

MINUTES
MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
January 19, 2017
9:00 A.M. MHS Auditorium
Helena, Montana

CALL TO ORDER

President Bob Brown called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Joy Lewis took roll call.

Montana Historical Society Board of Trustees members present: Bob Brown, Tom Nygard, Janene Caywood, Kent Kleinkopf, Crystal Wong Shors, Ed Jasmin, Jude Sheppard, Jim Court, Thomas Minckler, Cliff Edwards and Steve Lozar.

Excused Board members: James Utterback, Chuck Johnson, and Shirley Groff.

Staff present: MHS Director, Bruce Whittenberg; MHS Membership Coordinator, Rebecca Baumann; MHS Development and Marketing Officer, Susan Near; MHS PR/Media Manager, Tom Cook; MHS SHPO Manager, Mark Baumler; MHS Centralized Services Administrator, Denise King; MHS Outreach & Interpretation Manager, Kirby Lambert; MHS Research Center Manager, Molly Kruckenberg; MHS Publications Manager, Molly Holz; MHS Museum Manager, Jennifer Bottomly O'looney.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Ed Jasmin moved approval of the October 21, 2016 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Jim Court and carried unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Bob Brown

Bob reported that he and Bruce attended the Hearing on HB 14. The MHS Heritage Center is number two on Governor Bullock's priority list. Unfortunately, the State Reserve is down to \$80 million. He reviewed the proposed cuts and possibilities for MHS that may include bonding. There is a critical hearing coming up on the building project on January 27th that will need as much support as we can muster. He passed around a draft of a new letter from the Trustees in support of the MHS Heritage Center that he wanted to get out to the Press as soon as possible. Much discussion followed concerning the letter's intent, its audience and the approach it takes.

Crystal moved to authorize Bruce to proceed with the letter and work on it with Cliff Edwards. Kent seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Bruce explained that Molly was presenting early on the agenda because she is participating in Leadership Montana which is meeting today in Helena. She is the first MHS employee to become a member of the group.

RESEARCH CENTER – Motion Action -- Deaccession Request – Molly Kruckenberg

Molly presented the quarterly deaccession list and asked for a motion to approve the list. **Ed Jasmin moved to approve the deaccession. Janene Caywood seconded it and the motion carried unanimously.**

She discussed the Deaccession Policy of stamping the books that are being deaccessioned. They stamp the books only if there is an existing mark on the books. They do this to protect the buyer and the MHS. The book is not stamped if there isn't any prior mark in the book and they never mark archival materials. Some discussion followed about using other means of marking. She offered to investigate other methods used for deaccessioning books.

She explained that they have had a challenge to a government records collection of State Banking Records that was transferred to MHS in 1975. The collection dates to the 1920's and 30's and consists of banking reports and audits. The banking division expressed some concern about the content of the reports and would like the contents closed to the public and returned to them. The original decision was to keep them closed for 40 years. The Research Center closed the records immediately until they can resolve the issue with the banking division. They have been waiting to hear back from the division. Much discussion took place concerning keeping the records intact and open to the public. Jodie Foley explained that the records consisted of examiners' reports related to the closures of banks.

Molly reported that they have finalized the donation of the Fred Miller photo collection and it was appraised conservatively at \$703,000. The photos depict the Crow Tribe. They were donated through the efforts of the Nancy O'Connor family and Fields family. The collection was gathered over a period of 30 years. She presented a few prints from the portfolio.

She reported that they received a grant for \$55,000 from the Treacy Foundation for installing compact storage for the Film Archive Space that will be in the basement.

Cliff introduced his wife Susan, who on the Board of the Yellowstone County Museum.

Executive Committee Report – Kent Kleinkopf

Kent reported that everything the Executive Committee discussed has already been reported on or will be in the Director's report.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Bruce Whittenberg

Denise King introduced the new Store Clerk, Jodel Fohn

Bruce gave an overview of MHS highlights:

- 65th Legislature
 - Budget – he reviewed the proposed cuts and stated that it's still early in the process.
 - Building project – part of HB14, which is the Governor's proposed infrastructure package. The Heritage Center proposal is included in the Long-range Building Program/Projects and is #2 priority in the Governor's budget proposal. Last Legislative session we stood at #40. The \$27.6-million-dollar proposal will be paid for by bonding. He encouraged Board members to come to the Legislative Hearing on January 27 to support the Heritage Center proposal.

