

# State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2021

The Conference Room at the Montana State Historic Preservation Office

(also via Zoom)

Helena, Montana

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**Review Board (Board) Members Present (all via Zoom):** Dr. Delia Hagen, Carol Bronson, Marcella Walter (Chair), Patti Casne, Jeff Shelden, KellyAnne Terry, Nick Kujawa, Marv Keller

**State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Staff:** Peter Brown, John Boughton, Kate Hampton, Eric Newcombe, Jessica Bush

**Guests (all via Zoom):** Kevin Kooistra, Lora Mattox, John Thorson, Karen Thorson, Anne Grove, Lesley Gilmore, Carol Brooker

**Call to Order-9:00 a.m.:** Marcella Walter (Board Chair) called the meeting to order and read the State Historic Preservation Review Board mission statement.

**Welcome/Introductions-9:04 a.m.:** Ms. Walter requested that the Review Board, SHPO personnel, and guests introduce themselves.

**SHPO Preservation News-9:10 a.m.:** John Boughton briefed the Board about several subjects including:

**Local Preservation/Certified Local Government (CLG):** The Lewistown CLG has been put on probation after failing to submit the required documentation for the program. Lewistown also needs to fill its vacant preservation officer position. Similarly, Red Lodge also currently seeks to fill their preservation officer position, which has sat vacant since the middle of December.

Both Lewistown's and Red Lodge's CLGs failed to spend their federal funds in Federal Fiscal Year 2020 as required by SHPO's agreement with them. Ms. Hampton of SHPO is presently exploring other uses for the funds in other CLG communities.

**Grants: Documenting and Sharing Montana's African American Heritage project:** Ms. Hampton continues to work on the African American Heritage Project with a documentary production and original creative content about historic African American experiences in Montana planned. The preparation of a statewide African American MPD, and National Register nomination is currently being prepared by Dr. Delia Hagen.

**Grants: Revitalizing Montana's Rural Heritage Project:** As mentioned at the previous board meeting, eight projects were selected to receive grants from the "Revitalizing Montana's Rural Heritage Project." Preparation of contracts for the individual projects have been executed. Eric Newcombe, SHPO's Historic Architectural Specialist, assumed the role of managing these grants.

### **Digitizing and Data Cleanup of Cultural Record Files**

Damon Murdo, Cultural Records Manager, continues to guide the management of GIS digitization and data cleanup, work paid for by file search revenue. The work involves digitization and data cleanup of cultural sites in multiple western Montana counties. Mr. Murdo has also finalized a full-text search option of the SHPO database for both forms and reports.

Jolene Keen, the former Cultural Records Assistant, worked on an interactive National Register map for Montana and added new sites from Lewis and Clark County.

**Office Changes:** Ms. Keen resigned her position the beginning of January. SHPO is currently seeking a new cultural records assistant. Renee Erb Kelley was hired to fill the vacant grants manager position. Ms. Kelly received her undergraduate degree from the University of Portland in Arts/History and Music, a Master of Public Administration Certificate in Public Policy from the University of Montana and is currently working on her Masters in Public Administration. She currently serves on the Lewis and Clark Heritage Preservation and Tourism Development Council.

SHPO remains closed to the public due to Covid and is only accessible by appointment.

### **Properties Listed in the National Register Since January 2019**

The Monarch Depot Historic District, Monarch, Cascade County  
The Pugsley Bridge, Liberty County  
The Fratt-Link House, Billings, Yellowstone County  
Billy Miles & Bros. Grain Elevator (the Teslow), Livingston, Park County

### **Potential Upcoming Nominations**

McMaster's Ranch in Broadwater County  
Everson Creek Historic District in Beaverhead County  
Billings Mausoleum, Billings  
"Shaw's Best" Pancake Flour Building, Helena

### **Consideration of National Register nominations-9:15 a.m.**

#### **McKinley School (Billings)**

Kevin Kooistra, the Executive Director at the Western Heritage Center in Billings, said a few words about the preparation of the National Register nomination for the property. The property was presented as significant under criteria A and C.

#### *Questions and Comments from the Review Board:*

- Were any of the architectural drawings located? [None found.]
- The south elevation is battered. Is this specific to the entry only or elsewhere? [Pretty sure its restricted to the entry.]

- Can an image of the 1958 addition be added? [Yes.]
- What does the term “isolation pockets” found in the nomination mean? [Areas where kids congregate.]

Ms. Walter asked for any public comment on the property. No additional comment was given. Mr. Sheldon moved and Ms. Bronson seconded that the nomination with discussed edits be forwarded to the Keeper. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

### **Pioneer Park (Billings)**

The main author of the nomination failed to appear, so a brief overview of the park was made by John Boughton and Kate Hampton of SHPO. Lora Mattox, the local Historic Preservation Officer, discussed the origins of the preparation of the nomination. The property was presented as significant under criteria A and C.

#### *Questions and Comments from the Review Board:*

- How did this nomination result from a Section 106 project? [AT&T planned to erect a new cell tower. The nomination of Pioneer Park served as the mitigation for that project.]
- Why was Pioneer Park chosen for nomination instead of other similar early parks in Billings? [Billings contains several early historic parks, including South Park and North Park. All could be nominated to the National Register. Although the best scenario would have been the preparation of a multiple property submission for all the historic parks of Billings, the mitigation focused on Pioneer Park. The selection of Pioneer park also proved opportune as other National Register nominations near this area were moving forward at the time.]
- Add quotation marks to the word, “pioneer,” in the general text.

