

**MINUTES**  
**MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**  
**January 17, 2019**  
**9:00 A.M. MHS Auditorium**  
**Helena, Montana**

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**Montana Historical Society Board of Trustees members present:** Tom Nygard, Doug MacDonald, Kent Kleinkopf, Ed Jasmin, Hal Stearns, Chuck Johnson, Steve Lozar, Sam Phares, Jim Court, Jude Sheppard, Mike Shields, Crystal Shors and Thomas Minckler.

**Excused Board members:** Bob Brown & Cliff Edwards.

**Staff present:** MHS Director, Bruce Whittenberg; MHS SHPO Program Manager, Mark Baumler, MHS Centralized Services Administrator, Denise King; MHS Education Outreach Program Manager, Kirby Lambert; MHS Research Center Program Manager, Molly Kruckenberg; MHS Publications Manager, Diana Di Stefano; MHS Museum Program Manager, Jennifer Bottomly O'looney and Curator of Collections, Amanda Streeter Trum.

**REVIEW OF MINUTES**

**Ed Jasmin moved approval of the October 11, 2018 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Chuck Johnson and passed unanimously.**

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Tom Nygard**

Tom Nygard recognized Jim Utterback's 19-years of service as an MHS Trustee and presented him a plaque of recognition. Jim thanked MHS for his plaque and said he has enjoyed nearly every minute of his tenure on the Board. He reiterated that a new MHS building is still a priority for him.

**Executive Committee Report – Hal Stearns**

Hal gave an overview of this year's Legislative process and which bills MHS will be tracking – HB 14, Long-Range Planning and HB 2, the Budget Bill. A Bed Tax bill is also on the backburner. He reported that we are doing more with less and he hopes we can regain some FTE positions. The Executive Committee suggested that Trustees reinstate and start taking their per diem again.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Bruce Whittenberg**

Bruce mentioned the MHS Facebook Book Club success. He suggested that we are doing "less with less" but we're doing it really well. He had Program Managers introduce the new staff. Kirby introduced Christine Brown, the new Outreach and Interpretation Historian for Sites and Signs, and Mark introduced Craig Mrock, the new Grants Contracts Coordinator at SHPO. Bruce mentioned Carol Loomis who is the new Human Resources Specialist and was not present. Bruce gave an overview of upcoming important Legislation that MHS is tracking and he encouraged Trustees to attend any and all committee hearings. LC 1444 is still in draft form but is a bill that will raise the bed tax 1% with accommodation

for construction of the new MHS building in phases. LC 3160 is a bill to confirm a number of Trustees and they will try to pick a time later in the session for the confirmation in hopes that those trustees can be there in person. He recognized Anneliese Warhank and April Sparks for achieving their new titles – Digital Archive Specialists, after much hard work studying and testing. He recognized the Craney Photo Media Project as no longer a “project” but a Program. Kelly Burton has spearheaded the work and has been the major force behind the program. Joe Sample’s gift of \$59,000 came at the end of 2018 and supports a year of the program. Different private funding sources have helped move the program forward. Fundraising for the Barbara Van Cleve collection acquisition continues. Visitors Count is a project MHS participated in this summer and is part of the American State and Local Histories to survey the Museum Visitors. Visitors completed over 200 surveys. Our year-end appeal letter has brought in \$29,892. In addition, MHS received \$139,000 in major gifts, some of which were grants. He gave an overview of the Critical Issues Planning meeting on December 11. Crystal offered some comments concerning the diversity of the community that the MHS serves and the value that it provides to people across the State. She pointed out the recent news coverage reflecting this information.

### **RESEARCH CENTER – Motion Action – Molly Kruckenberg**

Molly explained that the Digital Archive Specialization that Anneliese and April received was a two-year program that is quite rigorous. Jodie Foley received the same certification a year ago. The certification facilitates the Research Center’s move forward into its electronic records program. She said they continue to work on the film archives, building that into a forward moving program with Kelly Burton’s skilled help. With the gift from Joe Sample they now have funding for a full 18 months for Kelly’s position. She gave an overview of the State Historic Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) and explained that the \$10,000 to \$15,000 MHS receives each year allows MHS to give scholarships, workshops, training and the sponsoring of an intern to work at an archive project at a select location in the state. That money is also used to sponsor archives blitzes’ that sends staff and other archive people to a particular location in the state to jump start a museum’s care for their collections. Jodie Foley oversees the National Historic Records Board. Molly said that they are continuing to work on the HVAC System planning. She explained that MHS had received a grant from the National Endowment of Humanities to help identify problems with and provide recommendations for the system. She is applying for a follow-up NEH grant to implement some of those recommended changes.

