



**Nebraska State Historical Society Board of Trustees Meeting
April 10, 2026 – 9:00 AM (Central Time)**

The Meeting was conducted in person and virtually via Teams

The public was invited to attend in person at:
Burlington Street Station Meeting Room,
603 N Plum St., Grand Island, Nebraska 68801
or virtually at: <https://tinyurl.com/57eyh5kh>
Meeting ID: 275 190 777 520 31 Passcode: 5Mh2tg7R

MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order

President Bob Wickersham called the meeting to order at 9:16 am.

Roll Call – Quorum confirmed.

ATTENDING IN PERSON: Mark Batt, Jack Berg, Bruce Clawson, Nancy Faber, Jamesena Moore, Shannon Smith, Bob Wickersham and Arlan Wine.

ATTENDING ONLINE: Gail DeBuse Potter (left the meeting at 11:57 am) and Tom Neal (left the meeting at 10:27 am).

ABSENT: Anna Castner Wightman, Beverly Duran, and Laura Muñoz.

Certification of Publication - Notification of Open Meetings Act

- The legal notice required by state statute was published in the *Grand Island Independent* on April 03, 2026.
- 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

- Director Daryl Bohac outlined the addition of the virtual option to this meeting and how it meets the Nebraska Open Meetings Act requirements.
- One member of the public was present. Two members of the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation and four NSHS staff members were online.

Reminder of the Nebraska State Historical Society Mission

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

Opportunity for Public Questions and Comments

No questions were asked or comments given.

Approval of the January 9, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the January 9, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Motion by: MOORE

Second by: BATT

Yeas: BATT, BERG, CLAWSON, DeBUSE POTTER, FABER,
MOORE, NEAL, SMITH, WICKERSHAM, WINE

Nays: NONE

Abstain: NONE

Motion approved

Authority to Appoint Board Representative to Nebraska State Historic Preservation Board

Discussion of the current role of the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Board, how often they meet and their bylaw requirement for the Board of Trustee President to serve on their board. Recently they amended their bylaws to reflect to read that the role may be filled by the President or his designee. President Wickersham is willing to continue to serve in this role.

Motion to allow the President to appoint a Board of Trustee designate to the Nebraska State Historical Board if the President is unable to attend.

Motion by: MOORE

Second by: SMITH

Yeas: BATT, BERG, CLAWSON, DeBUSE POTTER, FABER,
MOORE, NEAL, SMITH, WICKERSHAM, WINE

Nays: NONE

Abstain: NONE

Motion approved

Committee Reports

Bylaws

Clawson and Moore reported on the progress being made on the draft bylaws, proposed subcommittees based on their advisory role and researched information from other code agencies advisory board structures. The committee proposes clarifying that the Director is the board's secretary and may delegate minute-taking to staff. Discussion ensued on the process to nominate and elect board members. Draft bylaws should be ready for review at the July meeting.

Recess

OUT: 10:46 am

IN: 11:03 am

Roll Call

ATTENDING IN PERSON: Mark Batt, Jack Berg, Bruce Clawson, Nancy Faber, Jamesena Moore, Shannon Smith, Bob Wickersham and Arlan Wine.

ATTENDING ONLINE: Gail DeBuse Potter

ABSENT: Anna Castner Wightman, Beverly Duran, Tom Neal and Laura Muñoz.

Committee Reports (continued)

Membership Categories

Group discussion was held on the structure of the NSHS membership program and whether the authority should be consolidated under the Director. Statute requires that the Board sets the classifications for membership and the Director sets the fees. One free membership class must exist that allows the member to vote in the annual Board of Trustee election. The Board requested more information from the Membership Coordinator for the July meeting on a breakdown of membership numbers by the six classifications and clarification on what expenses the fees fund.

Legislative Proposals - Discussion

Extensive board discussion focused on potential statutory changes for the 2027 session. Topics raised included: the Board member elections and petition process, candidate qualifications, training, and the election method with a preference for continuing ballot-based elections via mail or electronic method. No final decision made – items will be included as July decision points.

