

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
HISTORY COLORADO**

**OCTOBER 15, 2015**

A meeting of the Colorado Historical Society (History Colorado/HC) Board of Directors was held at 8:00 am at the History Colorado Center (HCC) on October 15, 2015. Present were directors Cathey McClain Finlon, Robert Musgraves, Ann Pritzlaff, Chris Tetzeli and Tamra Ward. Rick Pederson participated by phone. Staff attending was Steve Turner. Also attending was Ed Ellis and Patty Calhoun, Westword Magazine. Sherry Lestina served as recording secretary.

Ann Pritzlaff, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:07 am and confirmed the presence of a quorum. She welcomed the newest board member, Chris Tetzeli, and thanked him for spending time here on October 9<sup>th</sup> meeting with Bob Musgraves and Steve Turner and learning about HC.

The order of items on the agenda was changed to accommodate the action items.

**Approval of State Preservation Plan:** Turner explained that the original plan was drafted 10 years ago and the board is now being asked to approve the 5 year update. He supplied a summary of the updated plan (Exhibit A) which shows some of the accomplishments to date. The Preservation Plan has been reviewed and approved by the Archaeology and Historic Preservation Committee. After approval by the HC board, it will be sent to the National Park Service for their approval. Musgraves moved, seconded by Finlon, the approval of the updated State Preservation Plan. The motion carried.

Turner was asked how the plan is disseminated after it is approved. He stated that there are a number of other partners that assisted in compiling this plan and that after NPS approval, the plan will be sent to all partners, put online, and on social media. Ward suggested that the plan also be provided to the legislators as it shows HC in a very favorable light.

Finlon brought up using the plan as a starting point for structure across the state as it identifies underserved areas, that it could possibly show areas for potential exhibits and maybe provide some archaeological information to be added to existing exhibits. This could aid in making a better connection between preservation and history.

2016 is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Preservation Act. SHF and OAHP are planning programming around the anniversary. Information will be provided at a later date.

**Transition Team Update:** Musgraves, Turner and Pritzlaff met with the Lt. Governor to give him an update on HC's progress. The originally projected loss for FY16 was \$2.2M. After staff and budget reductions, the loss is now expected to be \$1.2M. FY17 is anticipated to break even. \$250K has been built into the FY16 budget and \$150K into the FY17 budgets as contingency funds. No additional dollars have been set aside for exhibits, although there are still some capital campaign funds available, if necessary. They received positive feedback from the Lt. Governor as to HC's progress. Also, HC has received an invitation from the Governor to participate in a conference of "highly performing government agencies".

Pritzlaff thanked Musgraves and Turner for their job, as it has been painful. Eleven staff took voluntary retirement, eleven were laid-off and six were reduced to part-time. Approximately 4000 hours of voluntary furlough will be taken. The staff is now reduced from 134 to 107.

Musgraves and Turner met with all the division directors for a planning day. They listed all the things HC does. They then listed how many of those things we have to do by law, contract or other requirement, additional things that we should do, but are not required, and how do we accomplish all of these tasks. The division directors believe we have sufficient staff to achieve all these items. The community museums, collections, education, exhibits, development and marketing divisions are being encouraged to view themselves as a cross-functional working team responsible for the development exhibits (known as the “Blue Team” because of appearances on the org chart).

To aid in accomplishing these many tasks, Turner and Musgraves have developed a priority list (Exhibit B) to show the items HC staff need to be working on. These will be updated at upcoming board meetings as projects are completed and new projects added.

Musgraves and Turner met with the community museum directors. The directors gave a presentation outlining who they are and what they would like to do. They expressed concern over having been ignored in the past and stated they need support from Denver and want to work with HC, but need a better system for collaboration and a way to make outlying organizations a part of the whole.

Turner then spoke about the “holiday pop-up exhibit” and the meeting that will be held next week. This exhibit will require \$10K to build and \$40K for marketing. This exhibit will be a public relations exercise to showcase our collections and highlight Colorado history. Alisa Zahller will review the exhibits to be shown and Kelly Williams will speak about the marketing and communication strategies at next week’s meeting. HC would like to have someone of prominence “unveil” each mini-exhibit. Finlon moved, seconded by Ward, to approve spending \$10K to build the cases necessary for this exhibit.

Musgraves, Turner and Finlon met with Christoph Heinrich from the Denver Art Museum. Heinrich gave them some good advice about how to broaden core audiences, processes for developing exhibits using staff from all different divisions to give the exhibit a broad viewpoint, using collaborative spaces, and opportunities for collaboration going forward with the DAM. The DAM is also looking for some space to store some items, which HC may be able to provide. Finlon also requested the Denver Botanic Gardens give HC some suggestions for the landscaping. She also suggested that Denver Water should be considered a sponsor for some xeriscape landscaping.

**CEO Search:** The committee met last week to review six proposals from search firms, determine the budget, and determine the key characteristics of a museum leader. Phone calls and in-person meetings will be scheduled to speak with leaders in Colorado and across the nation, both inside and out of the museum industry, to help define these characteristics. Therefore, the proposals from the search firms will be tabled temporarily until this research is completed.

**Foundation:** Continued conversations are being held to better understand the Foundation’s role with HC. Ward had lunch with Foundation director, Lane Ittelson, to discuss the role of the Foundation. Musgraves and Turner had conversations with two CHF board members asking if they thought CHF could be moved to a fundraising foundation. The CHF board members said that while it was possible, they were not confident the existing board would want to move that direction. CHF is currently working on a new strategic plan. Having a separate foundation gives donors the perception that they are not giving to the State of Colorado, but are giving to History Colorado instead. It was suggested that someone speak with Steve Winesett at the

Children's Hospital Foundation to get his perspective. The board will continue research and talking with the CHF board. Musgraves will draft a letter asking the Foundation to consider the board's ideas and give us a decision as to whether or not they have any interest in proceeding to discuss the possibility.

**State Historian:** Pritzlaff is continuing her conversations with Dr. Patty Limerick about becoming the State Historian. The agreement is still in negotiation and was approved by The Center of the American West board in spirit. The arrangement would provide great collaboration between CU, The Center of the American West and HC. It would also give HC access to PhDs in history. This will probably be a three year term appointment. The agreement will specify the number of exhibits to be worked on, lectures, articles, etc. Two PhD candidates will be working with HC, one of them will be housed here and HC will pay one-quarter of his/her salary. The other candidate will be at CU but doing some HC work. Dr. Limerick will be a consultant to HC and will act as a part of the exhibits development group ("Blue Team").

**Revenue Strategies:** Ed Nichols is working on the fundraising for Ute Indian Museum (UIM). Nichols, Turner and Burlile met with Rep. Coram as the museum is in his district. Rep. Coram provided a list of prospect names and said that he would help with introductions to these potential donors. KM is interested in setting up some events in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor gallery. Changing rental priorities need to have stop and start times, as the gallery will be needed as exhibit space also. Pritzlaff urged the board to get directly involved in helping develop some strategies around raising revenue. Attendance and community participation are the most important items.

**Advisory Councils:** Turner and Holly Norton (State Archaeologist) are staff leads on the Preservation Council. Burlile, Williams, Rutherford, Phelps and DiPrince are the staff leads on the Museum Operations Council. The Museum Ops group will work with board members to have a broad discussion about where we see HC going, then staff can form ideas and present to board. An exhibit policy is needed for the process of selection. The Museum Ops council can help with the formation of the exhibit concept and fundraising.

**Other Business and Adjournment:** There being no further business to come before the Board of Directors, the meeting was adjourned at 10:06 am.