

**Montana Historical Society
Board of Trustees Quarterly Meeting
January 20, 2022, 9:00 MST
Montana State Capitol Building, Room 137**

CALL TO ORDER

President Hal Stearns called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Jodel Fohn took roll call.

Montana Historical Society Board of Trustees members present: Norma Ashby Smith, Carol Donaldson, Tim Fox, Ed Jasmin, Bill Jones, Kent Kleinkopf, Lorna Kunej, Douglas MacDonald, Steve Lozar, Ken Robison, Jay Russell, Jude Sheppard. and Hal Stearns.

Excused Board Members: Thomas Minckler.

MHS Staff Present: Molly Kruckenberg, Director; Denise King, Administrator; Eve Byron, Public Information Officer; Ginny Sullivan, Development Officer; Jodel Fohn, Membership Services; Roberta Gebhardt, Research Center Program Manager; Jennifer Bottomly-O'looney, Museum Program Manager; Martha Kohl, Outreach and Interpretation Program Manager; Diana Di Stefano, Publications Program Manager; and Pete Brown, State Historic Preservation Officer.

Review of Minutes

Bill Jones moved to approve the minutes from the October 21, 2021, meeting. Norma Ashby Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

President's Report – Hal Stearns

President Stearns spoke about the recent issue of the Society Star, the Murdock Trust Grant, the last issue of *Montana The Magazine of Western History*, and some of the new features of and potential outreach for the Montana Heritage Center.

Director's Report – Molly Kruckenberg

New Employee Introductions – Molly introduced Martha Kohl, who was promoted to Outreach & Interpretation Program Manager. Martha introduced herself and greeted the Board of Trustees. Laura Marsh from SHPO was introduced and greeted the Board of Trustees. Aaron Genton with the Museum Program was introduced to the Board of Trustees. Museum Interns, Josey Chumney and Aaron Rau, were introduced and greeted the Board. SHPO Intern Kali Zaglauer was introduced and greeted the Board.

Molly thanked everyone for adjusting the meeting to a virtual format due to Covid-19 concerns. She shared the precautions that are being taken to reduce the spread of Covid. While there is a spike in Covid numbers some adjustments are being made for staff absences.

Molly shared a review of 2021 Membership, Subscriber, Visitation, Virtual Interaction, and Social Media engagement numbers. She also reported on fundraising numbers for 2021 for the spring and falls appeals, Montana Heritage Center donations, and other private gifts. Molly reported that in 2021 collections have been added, strategic planning was undertaken, the rebranding process was begun, migration of the Montana Memory Project took place, *A History of Montana in 101 Objects* was published, the 2021 Historic Preservation Awards were held, the History Conference returned to an in-person event, and the Museum began their inventory and packing project. Molly shared current photos of the progress of the Montana Heritage Center. She shared the outreach opportunities that she was involved this quarter. Molly worked with Norma Ashby Smith for the Montana Statehood Day and Centennial Bell Teachers Award Ceremony. Heritage Keepers Award information will be sent out February 1 with a deadline for applications of April 1. Applications will be reviewed by the Heritage Keepers Award subcommittee and will be voted on at the April Board of Trustees meeting.

Eve Byron reported on advertising with Northern News Network, Yellowstone Public Radio, and Voices of Montana. Eve spoke about social media numbers, outreach opportunities, and preparing for the opening of the Montana Heritage Center.

Ginny Sullivan reported on progressing with large financial gifts for the Montana Heritage Center. The Development Office is hiring a part-time employee to assist with the growth. Ginny reviewed donation statistics. She has submitted grants and will be submitting more. Ginny thanked past Board of Trustee Cliff Edwards for assisting in arranging donor meetings. There will be information on a brick style campaign at the next meeting.

Eve Byron and Ginny Sullivan gave an update on the process of rebranding with SOVRN. We are updating the brand and logo for current and future audiences, messaging strategies and the Capitol Campaign. Ginny explained the selection process for selecting SOVRN. Eve introduced Erick Gutierrez from SOVRN and he introduced the company, their research of MHS, progress, and creating an identity that will work for us. Brian Elliott is our contact in Helena.