Proposed Advisory Role and Ambassador Document Discussion

President Wickersham provided two draft appendices (Appendix A: Advisory Role and Appendix B: Ambassador Role) for review. Discussion was held on the need for the documents, the alignment with expectations, and should they be appendices to the bylaws or a standalone reference. Members were asked to review further and deferred a decision to the July meeting.

Heritage Heroes Program Update

Mark Batt presented potential program refinements to enhance the program as a positive publicity tool. He proposed shifting to a six-month nomination cycle which would cap annual awards at ten per cycle (overflow would automatically roll into the next cycle) and would like to add a one-year complimentary Society membership to the awardee which would include a magazine subscription. The award certificate was recently updated and will be presented in a frame rather than the fiber certificate holders. Batt is consolidating the program process into a single reference document. The draft will be presented at the July meeting.

Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation Report

Leslie Fattig, Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation Director, presented the Foundation's April 2026 Grant Statement. YTD, they have contributed \$146,000 in grants with approx. \$18,000 pending. The Foundation contributed a hiring package for the new Paintings Conservator. They are also working on a museum kiosk project and budgeting for new exhibits. Other key highlights included: their new strategic plan launch with increased

statewide engagement, a new CRM software, partnership with Game & Parks on the 250th Anniversary Trail Program, *Bravery* magazine statewide distribution with Indian Affairs Commission, New *Our School, Our Story* statewide K-12 local history initiative and app upgrades to *Wander Nebraska* and *Walk to the Rock*. The Cottonwood Society has 76 inaugural members including over 50% Foundation trustees and several NSHS Board Trustees enrolled.

Nebraska State Historical Society Director's Report

Director Bohac started the NSHS Director's Report by thanking the Foundation for all of their support in the last year, their efforts to work together with staff and today's refreshments. A financial overview of the Society shows that at the 75% of the fiscal year mark, General Funds expended at 74% and are right on target. Year end goal is 99% execution. Cash Fund is at 51% (impacted by increases in CAC budget). Federal Funds: 61%. Overall: 63%. Board affirmed satisfaction with execution discipline by department heads.

Other updates included the hiring process status for the Director of Collections and Finance Director positions. Melissa Gardner the new Paintings Conservator starts next week. The NHM America 250 Exhibit opening has been set for June 29, 2026. The approach to the Core Exhibits has been revised so that all phases will be designed by a single firm for consistency.

Reports on current bills in the Legislative session included: LB83: Clarifies/streamlines Historic Preservation Office functions. Main Street Revitalization language was removed. LB596: Allows this Board to meet virtually except for one required in-person meeting annually. Nebraska Hall of Fame bill language was revised regarding living inductees.

2026 Proposed Meeting Schedule

The third quarter Board meeting will be held Friday, July 17th at the Neihardt Center in Bancroft, Nebraska with tours of the Neihardt Study and Dr. Susan La Flesche Picotte Memorial Hospital in Walthill, NE. Fourth quarter Board and annual membership meetings will be held in Lincoln with October dates to be determined.

Other Business & Trustees Roundtable

Capitol Gift Shop Update Trustees noted significant improvement in the Capitol Gift Shop. Director Bohac noted inventory is strong and has been expanding. A recent Cameron the Cat book signing event resulted in over \$6,000 in sales. The first full-year profit/loss report is expected in July.

Lezlee Williams Passing Noted President Wickersham recognized the recent passing of former Nebraska State Historical Society Executive Assistant, Lezlee Williams who provided exceptional support to the Board, and expressed appreciation for her service.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

Motion by: WINE

Second by: BATT

Yeas: BATT, BERG, CLAWSON, FABER, MOORE, SMITH,
WICKERSHAM, WINE

Nays: NONE

Abstain: NONE

Motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned by President Wickersham at 12:09 pm.

Minutes submitted by:

Daryl Bohac, Director

Nebraska State Historical Society

Minutes approved by:

Nebraska State Historical Society Board of Trustees

July 17, 2026