Ms. Walter asked for any public comment on the property. None was given. Mr. Keller moved and Dr. Hagen seconded that the nomination with discussed edits be forwarded to the Keeper. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

### **F.M. Mack General Store (Augusta)**

The main author of the nomination was not able to appear, so a brief overview of the property was made by John Boughton and Kate Hampton of SHPO. The property was presented as significant under criteria A and C.

#### *Questions and Comments from the Review Board:*

- Note the interior ceiling has been dropped about 30 inches.
- Any plans to put the original canopy/awning back on? [Not at this time.]
- How was the building moved? [Cut in half and transported.]
- Correct title of photograph on page 42.

- Consistent use of either “Fred” or “Frederick.”
- The word “boy” is repeated on page 18.

Ms. Walter asked for any public comment on the property. None was given. Mr. Keller moved and Mr. Sheldon seconded that the nomination with discussed edits be forwarded to the Keeper. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

**Break-10:05 a.m.**

**Resumption of meeting-10:26 a.m.**

**Paradise School (Paradise)**

John and Karen Thorson, the nominations primary authors, and Carol Brooker, Sanders County Commissioner, discussed the nomination and the future of the school. The property was presented as significant under criteria A and C.

*Questions and Comments from the Review Board:*

- Correct the property name on the National Register photographs.
- Very nice nomination.

Ms. Walter asked for any public comment on the property. None was given. Ms. Casne moved and Ms. Bronson seconded that the nomination with the discussed edit be forwarded to the Keeper. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

**Public Comment-10:46 a.m.**

Ms. Walter asked for any additional public comment. None was given.

**New Business-10:46 a.m.**

The Review Board was reminded to submit their donated hours forms to SHPO.

**Approval of September 2020 minutes:** Ms. Walter called for the approval of the September 2020 review Board meeting minutes. Mr. Keller moved and Ms. Bronson seconded to approve the minutes. The Board unanimously concurred.

**Election of chairperson:** Ms. Walter called for nominations for board chair for 2021 to begin service with the May meeting of the Review Board. Ms. Bronson nominated Ms. Walter to serve a second term. Mr. Keller seconded the motion. No other board members were nominated and nominations closed. The board unanimously concurred in the election of Ms. Marcella Walter as Review Board chair for 2021.

**Selection of time and place of May 2021 Review Board meeting:** The next Review Board meeting was set for May 14 beginning at 9:00 a.m. It is planned to transpire under a Zoom meeting format.

**Discussion of Historic Preservation Awards Ceremony:** The Board was briefed regarding progress on the 2021 awards ceremony. SHPO decided to move forward with a prerecorded ceremony consisting of voice-over commentary above images. The ceremony will celebrate individuals and groups who listed their properties in the National Register in 2019 and 2020 and acknowledge retired review board members during that same period. The ceremony will also recognize people and projects that have contributed to the preservation of Montana's historic resources in a significant way. This year, four awards will be given. These include The Monarch Depot Restoration Project and the Monarch-Neihart Historical Group, inc., the Northwest Montana Chapter of the Forest Fire Lookout Association, the 2019 Montana Legislature's Montana Museums Act of 2020, and the Freedom's Path Project at Fort Harrison, selected as the Governor's Award. This latter award acknowledges the Veterans Affairs staff who facilitated the Freedom's Path Project through which 11 National Register buildings were saved to use as housing for those veterans without.

**Establishment of a programmatic agreement with Department of Administration (DOA)**

A programmatic agreement with the DOA arose from the Heritage Stewardship reporting meetings. Similar agreements are currently in the works with the MT Heritage Commission, Montana State University, University of Montana, and Department of Corrections. SHPO's Eric Newcombe serves as the lead. The agreements identify work items that do not require Antiquities Act review and outline expectations for both SHPO and the agencies.

**The FWP partnership with Rachel Reckin and SHPO.**

SHPO is funding the analysis of Chinese affiliated and precontact (obsidian) artifacts found in Bannack. Information derived from this analysis could substantially increase our knowledge of the Chinese presence in Bannack.

The Chinese affiliated artifacts include coins, opium pipes, tins, and celadon potsherds. University of Montana Anthropology Ph.D. candidate Katie Kolwicz will perform the analysis. Ms. Kolwicz has expertise in Chinese-American artifacts and will identify the objects' approximate date of manufacture, place of origin, and any cultural details. She will also examine Bannack's entire collection of artifacts to determine if other objects have yet-to-be identified Chinese affiliations. Beyond the artifacts, Ms. Kolwicz will examine written records including census, GLO records, mining and homestead claims, historic letters, diaries, newspapers, and pictures to provide a fuller sense of the Chinese presence in Bannack.

The analysis of pre-contact (obsidian) artifacts will include investigations by The Geochemical Research Laboratory in Portola, California to determine the

obsidian's origin. The desirability of obsidian for stone tools use facilitated its trade by precontact people.

**SHPO's increased compliance workload**

SHPO's compliance workload increase of 31% in Federal Fiscal year 2020 equates to a greater workload than ever before. The trend is expected to continue for several reasons including Congress' consideration of funding overdue infrastructure projects, the establishment of the Great American Outdoors Act, and the Department of the Interior's plans for large scale fuels reduction projects.

**Adjourn-11:30 a.m.**

Ms. Shelden moved and Mr. Keller seconded for adjournment of the meeting. The Review Board unanimously concurred.