

Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes**Call to Order:**

A meeting of the History Nebraska Board of Trustees was held at the Knight Museum and Sandhills Center in Alliance, Nebraska, on Friday, July 19, 2019. The meeting was called to order by Board President, Bryan Zimmer at 9:10am.

Attendees:

Cherrie Beam-Callaway, Lance Bristol, Kim Elder, Katherine Endacott, Tom Kraus, David Levy, Marilyn Moore, John Nelson, Vickie Schaepler, Charles Schroeder, Connie Spellman, Eileen Wirth, and Bryan Zimmer
Absent: Bob Bartee and Ann Bruntz

History Nebraska Staff in Attendance: Trevor Jones, Lynne Ireland, Michelle Furby, and Lana Hatcher

Approval of the April 26, 2019 Minutes

Nelson questioned the statement listed on page two, third paragraph of the minutes that stated, "Levy asked Fattig to explain the \$582,000 in total grants that she reported as being disbursed to History Nebraska. Fattig explained that these are grants requested and disbursed by History Nebraska from the Foundation and processed." Nelson questioned the progression, and asked for a definition of the "process" mentioned. Jones explained that History Nebraska requests the funds from the Foundation, they have an approval process were they consider and approve the request, and then they disburse the funds, typically as a reimbursement.

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Nelson, Second by Kraus

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

No: None

Motion Passed

Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation Report

The Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation staff were not present to present their report. Leslie Fattig attached the 6/30/19 and the 9/20/19 fund reports in an email to all of the History Nebraska board members. The email also explained why Foundation staff or board members decided not to attend the meeting. Endacott requested the email to be read aloud and entered into the record. President Zimmer read the email to the board:

Dear Board of Trustees,

Our President, Jim Hewitt, is unable to attend your July meeting, and has suggested that we not attend or participate in HN meetings until we have determined our relationship with the Society going forward, and the nature of our support of other historical entities in Nebraska. As a result of his suggestion, I will not be attending the Alliance meeting.

In FY 2018/2019 the foundation processed transfer requests from NSHS discretionary funds totaling \$50,122.15. Grant requests processed totaled \$1,268,884.04. I have attached the 6/30/19 and the 9/30/19 fund reports for your review.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Leslie

Leslie Fattig

Executive Director

Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation

Finance Committee – Vickie Schaepler

Item: Treasurer's Report

Schaepler reported that the General Fund Appropriations for 2018-19 Fiscal Year were \$4,959,376.72.

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The amount expended /encumbered through 6/30/19 were \$4,210,421.13 and the amount of general funds remaining as of 6/30/19 were \$748,955.59.

The Cash Fund authority of \$5,962,689.37 appropriated for 2018-19 shows more because of the funds provided by the Foundation for the Chimney Rock project.

Budgeted Revenue Totals were: Budgeted Amount for FY 18/19 = \$3,700,489.00, FY 17/18 Actuals = \$2,805,991.26, Planned Change =31.88%, FY 18/19 as of 6/30/19 = \$3,693,515.16, Percent of Budget = 99.81, Variance = \$6,973.84

Levy asked what the state's fiscal year was. He asked if the year ended with \$750,000 of state appropriations not being spent when the fiscal year ended. Schaepler asked Furby to explain. Furby stated that is how it ended on June 30th. Right now we are paying expenditures that were for the prior year. She anticipates that \$300,000 of that amount is going to be certified and carried forward. We have to code everything in the accounting system as prior year expenditure and will get certified in August. Budget will give those appropriations in September.

Schaepler stated that the Finance Committee discussed that extra money is available because positions haven't yet been filled. The state sometimes allows us to carry money forward, but as this is the beginning of the biennium, we will be unable to carry any funds forward. Nelson noted that we lost about \$700,000 in cash appropriations. Furby explained that appropriation is the authority to spend our cash. We did not lose our cash in the bank; we lost \$700,000 worth of appropriations to spend in this new year. There is a process in place where we can request permission to spend more money if needed.

Governance Committee - Bryan Zimmer

Zimmer reported that we have received funding in the amount of \$859,146.19 from the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation for Chimney Rock, allowing the project to go forward. This will allow us to continue with the design process of the project and pay Sinclair-Hille to work all of the way up to the bidding of the construction project. The entire amount is to be paid by the Foundation on September 8, 2019. After the project is bid, we can go forward.

