



**Nebraska State Historical Society Board of Trustees Meeting  
October 17, 2025 – 12:30 PM (Central Time)**

**Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center  
1326 S 32<sup>nd</sup> St., Omaha, NE 68105**

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***MEETING MINUTES***

**Call to Order**

President Nick Walter called the meeting to order at 12:32 p.m.

**Roll Call**

PRESENT:

Mark Batt, Gail DeBuse Potter, Nancy Faber, Jamesena Moore, Jacquelyn Morrison, Laura Muñoz, Nick Walter and Arlan Wine

ABSENT:

Jack Berg, Anna Castner Wightman, Beverly Duran, Shannon Smith and Bob Wickersham

**Certification of Publication - Notification of Open Meetings Act**

- The legal notice required by state statute was published in the Omaha World Herald on October 14, 2025.
- The meeting complies with the Open Meetings Act
- A copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was available on the table.

**Welcome, Remarks, and Introduction of Guests**

Two members of the public were present.

**Reminder of the Nebraska State Historical Society Mission**

The Nebraska State Historical Society mission was read aloud by President Walter.

**Board President's Update**

Board President, Nick Walter, noted that this was his last board meeting as he did not run for re-election due to some personal life issues. He has enjoyed the organization – what they do, what they have accomplished and the people he has gotten to work with. He does hope to rejoin the board at some point in the future. His goal when he took over as President one year ago was to try and get the board thru transition and stabilization periods after some legal changes as well as to define what the board is and what it does.

**Opportunity for Public Questions and Comments**

No questions were asked or comments given.

## **Approval of the Minutes of the August 1, 2025 Board Meeting**

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 1, 2025

Motion by: MOORE

Second by: DeBUSE POTTER

Yeas: BATT, DeBUSE POTTER, FABER, MOORE, MORRISON,  
MUÑOZ, WALTER, WINE

Nays: NONE

Abstain: NONE

Motion approved

## **Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation Report**

Leslie Fattig, Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation Executive Director, thanked the board for letting them host the celebration event. They felt like they had a good response with almost 100 people signed up.

Fattig then shared with the board a Cottonwood Society presentation she recently gave to the NSHS Foundation Board as a call-to-action message on how both groups need to look forward with clarity on what they need to do together. The annual meeting is a time to reflect and celebrate projects such as Walk to the Rock trail system, Wander Nebraska and RoamNebraska. She stressed that stewardship is leadership, and every trustee is a steward. The Trustees' role is not just to attend meetings but also to advocate boldly and wisely. She then outlined both the donations required and benefits provided at each level.

In September the Foundation added two trustees to the board: Belinda Boelter and Sara Crook. Officers for the year include Dawn Rockey as president, Roger Lempke as vice president, Sara Crook as executive vice president and Gail DeBuse Potter as secretary/treasurer. Brett Comstock, Nik and Ben Kruse, Michael J. McGuire, Peggy Jones, Heather Lipovsky, Richard Piersol and Will Stoutamire were recently elected as trustees. Her presentation concluded with a summary of projects they have supported the Society on in the last year and a quick update on the Chimney Rock Visitor Center roof project.

President Walter thanked Leslie Fattig and the NSHS Foundation for providing refreshments for today's meetings and celebration.

## **Nebraska State Historical Society Director's Report**

Daryl Bohac started the NSHS Director's Report by thanking the Foundation for their

generous support. The 2024-2025 revenues and expenditures were presented to the board. Total revenues were \$9,215,622.47 and total expenditures were \$7,969,622.30 which did not include \$884,464 in encumbrances. These encumbrances included some expenses that occurred in the fiscal year but won't be invoiced until the next fiscal year. In the end NSHS was within \$350,000 of executing their appropriation and resources. Part of that was because of one-time expenses such as two new vehicles for Archeology, a replacement vehicle for Fort Robinson and one vehicle was shuffled to Broc Anderson as sites director. The current 10% reduction from the Governor's office was due in part to not fully using the year's funding by previous administrations. As was stated in the August meeting, no one will be laid off as a part of budget reductions and open positions are actively working on being filled. The difficulty of attracting experienced candidates to specialty positions such as the Painting Conservator was discussed and trustees brainstormed methods to attract people to Nebraska as the funding source already exists to be competitive in the nationwide market.

