May 31, 2018

**With Commitment to Transparency, Cooperation, Outreach**

BERKSHIRE MUSEUM OUTLINES THE ROAD AHEAD

For immediate release (PITTSFIELD, MASS.) – In an [open letter](#) distributed today to the community served by the Berkshire Museum, the museum’s Board of Trustees outlines the road ahead to secure the museum’s future with a commitment to transparency, cooperation, and outreach.

“Our most important goal has always been to secure the future of the Berkshire Museum. We want to protect what we consider the museum’s most important asset: our open doors,” the letter begins. “Reaching that goal has proven more difficult than we could have ever imagined, but it is within reach, allowing the museum to remain the ‘window on the world’ founder Zenas Crane sought to provide this community.”

The letter, emailed to museum supporters, posted on social media, and shared with news media, comes at the conclusion of May auctions where 12 of 40 works approved for deaccessioning were sold. Two additional works, including *Shuffleton’s Barbershop* by Norman Rockwell, were acquired in private sales that will keep both works in public view.

“We believe it is time to move beyond what has been a contentious and sometimes bitter debate to truly take up the critical work of securing the future of the Berkshire Museum, true to the museum’s mission, respectful of its collection, and responsive to the community it serves,” the letter continues. “We are committed to doing so, transparently, cooperatively, and thoughtfully, to regain public trust and confidence where it has been lost. We urge others to join us in that spirit.”

The letter outlines next steps to be taken by the Board, including: investing proceeds from recent sales and auctions, defining priorities for repairing and re-imagining the museum, reinvigorating fundraising, and renewing community outreach.
“We recognize there are still those in the community relentless in their opposition to the museum, despite the findings of an exhaustive government review and the judgments of two separate courts soundly in support of the museum and the decisions of the museum’s Board of Trustees,” the letter continues. “It is our deepest hope that we can at least begin to communicate not as adversaries, but as allies for a community that greatly needs and benefits from the all the Berkshire Museum offers.”

Link to letter: https://berkshirermuseum.org/newvision/the-road-ahead/