Beam-Callaway asked Jones to explain what it was like to not be able to pay the consultants due to the funding dispute with the Foundation. Jones explained that we had not received the required funds from the Foundation and this resulted in our being two months behind with the project, as the consultants stopped working due to non-payment. Jones stated that we were able to convince the consultants that they would be paid now and we believe we can make the time up and still be on schedule to open the new facility in May of 2020. He added that this is not the way that History Nebraska typically conducts business and it was embarrassing for the organization to hold up payments for work satisfactorily completed. Sinclair-Hille usually bill us once a month, but they are willing adjust the billing cycle so they can get the bills from the sub-contractors earlier. Levy asked if the contractors and sub-contractors knew why we couldn't pay them. Jones replied that they know that we had a break in the chain of moving money over, but they do not know the details. We are now paid up on the current work.

Zimmer credited Jones for getting payment on a short pay cycle in order to get the contractors' trust back. Nelson asked if Zimmer anticipated any problems in getting rest of funds from the Foundation. Zimmer stated that he has made it clear to the foundation officers that the funds have to be transferred by September 8th, and they are aware that the project cannot go forward without the rest of the funds. He does not anticipate any problems.

Personnel Committee - Lance Bristol and Marilyn Moore

Item: Commitment to Heritage Awards:

Bristol thanked the board members for their help in getting the Commitment to Heritage Award letters done the night before the meeting. He will divide the responses into Congressional Districts and the board members can go to each district to present the awards. There will be a script developed as talking points, and for media press releases. Bristol hopes for a 10% return. He anticipates that it will give us great exposure across state.

Beam-Callaway stated that they will reach out to past board members and ask them to be part of the effort.

Wirth suggested that something be placed in the History Nebraska newsletter announcing that letters have gone out and the program established, so people can be on the lookout for it. Lynne Ireland stated that the History Nebraska Marketing Team will take care of it.

President Zimmer thanked Bristol and Beam-Callaway on their idea for this project.

Item: Board member self-evaluation

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Moore announced that sometime in August or September, board members will be emailed a self-evaluation form to fill out and send back to her.

Bristol also mentioned that the Personnel Committee spent time talking about past board members, since some current board members are termed off this year. They would like to find a way to invite and include past board members to events and to also be invited to the annual meeting to be given some recognition. He stated that the Personnel Committee likes the board's new committee system, and feel that they are getting more done. They also appreciate the History Nebraska staff helping with the committees.

At 9:40am President Zimmer called for the board to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

Motion to go into Executive Session was made by Endacott, Second by Levy

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

No: None

Motion Passed

At 10:19am a Motion to come out of Executive Session was made by Beam-Callaway, Second by Bristol.

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

No: None

Motion Passed

On behalf of the Personnel Committee, Moore made the Motion, that for the Fiscal Year 19/20, History Nebraska Director, Trevor Jones' salary be set at \$160,000. Motion was Seconded by Spellman.

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

No: None

Motion Passed

Administrative issues

Item: Deaccessions

A new summary version of the deaccession document was shared and discussed by board members.

Jones brought to the board's attention that we are planning a major deaccession effort at Fort Robinson for items that have been stored there for decades. We plan to dispose of most of these items, and auction some others to support existing collections and acquire new collections. Any salvageable items lacking clear title will be brought back to Lincoln. There a variety of items, such as farm equipment, clothing, books, etc. Many came to the organization in the early part of the 20th century and almost all of them lack provenance. There may be as many as 4,476 pieces we will consider taking to auction.

Schroeder asked whether or not we anticipate title issues. Jones stated we have identified issues with some collections, but the vast majority of the items do not have title issues -- but we will be cautious and bring any items back to Lincoln to sort out any potential issues.

Motion to approve deaccessions was made by Levy, Second by Schaepler

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

No: None

Motion Passed

Nominating Committee – Katherine Endacott

Item: Nominating Committee Slate

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Endacott informed the board that the Nominating Committee has a slate of candidates for the upcoming Board of Trustees election: Eileen Wirth and Tom Kraus have agreed to run for re-election and Pam Hilton Snow will run in District 1.

The Nominating Committee recommends Richard Herink for the upcoming gubernatorial vacancy.

