, and agreed to partner with Kidzibits on this project.

There was a general discussion on the need to do something freestanding in Sioux City in the main hallway on the first floor of the courthouse. As that is joint use space it is not feasible to set up a permanent exhibit.

The information below is an overview of discussion and recommendations made during the walk through of the History Center.

**General Discussion:**

- The current theme is Cases, Places and Faces. During discussion on expanding topics such as including something for naturalization, bankruptcy cases, jury, and probation. There was consensus agreement that the theme can encompass all these and can be used as a format for the Sioux City exhibit.
- The mural on the wall of the History Center starts with the history of the Northern district when Iowa became a state through dividing into two judicial districts and into today. This background does not necessarily have to change with a new format of exhibits.
- The illuminated Lucite etchings of historical courthouses are not labeled and should be in some fashion. (Hilary can identify the locations).
- Current text panels are too dense for the average visitor to absorb the information. Needs to be quick and easy.
- The focus is on adding things (naturalization, probation, etc.) but are there areas to eliminate or minimize? One thought is to consolidate all judge information into the interactive display.
- Stand up kiosk costs approximately \$2,000, touchscreen/interactive.

**Recommendations:**

- Update the timeline to digital format. Make it an easy to digest timeline but don't fill in the entire history.
- Add an interactive piece on the front center panel to draw people in as they are passing by.
- Add artifacts and more cases with the ability to switch out the items on display.
- Add small judicial bench with a gavel and judges' robe for photo opportunity for children.
- Add naturalization display.
  - Ask questions based on what it takes to be a US citizen.
  - Set something up during a naturalization and ask people to participate in a video.
  - Run a video of someone who recently became a US citizen and what it meant to them.
- Display a virtual tour of the inside of the old courthouses to show the architecture.
  - Add digital walk through of courtroom.
- Add kiosk featuring judges and interactives. Take the focus off displaying judges on the wall and make room for other historical information.
- Highlight bankruptcy, probation, FPD, US Attorney, and US Marshals.
- Display information by topic or department instead of chronological
- Move the Know Your Way Around the Courtroom panel out front. Groups always stop and look at this panel.
- Add a breakdown of the different court levels.
- Incorporate more flood pictures and construction of new courthouse.
- Add educational component on three branches of government and what they do.
- Simplify information to say less about more items.
- Display Federal Practice CLE and Historical Society materials; open the display case to other agencies.
- Put something on the two doors to the storage rooms to utilize extra wall space.
- Add one interactive kiosk for Sioux City.
- May, or may not, want to change the wall murals if the display material is reorganized.
- Add sound, snippets/vignettes of oral histories of judges.
- Task members of the Historical Society to assist with organizing and researching materials for new displays.

**Next meeting:**

The next meeting of the Historical Society is to be determined by design team.