

MINUTES  
MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
April 16, 2020  
9:00 A.M. MHS AUDITORIUM  
HELENA, MONTANA

CALL TO ORDER

**President** Kent Kleinkopf called the meeting to order a 9:00 a.m. Jodel Fohn took roll call.

**Montana Historical Society Board of Trustees members present via phone, skype, Zoom, or other:** Bob Brown, Cliff Edwards, Ed Jasmin, Chuck Johnson, Kent Kleinkopf, Steve Lozar, Douglas MacDonald, Thomas Minckler, Thomas Nygard, Sam Phares, Sara Scott, Jude Sheppard, Mike Shields, Crystal Wong Shors, Hal Stearns.

**Excused Board members:** None.

**Staff present:**

MHS Director, Bruce Whittenberg; MHS Centralized Services Administrator, Denise King, MHS SHPO Program Manager, Pete Brown, 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, Curator of Collections, Amanda Streeter Trum, Information Technology, Rennan Rieke, Membership Services, Jodel Fohn and Public Information Officer, Eve Byron.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Jude Sheppard moved approval of the January meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Chuck Johnson and passed unanimously.

Director’s Report – Bruce Whittenberg

New employees this quarter are Pete Brown, the new State Historic Preservation Officer, Jodel Fohn, Administrative Assistant to the Director, and Maggie Meredith, Library Technician in the Research Center. Considering the impacts of Covid-19, MHS is doing well and continues to move forward. The leadership team remains in the building while most employees work at home. Working at home can have its challenges, but employees are doing a great job and continue to stay healthy. Social Media is keeping us engaged while at home and in front of our computers. MHS is collecting current information for the future, helping to keep MHS relevant in this time. The Research Center staff including Molly Kruckenberg, Natasha Hollenbach, Chris Gray and Sierra Ross have reached an impressive milestone of over one million newspapers scanned. Rennan Reike, our IT person has done an outstanding job keeping everyone connected and productive while working outside of the building. We do not have any detail on the drop in bed-tax from COVID-19 as of now. Not enough information on how the CARES Act will affect MHS at this time. MHS is slowing our spending. The Heritage Center could be affected but we are on track with planning development.

### **Montana Heritage Center Update – Russ Katherman & Jennifer James**

We are watching the bed tax and moving ahead with more design work, sustainable issues, parking considerations, closing 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and a commissioning agent. RFP's have been sent to contractors and are due at the end of April. Next there will be interview and a selection. The commissioning agent (GCCM – General Contractor/ Construction Manager) assists with the budget and other aspects of construction for the best possible product. The 50% Schematic Designs are in your packet. There is a public meeting at 7:00 pm MST that will be broadcast on public TV April 21 and using a new software Bang the Table. Marty Byrnes said the intent is to have a stake in the ground in November. The site and floor plans were shared and discussed. The application to vacate 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue has been submitted to the City of Helena, Community Development and Planning. So far, there has not been any negative response to closing 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Emergency Services are not concerned.

### **PRESENTATION FROM CURT MINER AND ASSOCIATES**

A presentation was given by Curt Miner and Laura Brehm suggesting some strategic moves and training for fundraising. There needs to be a sustainable and cultural feel of philanthropy with the recommendation to hire a Director of Development.

### **Financial Report**

Denise King presented the financial reports. MHS has slowed on spending due to COVID -19 but remains on track.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Heritage Keepers Award**

All nominees will be emailed to all board members for a phone conference. Thomas Nygard reminded us that we are to keep the awards to two and a possible 3<sup>rd</sup> award is for the Heritage Guardian award.

#### **Motion on approving the first quarter Deaccession list**

Ed Jasmin moved approval of the Deaccession list. The motion was seconded by Steve Lozar and passed unanimously.

#### **Motion to approve the extension of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture borrowing the Montana Federation of Negro Women's Clubs book.**

Bob Brown moved to approve the loan extension. It was seconded by Hal Jacobson. Motion was passed unanimously.

#### **Motion to approve newly hired employees**

Pete Brown, State Historic Preservation Officer  
Jodel Fohn, Director's Assistant

Maggie Meredith, Library Technician, Research Library

It was moved by Chuck Johnson to approve the three new hires and seconded by Jude Sheppard. Motion passes unanimously.

**Committee Reports**

The nominating committee will be comprised of three past presidents, Bob Brown: Chairman, Steve Lozar and Crystal Wong Shores.

**Motion on approving the hiring of a Director of Development**

Steve Lozar moved to proceed with hiring a Director of Development utilizing private funds. Crystal Wong Shores seconded the motion and was passed unanimously.

**Motion on approving Curt Miner and Associates recommendations**

It was moved by Sam Phares to support the direction and fund the \$50,000.00 and seconded by Mike Shields. Motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT - None**

**NEXT BOARD MEETING JULY 16, 2020**

**ADJOURNMENT 11:00 A.M.**