- Planning Retreat held on December 6. He reviewed revisions that were made to the Strategic Plan and Critical Issues document.
 - BBER Economic Analysis – Bruce handed out the BBER report. He stated that the report will be a critical component of pushing the Heritage Center forward.
 - Major grants: Borick Foundation donated \$50,000 for the Heritage Center, the Treacy Foundation gave \$55,000 for the Film Archives project, and the Greater Montana Foundation (GMF) gave us \$20,000 for the Film Archives projects.
 - Major Acquisitions – Fred Miller Collection and a separate gift from a collector in Cincinnati of 47 Joseph Scheuerle paintings.
 - Film Archives
 - Hooked, Fishing in Montana – exhibit opens tonight.
 - Craney Studio upgrade – to improve quality of recordings with Live Steam High Definition.
 - Executive summary of the BBER report – he reviewed the handout and the solid return on investment in the Montana Heritage Center.
 - 78,000 additional visitors
 - \$7.5 mil. new annual spending
 - \$49.3 annual impact during 2-yr construction
 - \$21.6 mil. annual impact of ongoing operations
- Discussion followed about fundraising strategies. Amanda Streeter Trum reported that the Museum’s Association of MT conducted a state-wide survey of the economic impact of museums across the state in 2011. She handed out copies of the report.
- Explore Big App is gaining in popularity across the state.
 - OGM restoration complete
 - Bruce spent time with Tom O’Connell, the State Architect, reviewing the Heritage Center project line-by-line in the effort to reduce costs. Some things have already been accomplished – the renovation of the Archives for example.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE – Mark Baumler

Mark reported on the Preservation awards scheduled for Friday, January 20 at the Myrna Loy and encouraged people to attend. He reported that the Montana African American Heritage Places Project is completed. Kate Hampton showcased a re-designed website for the AF/AM Heritage Places. She thanked everyone for all their support on the project. She also reported that they have updated their history page with the help of intern and volunteer, Anthony Wood. Mark reported that the project is getting recognized at the National level.

Steve Lozar commented that it disappoints him how little many of our schools talk about Black Heritage in Montana and about Martin Luther King. As a former School Board member, he tried to incorporate Black Heritage into the curriculum and received very little support. He’d like to see an African/American Footlocker for schools and he praised the staff who worked on the project for a job well-done.

BREAK

Crystal Shors suggested that as Board members, we show our support of the Montana Heritage Center by contributing to the Center in memory of George Dennison as a way of honoring all his good work for the MHS over the years. It also sends a strong message to Legislators that the Board is engaged in and supportive of the building project. **Crystal moved that we allow Sue Near to direct Board contributions made in memory of George Dennison, be designated to the Montana Heritage Center. Bob Brown seconded it and the motion carried unanimously.**

MUSEUM PROGRAM – Motion Action – Jennifer Bottomly O’looney

Amanda Streeter Trum showcased the Joseph Scheuerle Collection (47 pieces) that recently was donated to the Museum. She gave a short history of Scheuerle’s life and said that this now puts MHS’s Scheuerle collection (combined with a previous donation from his grandson) at 75 pieces. She stated that MHS currently has the largest collection of Scheuerle’s art in the country.

Ed Jasmin moved to approve the loan of four art pieces from the Capitol Art Loan Collection to the Governor’s Budget Office. Cliff Edwards seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Ed Jasmin moved to approve the loan of the Fred Niehaus art collection of 22 pieces of art to Attorney General Tim Fox’s office. Cliff Edwards seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Ed Jasmin moved to approve the loan of 40 items (with the exception of three fragile pieces) from the MHS Museum to the Western Heritage Center. Jim Court seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Cliff Edwards moved to approve the loan of the painting *Keeoma* by CM Russell to the CM Russell Museum. Ed Jasmin seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Marketing and Development – Susan Near

Sue reported that the brochure for the Montana Heritage Center has been updated and reprinted. She handed out copies of the new brochure. During the last quarter, the Heritage Center received \$5,600 from HC specific donations and another \$50,000 from the Borick Foundation in their continued support of the Heritage Center. The Year-End Appeal has brought in \$19,500, as of today. The Helena Chamber After Hours event held at MHS in November had the largest turnout of the year with over 150 people. First Interstate Bank helped with a sponsorship for the event. The Future of Montana’s History Event at the Capitol Rotunda on January 4 was a great success with the help of all MHS’s programs and some great donations from Great Harvest Bread Co – with sandwiches and Starbucks for coffee. The Rocky Mountain Credit Union gave \$2,000 in a sponsorship for the Fishing Exhibit.

