

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - DRAFT

Friday, October 18, 2019

A meeting of the History Nebraska Board of Trustees was held at the Fred and Pamela Buffett Cancer Center at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha. President Bryan Zimmer called to order at 9:16am.

President Zimmer opened the meeting by reminding the board of the History Nebraska mission statement: *History Nebraska collects, preserves, and opens to all, the histories we share.*

Notice to the press had been given and the Open Meetings Act was posted.

President Zimmer asked for a roll call of members present:

Present: Bob Barte, Cherrie Beam-Callaway, Lance Bristol, Ann Bruntz, Kim Elder, Katherine Endacott, Tom Kraus, Marilyn Moore, John Nelson, Vickie Schaepler, Chuck Schroeder, Connie Spellman, Eileen Wirth, and Bryan Zimmer.

Absent: David Levy.

Also in attendance: Trevor Jones, History Nebraska Director, and Board Secretary, Lynne Ireland, Deputy Director, Michelle Furby, CFO and Lana Hatcher, Executive Assistant

Guest: Cindy Drake.

Action item: Approval of the July 19, 2019 Minutes.

Motion to approve the minutes made by Bristol, Second: Beam-Callaway

Roll call Yes: Barte, Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Bruntz, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer

Absent: Levy

Motion to approve the July 19, 2019 minutes passed.

Leslie Fattig, Executive Director, of the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation was not present; however, the Foundation report was submitted via email. The report was provided to the board for their review.

President Zimmer stated that Foundation staff were invited to the meeting but did not respond. Zimmer also stated that despite a specific request to the Foundation Board in July, he has heard nothing about moving forward on the History Nebraska/Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation joint operating agreement.

Treasurer Bruntz asked History Nebraska CFO, Michelle Furby to point out discrepancies between the Foundation report and the History Nebraska financial report. Furby reported that there was a small \$3.00 mathematical error in the Foundation's total, but that the main difference was that History Nebraska's reported amount of \$970,532.64, does not include \$54,933.33 for the bronze sculpture that will be placed at Chimney Rock. President Zimmer stated that the amount for the bronze horse sculpture should not have been listed as support for History Nebraska, due to the fact that the funds were never transferred to History Nebraska, the funds went directly from the NSHSF to the artist.

Furby also stated that the Foundation did not list \$642.24 listed as payment for Chimney Rock prints requested in July by Site Supervisor, Sandra Reddish, but that does show up on History Nebraska's list. Finally, \$10,970 for Fort Robinson porch skirting that is listed on the Foundation report is not listed in History Nebraska's report, as funds have not yet been received because the project is not complete.

President Zimmer asked if the bill from the contractor for the Fort Robinson skirting work would be sent directly to the Foundation. Furby responded, no, as there is only a bid. Reimbursement will be received after work is completed. Moore asked if these discrepancies would show up in audit. Furby responded no, that the Foundation has their own audit and History Nebraska's is separate. President Zimmer stated that he would be happy to respond to Fattig and ask her to take the amount for the bronze horse sculpture off the Foundation report.

Treasurer Bruntz gave the Finance Committee Report:

Bruntz reported that the General Fund Appropriations were \$4,784,654.89. The amount of General Fund Operations remaining were \$3,397,175.07 and remain on target, and that the status of cash and federal appropriations are on target. The 2019-2020 Budget Revenue projection shows the difference between this year and last year, and the variance. The committee reviewed the report and did not see anything that stood out as needing to be watched. Bruntz added that the revenue from 150 license plate continues to come in, meaning that people continue to keep the plate. Last year's total revenue from the plates was \$84,000.

Nelson pointed out that we were budgeting an increase in interest income because of additional funds that we are holding that are drawing interest. Furby added that it was due to the Chimney Rock money.

Bruntz made the motion to accept the treasurer's report to be entered into the minutes, Second by Endacott Roll call yes: Barte, Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Bruntz, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer

Absent: Levy

Motion to accept the treasurer's report to be entered into the minutes passed

President Zimmer gave the Governance Committee Report:

President Zimmer reported that the consensus of the Governance committee is to move forward with a formal request for requesting access to the Weese funds from the Foundation. Zimmer will work with David Levy and Dick Endacott for proper wording of the request. President Zimmer added that we have an Attorney General's opinion stating that the History Nebraska Board of Trustees has the sole responsibility of ensuring the donor's wishes for this money are carried out. President Zimmer also stated that it is important for the board to show intent to use Weese sister's money for the betterment of Nebraska rather than having it continue to sit in an account. The board members thanked Zimmer and Elder for their work on this matter.