Molly asked the Board to approve the Deaccession list.

**Ed Jasmin made a motion to approve the Deaccession list. Kent Kleinkopf seconded it and the motion passed unanimously.**

### **MUSEUM PROGRAM – Motion Action – Jennifer Bottomly O’looney**

Jennifer reported that they are working on a lot of exhibit projects. They are gearing up for the Gallery of Outstanding Montanan’s induction ceremony taking place in the Capitol Rotunda on February 27. This year’s inductees are Fannie Sperry Steele (1887-1983) and Butte Architects, John G. “Gus” Link (1869-1954) and Charles S. Haire (1857-1925). The Brewery Exhibit will be opening this coming Fall. The Ice Age Exhibit will open on Saturday, May 18 and Amanda is heading that up with Stan Wilmoth and Steve Lozar who is providing tribal information and recommendations.

Jennifer requested approval of a loan of two Sharps Model 1874 rifles to the River & Plains Society at Fort Benton. **Ed Jasmin made a motion to approve the loan of the Sharps Model 1874 rifle to the River and Plains Society. Jim Court seconded it and the motion passed unanimously.**

Amanda passed around a photo copy of one page of a soldier’s handbook dated 1896 and belonged to George Busch. He enlisted at Fort Keogh, Miles City on June 25, 1896.

## **BREAK**

### **OUTREACH AND INTERPRETATION – Kirby Lambert**

Kirby talked about the next History Conference coming up this September and handed out the post cards calling for proposals for the conference. He reported that “Montana Stories of the Land,” MHS’s textbook, is sold out and they are in the process of getting 1,500 copies reprinted. There are now 15,000 copies distributed across Montana. He gave a review of the Visitor’s Count that MHS conducted last summer. It was conducted to help MHS better understand what we need, help identify areas that are critical to visitors, market our strengths and focus on our improvements and compare ourselves to other similar facilities. Some discussion followed concerning the Visitors Count and the Textbook.

### **PUBLICATIONS – Diana Di Stefano**

Diana reported that the Winter issue of the Magazine was out. She announced that some new grants have helped get the Press book publications back on schedule. She explained that they are excited to hire a new Associate Editor soon. They are exploring the idea of an endowment to help stabilize the financial outlook for the Pubs Program. She talked about the Direct Mailing they did this last Fall. John Russell’s biography of Nelson Story should be out by March, 2019. They are looking at getting reprints of the more successful books in their collection.

### **STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE – Mark Baumler**

Mark talked about the Historic Preservation Awards Ceremony that is happening tomorrow afternoon at the Myrna Loy at 2:00p.m. They are recognizing 5 projects and people. He encouraged everyone to attend. Mark commented on The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service employees that couldn’t attend to accept the award because of the Government shutdown.

### **CENTRAL SERVICES – Denise King**

Denise handed out Legislative Handbooks to Trustees. She reported on an Executive Action hearing she had just come from on HB 9, the Cultural & Aesthetics Grant. She explained that every two years MHS receives \$30,000 for conservation for Capitol Art. There was also a grant for \$5,400 for SHPO and the African American project that passed out of the subcommittee. She reviewed more legislation that is important to MHS. She mentioned the upcoming Legislative Audit. She shared new books from the store and showcased the updated County Handbook that outlines the services that the MHS provides the State’s 56 Counties. She reviewed the Financial Schedules for fiscal year 2019.

## **GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**

Bruce encouraged Trustees to attend hearings, email and call their Legislators. The Trustees can do a lot to advocate for the MHS.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Hal Stearns asked if we could have the Fall Board meeting right before or after the History Conference. Some discussion took place and it was decided that it should not be held at the same time because of staffing issues.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Chuck Johnson asked Tom Minckler what the status of the gold nugget was? There was some discussion about the fundraising process. The nugget's purchase price is \$175,000.

Jim Court asked about the status of the Van Cleve collection acquisition. Bruce explained that we've already made a \$50,000 down payment and the acquisition was included in the Year-End Appeal letter as well as in a separate letter sent to 25 people (collectors and friends) that Barbara Van Cleve suggested. Bruce explained that we have by agreement until the end of 2021 to make the final payment.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS** – No Report

**DONOR RELATIONS** – No Report

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

**LUNCH**

**ADJOURNMENT 12:36 P.M.**

**NEXT BOARD MEETING –April 18, 2019 and October 17, 2019.**

***“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***