Item: Plans for the Annual Meeting

The History Nebraska Annual Meeting will be held the evening of Thursday, October 17th. Tentative location is the Gerald Ford Conservation Center in Omaha. Jones stated that we have a speaker available to us, Dirk Chatelain, who is the author of the book *24th and Glory*.

Jones stated that Bob Bartee had offered the USMC Davis Global Center as a location for the October board meeting; however, the center will not be open by October 18th. An alternate location could be the new Cancer Institute, part of which is the Chihuly rooftop healing garden. The board could also decide on a different location. The board agreed that we should accept Bartee's offer, and hold the meeting at the new Cancer Institute.

Endicott stated that the Planning Committee has been discussing the annual meeting. President Zimmer offered his help if needed.

Director's Report -Trevor Jones

Jones reminded the board of our Five Strategic Plan Goals, and Four Employee Values.

Jones thanked Jill Dolberg, the historic preservation team, and our summer help for managing our response to Nebraska's historic flooding. They have conducted reviews across the state and received praise from the governor's office and federal agencies for their diligent work and rapid response.

Jones thanked Connie Spellman for helping open doors for our recent Omaha Oral History Project on downtown redevelopment. We have completed all of the interviews that we planned to do, and we will plan to do a stage two.

Jones shared documents for organization's Vision Traction Organizer (VTO) outlining the goals, rocks, and issues from the Fiscal year 18/19.

- Revenue totaled \$8,484,932, which was 2.5% over FY 17/18
- Overall attendance was 9% below our goal
- We completed the Cather property transfer
- We completed the Chimney Rock approvals, 90% of fundraising was completed
- We completed the first phase of digital technology road map with CRM implementation
- We did not complete CRM implementation by June 30th, but signed a contract this week
- Revised employee review system, New HR procedures, revised employee handbook
- New innovative projects, including hands-on agricultural exhibit, Neligh Mill plans, archeological outreach and exhibit, women's suffrage programming. We completed all *except* the hands-on agricultural exhibit. We had planned to use the money from the Weese Farm for this project but have not received it from the Foundation.

Nelson inquired about the Neligh Mill project. Jones stated that we hired a consultant to look at the physical needs, interpretive needs, and the vision for 10 - 20 years. We looked at what we need to do for infrastructure needs long-term. We needed a long-range plan for Neligh so we will know what our future projects could be and can discuss them with potential donors.

The document showed 11 issues on the Issues List. Issues are things that we are unable to deal with right now, but we do not want to forget about. Jones pointed out that creating a volunteer management program was one of the major issues that was not solved in the last year.

Zimmer asked what issue number 9: "Solve leaders in two seats" meant. Jones explained that it means that there is one person doing two jobs.

Kraus asked whether or not landowners need to call History Nebraska if they find any archeological items on private land. Jones responded that we are only involved if federal funds are involved, such as using disaster relief. If a landowner digs and finds artifacts, they can call us if they want to. Jones added that we encourage landowners to call us

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as we cannot do archeology in Nebraska without the help of private landowners. He also added that State Archeologist Rob Bozell is excellent with working with landowners.

Jones also prepared a document for the board outlining the goals for FY 19/20, adding that our ten-year target is now nine years away. The total revenue goals for a future date of July 1, 2022 would be \$10,235,000, with a key measurable of 10,000 members.

The second page shows goals for the year, ending in June 30, 2020. We are anticipating a total revenue goal of \$10,360,000 with 3,000 members. Anticipated funds from the Foundation are \$2,500,000, including the Weese Farm money and the money for Chimney Rock. We are planning to continue to grow federal grants and contracts. We have also applied for an IMLS grant to receive \$1,000,000 over three years. We will find out by October if we get the grant.

We have set six organizational goals for FY 19/20:

1. Refine, document, and implement an organization wide IT solution, including a training and growth plan.
2. Refine and implement comprehensive attendance strategy, including price/donation, programing plans, marketing, and cross promotion.
3. Document, schedule, and implement steps to make our Chimney Rock site "Best in Class."
4. Access needs, outline options, and document next steps for History Nebraska's strategic growth.
5. Document, schedule, and implement steps to make History Nebraska's volunteer program "Best in Class."
6. Identify options and implement solutions for forecasting accounting, budget, and compliance issues across History Nebraska.