Lance Bristol gave the Personnel Committee report:

Bristol reported that 44 nominations for the Commitment to Heritage Awards had been received. One nomination included all members of the Historical Organization board from Franklin County, bringing the total of awards to be received to 54. Bristol indicated that everyone on the History Nebraska board received folder with listing of all Heritage Hero recipients. An instruction sheet outlining the process to approach the recipients when giving rewards was included in the folder, along with a media release form. A list of Emeritus board members has been provided to all board members in case they are needed to help with the presentation. Bristol will pass out the Heritage Heroes pin that will be given to each award winner. Only the Heritage Heroes will receive this exclusive pin.

Moore will be in charge of presenting the awards from the first congressional district. Wirth will take care of the three awards for the second congressional district. Bristol will get together with board members from the third congressional district to determine who will present the awards from that district. Bristol asked the board members provide stories of their presentations at the January meeting.

The board thanked Bristol and Beam-Callaway for their work on this project.

The board discussed the issue of the Thomas B. Johnson Paintings:

Beam-Callaway stated that she received a phone call from Judi gaiashkibos inquiring about what had happened to these paintings, as there was an article in the August 22, 2019 *Seward Independent*. Beam-Callaway responded to gaiashkibos with the correct information. The issue is now resolved, but Beam-Callaway wanted to put the issue on agenda to explain what had transpired. Jones explained that there have been nine Thomas B. Johnson paintings on loan the Seward Civic Center since 1992. This was a renewable loan, and had been renewed multiple times. History Nebraska chose not to renew the loan, as the paintings needed to be cleaned and other museums have also asked to borrow them. The collections staff communicated several times with the Civic Center and offered to gift an equal number other paintings of Thomas B. Johnson; however, the chairperson objected. The Civic Center missed deadline to return the paintings, but did eventually choose nine replacement paintings. The collections staff took back the paintings in September and installed the new ones. They will be evaluated by the Gerald Ford Conservation Center and then will be loaned to other entities for exhibition. History Nebraska staff did everything in accordance with our approved policies.

Although History Nebraska understands Seward's attachment to the original paintings, our mission is to serve the entire state and this is type of review is standard procedure.

Action item - approval of Deaccessions

The board reviewed the list of deaccessions for this quarter.

Motion to accept deaccessions was made by Bruntz, Second by Nelson

Roll Call Yes: Bartee, Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Bruntz, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer

Absent: Levy

Motion to approve of the deaccessions passed

Action item – Request for decision on proposed restricted gift

Jones reported that the History Nebraska collections committee is working with Gray Communications regarding a large acquisition of newsroom footage. Gray has requested a permanent restriction that would allow them to approve any requests by commercial entities to use the footage. Per our Collections Policy, any requests for permanent restrictions on collections must be considered by the Board of Trustees. Nelson asked if Gray Communications wanted to receive any revenue from access by other entities. Jones explained no, but their lawyers are worried that the images would be used in a way that they would not approve. Schroeder stated that it would this restriction would cause problems over the long term and result in more work for future collections staff.

Motion to reject permanent restricted access by Gray Communications made by Wirth, Second by Moore.

Roll Call Yes: Bartee, Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Bruntz, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer

Absent: Levy

Motion to reject restricted access passed

Nominating Committee report:

Katherine Endacott reported on the Board of Trustee Election Results. Eileen Wirth was re-elected to the board in Congressional District 2. Tom Kraus was re-elected to the board in Congressional District 3. Pamela Snow was elected to the board in Congressional District 1. Endacott stated that Snow comes highly qualified as a new History Nebraska board member. Endacott reported that she has learned that Rich Herink has submitted his application to the Governor's office requesting to be appointed to the board and that Herink is highly qualified to serve on the board. President Zimmer thanked Nominating Committee and the History Nebraska staff for streamlining the election process by providing voting online.

President Zimmer thanked the outgoing board members, Cherrie Beam-Callaway and Katherine Endacott for their service on the board and presented them with resolutions honoring them. The resolutions have been added to the minutes as addendums.

