

**MINUTES**  
**MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**  
**October 26, 2017**  
**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, Janene Caywood, Kent Kleinkopf, Crystal Shors, Ed Jasmin, James Utterback, Chuck Johnson, Thomas Minckler, Steve Lozar and Sam Phares.

**Excused Board members:** Bob Brown, Jude Sheppard, Hal Stearns

**Members not present:** Jim Court, Cliff Edwards

**Staff present:** MHS Director, Bruce Whittenberg; 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 Collections Manager, Jennifer Bottomly O'looney and Curator of Collections, Amanda Streeter Trum.

**REVIEW OF MINUTES**

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

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Tom Nygard**

Tom said that MHS is blessed with a great staff that has met the challenges of all the budget cuts and he praised all of the MHS staff for their hard work.

**Executive Committee Report – Hal Stearns** – no report

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Bruce Whittenberg**

Bruce thanked the Board for their support during the last several months. He provided handouts of the budget cuts MHS has already made and another sheet outlining an additional 10% reduction plan that MHS was required to submit to the Governor's office. He explained that they have received assurances that no further cuts will have to be made but nothing is set in stone. He said that the MHS is moving forward and staying focused on positive aspects of what MHS provides to the public. He highlighted the success of the 44<sup>th</sup> History Conference, Archeology Day on October 5, the Tourism Awards that MHS and Ellen Baumler received, the Film Archives project, the WWI project and upcoming exhibit opening on December 14 and the CMR and the American West PBS film scheduled to air in November.

Kirby showed his O&I program slide/video

Bruce gave an overview of membership services. He handed out a membership report. Denise gave an overview of donations from July through September. We received \$452,000 but of that total \$389,000 came from the Jean Smith Estate and was designated as unrestricted use. The mid-year appeal letter brought in \$24,000 and the total of donations with the mid-year appeal was \$58,000.

Bruce gave an overview of the current budget reductions for MHS. He said that with all the reductions we are seeing a setback of 5 years to the 2013 budget. He stated that MHS got a lot of press coverage about the cutbacks and as a result is getting a lot of donations from concerned constituents who want to see the Historical Society stay alive and thrive.

Bruce reported that we are continuing to focus on the critical issues and will move ahead with the plan. The next Critical Issues Planning meeting is scheduled for December 5. All are welcome to attend. One new critical issue added will be "Recovery."

Bruce praised the staff for motoring through some very tough times and moving forward. He thanked the Board for all their support as well.

Tom Nygard reminded everyone to not lose sight of the bigger picture. MHS has been here for 150 years plus and it's not going away.

## **BREAK**

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

Molly reported that they continue to make good progress on the Film Archives project. The shelving should be installed by the end of the calendar year. She talked about the staffing changes they are dealing with and redistributing the tasks that Lea Solberg used to do. Everyone has picked up new tasks. They are also adjusting to not having Lory Morrow with them anymore because she retired September 15.

Molly requested 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 any money earned from deaccessions goes back in acquisitions. This is set in state statute. In fiscal year 2016 the deaccession earned \$9,160 and in fiscal year 2017 it brought in \$12,776 into the Acquisition Trust. She gave examples of some items purchased with those funds.

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

Jennifer reported that they had received a loan request from the Fred Jones Museum of Art for an exhibit, *Ticket to Ride: Artists, Designers, and Western American Railways*. **A motion was made by Ed Jasmin to approve the loan and seconded by Crystal Shors. The motion was approved unanimously.**

A loan request was received from the CM Russell Museum for a traveling exhibit: *Charles M Russell: The Women in His Life & Art*. **A motion was made by Jim Utterback to approve the loan and seconded by Ed Jasmin. The motion was approved unanimously.**

A loan request was received from the Lewis & Clark Library for some smaller WWI artifacts for an exhibit they will showcase this fall during a series of events about WWI. **A motion was made by Ed Jasmin to approve the loan and seconded by Chuck Johnson. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Amanda Trum presented Big Medicine's 45 caliber pistol, from the Tamms Day gun collection that consists of over 107 plus guns and was gifted to MHS. Big Medicine was from the Crow tribe and was born in 1857 and became a messenger for the US army during the 1876-77 campaign against the Sioux and Cheyenne. He later became the Chief of Police on the Crow reservation. His name is engraved on the pistol. Discussion followed concerning the collection.

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

Kirby talked about their long-term goal to increase attendance and participation by Native American people coming to MHS. His program does a lot of "Indian Education For All" outreach but they want to bring in more people. Their biggest obstacle is finding funding to bring American Indians to MHS. Larry Peterson offered to donate the proceeds of his book to help fund the plan. Kirby, Deb and Martha have been working with Donny Wetzel from the Office of Public Instruction on some ideas. Steve Lozar reported that they might want to consider financial aid provided by the Johnson O'Malley Act.

### **PUBLICATIONS – Molly Holz**

Molly passed around a handout on the Vivian Paladin Award for Best Article. Linda Sargent Wood is the winner of the award this year for her article "We Had to Start Treating Them Like Human Beings," in the Spring 2017 issue of *Montana The Magazine of Western History*. They are also working on *Ties, Rails, and Telegraph Wires: Railroads and Communities in Montana and the West* by Dale Martin and *Treasure State Tycoon: Nelson Story and the Making of Montana* by John Russell.

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

Mark reported they are working on the Montana Historical Preservation five-year plan. The plan outlines the status of historic preservation in Montana and some of the issues and challenges the state faces and also identifies strategies and objectives for improving historic preservation. The summer questionnaire they sent out to get current input for the plan elicited 500 responses. They also used social media. Brad Hansen, SHPO Grants Manager, presented the major take-aways from the questionnaire. Forty-two of Montana's fifty-six counties responded. Discussion followed about perhaps conducting a modified version of the survey yearly.

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

Denise gave some housekeeping updates; membership and the store have been combined and Denise Gjerde left for a job at Commerce. Denise's job was absorbed by Lori Ereth who has taken over payroll processing and Brad Hanson who is helping with the daily deposits. Denise King has taken over the human resources aspect of the job. Faith has been helping the Research Center and working on Social Media and doing some outreach. The Moss Mansion contract is up for renewal this December. She reported on book sales. Denise reviewed the 2017 fiscal year-end financial report and the first quarter financials for FY 2018.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Heritage Keeper Awards restructure report:**

Janene Caywood reviewed the finding and process, and the difficulty of choosing the Heritage Keeper awardees. Much discussion followed. Janene would like the Board to take part in vetting the applications at the April meeting. Everyone would receive the application packets before the meeting for review. She feels that having more people involved would resolve any potential issues of bias. It

was agreed that the packets would be sent to all Board members and two hours would be set aside at the April meeting for the Board to pick the award winners.

Kirby vetted his idea to have the awards presented in the awardees' communities rather than at the History Conference. Discussion followed and the consensus was to consider each year separately depending on each selection.

## **LUNCH**

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS contd**

The meeting resumed at 12:35p.m. with Bruce leading a discussion on the value of the collections. He gave an example of the Tammis Day gun collection that was gifted to MHS and appraised at just under \$500,000.

### **Nomination & Appointment of two additional Executive Committee Members:**

Tom reported that we need to nominate two Board members to the Executive Committee. Denise read the MCA for clarification. Tom will contact Board members to see who might be interested in serving on the committee.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None**

**NEW BUSINESS - None**

**PUBLIC COMMENT – None**

**NEXT BOARD MEETING – January 18, 2018**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**12:55 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*