

MINUTES
MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
July 20, 2017
9:00 A.M. MHS Auditorium
Helena, Montana

CALL TO ORDER

President Bob Brown called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. Joy Lewis took roll call.

Montana Historical Society Board of Trustees members present: Bob Brown, Tom Nygard, Janene Caywood, Kent Kleinkopf, Ed Jasmin, Jim Court, James Utterback, Chuck Johnson, Jude Sheppard, Thomas Minckler, Steve Lozar and Sam Phares.

Excused Board members: Cliff Edwards, Hal Stearns and Crystal Shors,

Staff present: MHS Director, Bruce Whittenberg; MHS Membership Coordinator, Rebecca Baumann; MHS Donor Relations & Marketing Officer; Susan Near, 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 Associate Editor, Randall Williams; MHS Museum Collections Manager, Jennifer Bottomly O'looney.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Ed Jasmin moved approval of the April 20, 2017 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Jim Court and passed unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Bob Brown

Sam Phares introduced himself to the Board.

Bob said that this was his last President's report and that he was honored to serve as the Board President this past year and he felt confident that Tom Nygard would lead MHS forward through these tough times.

Executive Committee Report – Kent Kleinkopf

Kent reported that the committee discussed the impact of SB 261 on the MHS.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Bruce Whittenberg

Bruce reported that this was his 24th Board meeting and the first one that he had to report that MHS was moving backwards due to the devastating budget cuts handed out with HB 2 and SB 261. He said that after weeks of considerable deliberation they made some painful decisions concerning layoffs, reduced staff hours and Program reductions.

The Film archives project is in a great place and the shelving bid will be let soon. The 44th History Conference is taking place September 21-23 in Helena. There is still a future for the Montana Heritage Center but it necessarily will move a few rows back in importance for the time being. There is high confidence that a sponsor can be found for the 2019 Legislative Session to lead another effort for funding the Heritage Center.

He reviewed the HB 2 and SB 261 budget reductions and what effect those reductions will have on MHS.

A total of 24 positions will be impacted by reduced hours, retirement, unpaid leave, change in responsibilities and reduction in force. He summarized program cuts and travel reductions unless the travel expenses are paid by the host. We continue to get good press.

The OGM's exterior projects are complete. The MHS and Montana Restoration Foundation's (formerly the OGM Restoration Society) relationship is changing and evolving due to the MRF's change in focus. Bruce ended by saying that the Legislative budget cuts have been brutal and the decisions heartbreaking but we're in it for the long haul because we can't count on the 2019 legislature being any different.

Much discussion followed about the cuts and how other agencies are affected.

Marketing and Development – Susan Near

Sue reported that the mid-year appeal has netted \$9,500.00 as of July 19 with 95 people contributing. An annual donation of \$1,000.00 was secured through an estate from a former volunteer that will go toward the History Conference. Greg Richardson is working on a book about six generations of his family and he will be donating his author royalties to MHS. She's been working on marketing and continuing the arrangement that MHS has with Northern Broadcasting. Some tourist related tasks were competed with the distribution of brochures around the State. She's been picking up where Tom Cook left off with the Chronicles and will continue them as she can.

MEMBERSHIP – Rebecca Baumann

Rebecca reported that membership continues to grow and that because of some changes in the membership process the report will look different.

Steve Lozar honored and thanked Rebecca and Sue for their dedication and hard work over the many years at the MHS. He has come to appreciate and value their professionalism and the friendship he has developed with them as well and he is sad to see them go.

Bob moved the Committee reports up on the Agenda to facilitate his and Steve Lozar's early departure.

Committee Reports:

Heritage Keeper Awards:

Janene outlined three concerns:

1. In the past nominations for people in a professional field were not necessarily accepted. People were nominating those with an avocational interest that was a personal interest. Her problem comes with how do you evaluate individual nominations for people with professional backgrounds, like architects. How do you judge above and beyond the call for architects? She wondered if we should consider going back to that model.
2. Do we want to go back to a more formal process and have the Board pick candidates at a Board meeting?
3. The nominating form needs to be revised and closely reflect the qualifications statement.