Levy asked why growing the number of History Nebraska members is an important goal. Jones replied that revenue is the primary goal of the membership program and we have worked to create a model that increases revenue. The new model is simpler for customers and is about supporting the cause of Nebraska History. 10,000 memberships will provide a revenue stream to support programming. We would also love to have a network of 10,000 members who believe in the cause and will be advocates for history and history education.

Beam-Callaway stated that the Heritage Awards is an opportunity to spread the word about membership. She added that they would like a cheat sheet to use to train board members to sell membership so they will all have the same pitch.

Issues List: The document showed 11 issues for FY 19-20. Jones pointed out that some of the issues from the FY 18/19 list have changed on the FY 19-20 list because we have moved them to the active list and goals for the year, but some issues on the list are new. One of the main issues is the Emergency Response resources. We need to make sure that the lessons learned from the flooding this summer are documented so we can improve our response in the future.

Nelson asked what we have in place to be able to access historical sites electronically. Jones explained that we now have our marker app, which is a free download that allows people to find the location, and access information on the Historic Markers. Jones added that a goal is to improve the app over the next year. The marketing team plan to make it into a game where players can receive a prize for how many markers that have visited.

Levy inquired about the new Nebraska Good Life signs that we now sell in our Gift Shops. Jones responded that the signs are selling quite well but he did not have current figures at hand.

Chimney Rock:

We are two months behind schedule on Chimney Rock. We expect the exhibit concept drawings by next week, the 95% complete construction drawings by mid-August, construction bidding in September, and we will close visitor center in January. Our visitation drops in October so we have flexibility there and could close it earlier. We hope to complete it by May but the delay in funding means we have used up all our contingency time.

Women's Suffrage, the 19th Amendment in Nebraska:

Trevor brought copies of "Women's Suffrage, the 19th Amendment in Nebraska" which is a special issue of the *Nebraska History* magazine for the board to have an opportunity to purchase today. The opening of the Women's Suffrage Exhibit will be on Aug 16th. Eileen stated that she and Sharon Kennedy are talking about sending people to community groups to talk about women's suffrage.

Hands on Agricultural Exhibit:

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We need bring in outside consultants to help with this exhibit. This is where the Weese farm money will be used once we get it transferred from the Foundation. With this exhibit, we will answer the question: "How does food shape who we are?"

Jones informed the board of the new book *24th and Glory: The Intersection of Civil Rights and Omaha's Greatest Generation of Athletes* by Dirk Chatelain, which will become available in August. Jones stated that the book was co-sponsored by History Nebraska and the Omaha World Herald. Christine Gerber, who is the book editor at the *Omaha World Herald*, contacted Jones about making the series into a book. Funding for the book came from a Publications Fund at the Foundation. Jones added that we are not making money from the book, only recognition. This project also meets one of our goals to raise our profile in Omaha.

Jones introduced his new book: *Major, A Soldier Dog*. The book tells the story a war dog trained at Ft. Robinson. The story is told from the dog's perspective. Jones stated that we have national distribution of the book, which is also available on Amazon, among other sites. Jones added that we make more money if the book is purchased at our stores than if it is purchased online.

At 11:54 AM, President Zimmer requested the board to go into Executive Session.

Motion to go into Executive Session was made by Nelson, Second by Moore

Roll call yes: Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Levy, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer
No: None
Motion Passed

At 12:35 the Motion to come out of Executive Session was made by Levy, Second by Schroeder

Roll call yes: Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Levy, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer
No: None
Motion Passed

Elder made the motion ,Second by Bristol: "to authorize the Governance and Executive Committee to explore relationships with other philanthropic organizations that might find the goals of History Nebraska within their charitable purpose."

Roll call yes: Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Levy, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer
No: None
Motion Passed

President Zimmer called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Moore, Second by Kraus

Roll call yes: Beam-Callaway, Bristol, Elder, Endacott, Kraus, Levy, Moore, Nelson, Schaepler, Schroeder, Spellman, Wirth, Zimmer
No: None
Motion Passed

Meeting adjourned at 12:40pm

Next meeting dates:
Friday, October 18, Omaha
History Nebraska Annual Meeting: Thursday, October 17th, Ford Center, Omaha

history.nebraska.gov

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