Slides were shared on membership by numbers and how many voted in the recent election. Memberships have declined for the last two years. More statistics are being studied to determine why/who that is and how to increase membership and possibly expanding categories. Costs are also being reviewed to make sure membership fees are adequate.

The floor plan for the future core exhibits on the museum's second floor was presented, and discussion was held on the planned content and timeline. Consultants are being used to help design and construct the exhibits. Museum staff are reaching out to include histories of all groups and peoples in Nebraska so that people can see themselves in the displays not just a history.

Kennard House repairs and maintenance were discussed and how best to use the available funds. The Neihardt Study is also in need of attention as the Society owns the building. The Fort Robinson History Center may be closed for a year while major renovations take place.

## **Ad Hoc Committee Reports**

President Walter reminded the board that the ad hoc committees were established with the intention of a one-year duration. He recognized that there were issues that still need to be finalized but it was his preference that the issues and documents be left to next year's board to conduct business as they wish.

Moore reminded him that all issues were tabled at the August meeting and would remain so until the group decides to take it from the table. A clarification from the August meeting discussion ensued as the Advisory Committee wanted their report of recommendations to be incorporated into the governance document rather than create a separate document. They also thought that it would be best if the

Governance Committee were the ones to amend their own document not a different committee. The Advisory and Governance committees have both provided reports, but the Ambassador committee has not.

The possibility was raised that going forward it might be best to combine all three ad hoc committees (Advisory, Ambassadorship, and Governance) efforts into one ad hoc committee.

## **Election of Officers for 2026**

President Walter discussed the timing of the need to elect board officers annually. Traditionally it was done at the October meeting. The statutes don't name a specific time just that it must occur annually. There was an election in 2025, so this obligation has been met. It was suggested to move elections to the first meeting at the start of the new year when the new members (Bruce Clawson was elected and Arlan Wine was re-elected to the Board) are present. This information as well as officer's position descriptions and responsibilities should also be incorporated into the new governance document. Board members were encouraged to recruit outside of the meeting people who are willing to serve as President, First Vice president and Second Vice President. Since no action was proposed no motion nor vote was needed to wait to elect officers.

The plan discussed would be to have the governance document finalized before the end of the year and that Director Bohac and President Walter will set the agenda for the next board meeting before December 31, 2025. Either the First or Second Vice President will conduct the meeting and assume the duties of the President until the election is complete.

## **Proposed Meeting Schedule for 2026**

The statutes changed so that the board no longer determines the date of the annual member meeting, but it is silent on every other meeting. The recommendation was made by Director Bohac to schedule the first three meetings on the second Friday of the first month of the quarter with a preference of a morning meeting. The date chosen in July allows adequate notice for the meeting to occur within the 120-day deadline before the board elections.

- First Quarter, January 9, 2026 – Location TBD
- Second Quarter, April 10, 2026 – Location TBD
- Third Quarter, July 10, 2026 – Location TBD
- Fourth Quarter 2026 – Location and Date TBD (Board Meeting)
- Fourth Quarter 2026 – Location and Date TBD (Annual Meeting)

The NSHS Foundation plans to offer an orientation for new (and interested old) board members right before the board meeting with a final time and location to be determined after discussing further with the Director.

## **Other Business & Trustees Roundtable**

The question was asked if there have been any conversations (or will there be any conversations) about a legislative bill to clean up some of the ambiguities that were left from the previous statute

changes. Per Director Bohac, as a code agency, we report directly to the governor and as such we submit legislative proposals to the Policy Research Office for consideration, but the Society cannot submit proposals directly to the Legislature.

The number of board vacancies in 2026 was also questioned. There will be two elected vacancies, one in District 1 when Walter's term expires and one in District 2. There is an interested party in the District 2 seat that Director Bohac will connect with.

## **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by President Walter at 2:02 pm

Minutes approved by:

Nebraska State Historical Society Board of Trustees

January 9, 2026