Motion to approve two resolutions thanking outgoing board members Beam-Callaway and Endacott

Roll Call Yes: Bartee, Bristol, Bruntz, Elder, Kraus, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer

Absent: Levy

Abstained: Endicott, Beam-Callaway

Motion to approve of both resolutions passed.

Motion to have the board thank the outgoing President Zimmer for his service as President through a time of significant opportunities made by Wirth, Second by Bartee

Roll Call Yes: Bartee, Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Bruntz, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth

Absent: Levy

Abstain: Zimmer

Motion to thank President Zimmer passed.

Zimmer thanked the board for their assistance during his term as President.

Action Item: Election of new board officers

Incoming President for 2020 is Lance Bristol. Bristol presented the following officers:

1st VP: Marilyn Moore

2nd VP: Connie Spellman

Treasurer: Ann Bruntz

Motion to accept 2020 officers as presented by Bristol made by Elder Second by Schroeder.

Roll Call Yes: Bartee, Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Bruntz, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer

Absent: Levy

Motion to accept 2020 officers passed

Jones requested the board plan an orientation of new board members. The board agreed that waiting until the day before the January meeting would be too late for orientation. The board also agreed that only three or four regular board members needed to be present at orientation. Jones stated that he would reach out to Pamela Snow to see what dates in November would work for her, and notify the board of the best date. A second orientation will be done once the Governor makes his appointment to the board.

The board took a short break at 10:20am

Action Item: Proposed Meeting Schedule for 2020 Board Meetings

The board discussed meeting dates and locations for next year

The following 2020 meeting dates and locations were established:

- January 17 Lincoln
- April 17 Grand Island
- July 10 North Platte
- October 16 Omaha

The board also expressed interest in holding future board meetings in: Nebraska City, Norfolk, and Fremont

Motion to approve 2020 meeting dates and locations made by Elder, Second by Bristol

Roll Call Yes: Bartee, Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Bruntz, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer

Absent: Levy

Motion to approve 2020 meeting schedule passed

Jones pointed out two other important dates

- February 19, 2020 Legislative Reception, Lincoln, and annual awards
- May/June 2020 grand re-opening of Chimney Rock

Director's Report:

Jones reviewed the five interlocking goals of the strategic plan, and reported on the First Quarter results for FY 19-20.

- \$385,106 in earned revenue (20%)
- \$970,532 foundation (39%)
- \$213,290 federal grants and contracts (18%)
- \$1,387,479 state appropriation spent (31%)
- \$139,290 in 309 funds (46%)
- Five of the seven leadership team rocks were completed (71%)
- Attendance up 16% over last quarter. We have met 29% of the total revenue goal for the year.
- Chimney Rock will shut down November 1st. We will have no revenue, but; expenses will continue. Our goal is to get the facility open by May 1st. This opening date is important for hitting earned revenue targets.
- Chimney Rock project update
 - \$1,727,770 for the Chimney Rock project has been transferred to our account
 - Construction bids are now out and will close on October 24, 2019.
 - We will be closing the facility on November 1, 2019.
 - All artifacts will be transported to Lincoln by November 15, 2019.

- We will salvage exhibit materials to use for other sites. Some items will be stored in pods.
- Items that we will no longer need will come back to Lincoln for surplus.

Moore asked if the current Chimney Rock staff will be kept on duty or if they will be reassigned. Jones replied that their job will be to maintain the site and one person will be needed to oversee construction. We are unable to furlough or reduce hours per State Personnel, however, one position will be temporarily laid off.

Nelson asked if the large amount of artifacts could be stored in Gering. Jones responded that the artifacts that will not be reused would be cleaned and conserved by the Gerald Ford Conservation Center in Omaha.

- Jones announced that History Nebraska won the Mountain Plains Museum Association's Leadership and Innovation Award for the second year in a row for our curiosity project.
- History Nebraska also won the Cultural Leadership Award from Impact Lincoln for our outreach to minority groups in Lincoln. Jones reported that *Museum Magazine* published an article written by Jill Dolberg, "Searching for Truffles," which was about the curiosity project at the museum. Copies were included in the packet for all board members.
- Jones reported on the Willa Cather Statue that is to be placed in Statuary Hall in Washington, DC. This is an unfunded mandate from the Legislature. History Nebraska is in charge of the logistics. There are several procedures to go through with the Federal Government. Every step has to be approved by a congressional committee. We have no control of when the unveiling ceremony will take place, nor do we have control of the guest list. Littleton Alston is the sculptor and is currently working on the maquette of the statue. Alston is the first African American sculptor to have a statue in Statuary Hall. Jones added that the location where the Cather statue will be placed is actually in the prominent entry of Capitol Visitor Center. Jones showed a photo of the maquette. The board members liked the maquette, stating that it captures her stance, and expression on her face.