Program Managers Reports

Roberta Gebhardt, Research Center Program Manager, reported on vacant positions in the Research Center. She gave an update to the changes with the Montana Memory Project and the recordings of the Legislature. The Research Center staff has made the decision to close January 1, 2023, to prepare for the construction move. She presented the Quarterly Deaccession list.

Ed Jasmin moved to approve the Deaccession List. Ken Robison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Roberta provided information on the request to deaccession the *Butte Women's Protective League Records* and transfer them to the Butte Silver Bow Public Archives.

Ken Robison moved to approve the *Butte Women's Protective League Records* Deaccession. Ed Jasmin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Roberta provided information on the request to change research request and reproduction fees.

Norma Ashby Smith moved to approve the changes to research request and reproduction fees. Ed Jasmin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Roberta spoke about the request to change the name of the Research Center to Library and Archives. Discussion took place.

Bill Jones moved to approve the name change from Research Center to Library and Archives. Jude Sheppard seconded the motion. The motion passed 12-2 with Lorna Kuney and Ken Robison dissenting.

Jennifer Bottomly – O’looney, Museum Program Manager, shared an update on the Museum inventory and packing project. Mount making training was provided for Museum staff, and the creation of muslin coverings for textiles is in process with the assistance of Mary Jane Bradbury. Jennifer shared information about the future Russell and Homeland galleries.

Martha Kohl, Outreach and Information Program Manager, spoke about Kirby Lambert retiring after 36 years with the Montana Historical Society. Martha shared highlights of “*Montana – A History of Our Home*” the new 4th grade textbook and gave an overview of the content. Martha answered questions about the cost of the textbook.

Diane Di Stefano, Publications Manager, shared Publications’ highlights of the winter issue of the magazine and how this women’s issue started two and a half years ago. The spring issue will include part of a celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Yellowstone National Park. The fall direct mailing was successful and *Montana The Magazine of Western History’s* Facebook page is doing very well. The Rose Gordon book will be available this spring. Other upcoming publications include a book on the Custer Creek tragedy; the Baker Massacre; a biography of Willard Frasier; Montana’s First People; as well as others. Diana shared plans to make the magazine available in a digital format. There is a growing number of subscribers and members.

Pete Brown, State Historic Preservation Officer, shared that Frank LaLiberty is the newest Historic Preservation Review Board Member. SHPO has created a Fellowship Program with U of M students based around the SHPO database. Pete spoke about SHPO costs, donations, and funding for specific projects. Damon Murdo, Cultural Records Manager, explained the request to increase file search fees for SHPO.

Ed Jasmin moved to approve the increases to SHPO file search fees. Ken Robison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Denise C. King, Administrator for Central Services Division, reviewed the financial reports. Trustees should contact Jodel if they would like a hard copy of these statements.

Denise asked Trustees to approve the hiring of Martha Kohl, Outreach and Interpretation Program Manager, and Laura Marsh SHPO.

Steve Lozar moved to approve the hires. Norma Ashby Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

Jennifer James and Marty Burnes shared an update on the construction and design of the Montana Heritage Center. Outreach in the last quarter was conducted with agencies; tribal stakeholders and other stakeholder groups; website updates; the City of Helena; Montana State Library Commission for the exterior sensory garden funding; and the surrounding neighborhood. Russ Katherman was unable to join us today, but there are no significant changes to the budget.

Marty shared that construction is moving into the most exciting phase, with the mass of the building beginning to show. Marty explained the construction process and reviewed current site photos. The last beam to be placed will be signed by school children and others from around the state. The interpretive design has been updated and design development reports were submitted in November.

New Business

Jude Sheppard stated that next meeting will potentially be the last meeting for Hal Stearns, Kent Kleinkopf, and Steve Lozar, whose terms end on June 30.

Public Comment

None

Ed Jasmin moved to adjourn the meeting. Norma Ashby Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.



Hal Stearns, President