Membership – Rebecca Baumann

Rebecca said that membership is going very well. She reported that MHS is sitting at 2,494 members. Fallon County is the only county in Montana with no MHS memberships. We have 15 members from other countries. Become a Member in November netted 77 new members.

MHS PR/Media Manager – Tom Cook

Tom talked about the newspaper coverage of the Paxson Family Diary donation and the opening of the Fishing exhibit. He handed out copies of the coverage. He talked about the Fred Miller collection and

Nancy O'Connor. He mentioned Kent Kleinkopf's donation of his mother-in-law's diaries. TV spots are helping get the word out about MHS events and staff is stepping up to the plate with their TV personalities. He presented a few TV spots to illustrate the work he is doing.

LUNCH BREAK

OUTREACH AND INTERPRETATION – Kirby Lambert

Kirby handed out "save the date" History Conference postcards. This year the History Conference will take place in Helena, September 21-23. The theme of the conference is "Montana 1917 - Time of Trouble, Time of Change." Kirby reported that they have been thinking of ways to increase visitation to the Museum by Native Americans. One way is to give money to reservation schools for the purpose of visiting the MHS and providing training to conduct research projects about their respective reservations. They are collaborating with Donny Wetzel from OPI and others to bring the project together. They have written a small grant to a Foundation for a pilot project to work with schools from Browning and Cut Bank. They'll assess the project's success and then decide which direction to take for future programming. Steve Lozar commented that tailoring it to each tribe or band will aid in its success. Jude Sheppard asked if MHS could go to the reservations and bring the program to them. Crystal applauded the partnerships they are developing. Much discussion followed.

CENTRAL SERVICES – Motion-Denise King

Denise King asked Trustees to add Montana Heritage Center/George Dennison to their checks if they are donating in memory of George Dennison. She reviewed the Legislative bills currently affecting MHS – HB3, HB 13 and HB 2. Bruce commented on a bill draft from Rep. Lenz that would authorize MHS to sell collection items. Denise reviewed the Quarterly Financial Report and presented a new book they are selling in the store authored by Thomas Minckler.

Publications – Molly Holz

Molly showcased the Winter addition of the *Montana The Magazine of Western History*. She shared her vision for a new book about Chief Plenty Coup that has been in progress for about two years. The book tells the story of Plenty Coup's childhood and pre-reservation years. Historian, Dr. Tim McCleary from the Crow reservation, has written the introduction and photos from the Bud Lake collection will be used. The book is scheduled to come out by next Christmas.

There was discussion about the Magazine being used in the schools. Molly reported that they were advertising for the Photo Editor position. The Magazine was voted "business of the month" on KBLL TV.

New Business:

A motion was made to increase Bruce's base salary on January 15, 2017 by .50/hour as appropriated by the 64th Legislative assembly, was made by Ed Jasmin and seconded by Steve Lozar. It carried unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Government Relations – No report

Donor Relations – Crystal expressed the need to re-group and offer Trustees opportunities to serve on the different committees.

Unfinished Business – None

Jude Sheppard brought up the issue of the Board meeting informally the night before a scheduled Board meeting. Much discussion followed.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

Steve Lozar honored George Dennison and Terry Sheppard with a moving prayer and song.

NEXT BOARD MEETING – April 20, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. - Executive Committee – 8:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Ed Jasmin made a motion to adjourn the meeting and the motion carried unanimously. Bob adjourned the meeting at 2:00 P.M.

“The reason that this Society as a whole is going full blast is that we simply can’t believe that full support won’t be forthcoming.” – K. Ross Toole, 1954