Jones stated that the second part of his presentation was on big picture issues:

Jones reported in the last three years History Nebraska has grown its total budget by about 25%, attendance by 13%, earned income by 55%, and have raised about \$5 million with the Foundation. With our re-branding, our website traffic has gone up 155% in a single year.

Jones stated his belief that History Nebraska is at a pivotal moment. At the April board meeting the board expressed support for considering a new building, and we have worked on planning since then. Jones added that key decisions are for the board to make in the coming months. Jones is excited about the possibilities, but wanted to make it clear that the executive director does not have the time or resources to launch a major project without substantial board assistance. Any project will require more resources, and he is looking for direction on what the board sees as a timeline and how we can obtain the required resources.

Jones asked the board to consider how they envision going forward with this project, and how they envision History Nebraska meeting physical infrastructure, outreach, and digital needs over the long term.

Schaepler stated that we need to dream big, and would like to see Nebraska have a new building. Endacott asked what state history museums he thought stood out. Jones responded that Minnesota Historical Society is a benchmark organization. They have a lovely facility, and engage communities with great programs. Nelson stated that money for building came state and private donations came at the right when their Governor wanted a legacy. Schroeder stated that same thing occurred in Indiana. Schroeder added that everyone should keep in mind that Director Jones does not have the time or resources to focus on a new building and that asking him to do so will damage other results. He expressed concern that it will eat away the director's time.

Bartee stated that the board needs to dream big, but be realistic. Incremental change will not work and we need a bold vision. The philanthropic climate is great and he suggested that the board should make initial overtures to see the possibility to raise funds. Corporations could give their support with having their own displays. We are in a fork in the road and should not let this opportunity go without exploring. Bartee added that the board needs to express its intent to take this to next level. Bartee stated that if you start with what cost the cost, creativity goes away. Start with a good Idea. At this time, you can raise the funds to support that idea in Nebraska.

Moore added that Bartee's words are wise, exciting, and show us what is possible.

Spellman suggested the board start by looking at a white paper Jones has drafted, and then have a few interested people figure next steps. The board agreed that this is the time to begin working on this project.

President Zimmer stated that the first step is to have Jones send the board the white paper, and then plan to hire a consultant to give feedback and conduct a feasibility study. Jones added that he would need to have board conversations on what they consider the timeline to be, and their expectations.

Nelson asked what type of building this would be, would everything be in one building? If we request State funds, their question would be why we need it. We just spend six million dollars on the museum. Furby responded that the six million dollars was for a systems upgrade, and not a renovation project. It added to the overall value of the building no matter how it is used.

Endacott suggested that the board should make a vision for a certain date, such as 2025. Jones suggested September 28, 2028, which would be the 150th anniversary of the Historical Society.

Zimmer appointed a formal committee to continue and report at the January meeting. The committee will consist of Bartee, Endacott, Spellman, Jones, Zimmer, Elder and Levy.

At 11:43 President Zimmer called and **Executive Session** to discuss matters of real estate and personnel.

Motion to go into executive session made by Moore, Second by Elder

Roll call Yes: Bartee, Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Bruntz, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer

Absent: Levy

Motion to go into Executive Session passed

The board came out of Executive Session at 12:50pm

Motion to come out of Executive Session made by Moore, Second by Nelson

Roll call Yes: Bartee, Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Bruntz, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer

Absent: Levy

Motion to come out of Executive Session passed

President Zimmer called for discussion of Other Business & Trustees Roundtable

Bristol stated that Eileen Wirth had been awarded the Communicator Achievement Award, the highest honor bestowed by the National Federation of Press Women Award.

The board congratulated Wirth for her award.

Zimmer opened up the Opportunity for Public Questions & Comments.

With there being no comments, President Zimmer called for the meeting to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn made by Schaepler, Second by Elder.

Roll call: Bartee, Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Bruntz, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer

Absent: Levy

Motion to adjourn meeting passed.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00pm

2020 meeting Dates/Locations

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| January 17 | Lincoln |
| April 17 | Grand Island |
| July 10 | North Platte |
| October 16 | Omaha |