She and Kent will meet in August and have a more formal proposal for the October meeting. Kent added that he would like to see more involvement of the Board in the entire process. They will send out a Board questioner by the end of August or early September.

Bob proposed that the Board make some concessions that match what the staff is going through. He asked that Board members consider foregoing their stipend, travel and/or lodging reimbursement as their contribution toward cutting costs. Denise King will go into it in more depth in her report.

Nominations Committee:

Steve Lozar opened the election process for a new slate of officers. He explained the tradition.

He opened the nomination for MHS Board President and hearing no new nominations he nominated Tom Nygard. The vote was unanimously affirmative for Tom Nygard as President.

He opened nominations for MHS Board Vice-President and hearing no new nominations he nominated Kent Kleinkopf. The vote was unanimously affirmative for Kent Kleinkopf as Vice-President.

He opened nominations for MHS Board Secretary and hearing no nominations he nominated Hal Stearns. The vote was unanimously affirmative for Hal Stearns as Secretary.

Tom Nygard assumes leadership and says how humbled and honored he is by the institution and the people who have served before him. He intends to do all he can to advance the society.

BREAK

RESEARCH CENTER – Motion Action – Molly Kruckenberg

Molly opened with a request for a motion to approve the Deaccession list.

Ed Jasmin made a motion to approve the Deaccession list. Jim Utterback seconded it and the motion passed unanimously.

Molly reported that they were making good progress on the Film Archives project. They hired a new Film Archivist, Kelly Burton, and he started July 1. They expect to have a contract in place by September for the compact storage units and the project completed in October – November. The project is privately funded.

Molly summarized the work that the two Bradley Fellows are doing and the work of the Dave Walter fellow. She reported that Lory Morrow will be retiring on September 15 with 45 years at the MHS.

MUSEUM PROGRAM – Motion Action – Jennifer Bottomly O’looney

Jennifer reported that they had received a loan request from the Lewis & Clark Library but that the Library hadn’t decided on exactly what they wanted so the request will be on the next BOT agenda. They want to borrow some smaller WWI artifacts for an exhibit they will showcase this fall. The Museum is working on a WWI exhibit that will open in November. She mentioned the WWI exhibit and tours that are taking place at the Original Governor’s Mansion. Amanda presented a show and tell of William O’Day’s carved creation of mining equipment that fits into a long-necked bottle that he made in 1955. This carving paid for his stay at Robber’s Roost near Alder Gulch.

OUTREACH AND INTERPRETATION – Kirby Lambert

Kirby talked about the History Conference and getting Michael Punke the author of “The Revenant” as the keynote speaker Thursday night.

Martha reported on the success of the mid-June teacher workshops held at MHS and gave a review of the week-long program.

PUBLICATIONS – Randall Williams

Randall reported that the summer magazine is out and he reviewed the articles. They have started work on the fall issue and he listed the upcoming articles. Their ongoing book projects include a biography of Nelson Story, by John Russell, entitled “The Story of Montana: The Life and Times of Nelson G. Story,” and a book about Railroads. They continue working on the 150th book project and currently have 80 essays.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE – Mark Baumler

Mark reported on the State Antiquities database upgrade completed by Michelle Phair and Damon Murdo. Damon and Michelle were recognized by the chief CIO of ITSD for their work on the project and were presented with awards. Michelle demonstrated the use of the database.

CENTRAL SERVICES – Denise King

Denise reported that she had no Financial report because of Fiscal Year end. The Board will get two reports in October. She explained the process of Board reimbursements and handed out forms for Trustees to sign.

New Business:

The property that was donated by Tom Nygard was discussed. An interested buyer has surfaced. **A motion to sell the property and designate the money for the Heritage Center was made by Jim Utterback and seconded by Jude Sheppard. The motion passed unanimously.**

Bruce asked the Board to consider moving the next meeting date forward to October 26 since he will be out of the country. **A motion to move the date to October 26 was made by Bob and seconded by Kent. The motion passed unanimously.**

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

NEXT BOARD MEETING – October 26, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. - Executive Committee – 8:00 a.m.

Executive Session – began at 11:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

12:00p.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