



History Colorado
Board of Directors Meeting
November 15, 2017
Minutes

The Board of Directors of History Colorado (a/k/a The Colorado Historical Society) (“HC”) met on November 15, 2017, at 8:00am, at History Colorado Center (Denver). Present were directors Marco Abarca, Cathy Carpenter Dea, Cathey Finlon, Bob Musgraves, Ann Pritzlaff, Alan Salazar, and Tamra Ward. History Colorado staff in attendance were Steve Turner, Kathi Grummel, Shannon Haltiwanger, Kelly Williams, and Michelle Zale. Also attending were volunteers Mavis Kacena, Margaret Conable, and Ed Ellis. Dianne Brown served as recording secretary.

Bob Musgraves, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:04am and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

Chair:

- The minutes of the September 27, 2017 meeting were approved without change.
- State Historical Society of Colorado Bylaws – Musgraves reminded the board that it had previously decided to implement term limits for directors, but concluded that it was not an appropriate time to pursue a statutory change through the legislature because of other pending legislative matters. Consequently, the decision was made to create an “internal” term limit through a change to the bylaws. This provision would express the desire of the board in this regard, but would not actually be binding on the Governor. The board was furnished with a copy of the proposed bylaw change, which provided that “that no existing member be reappointed if such reappointment would result in such member’s serving in excess of three consecutive full terms of three years each.” Additional changes were proposed to conform the bylaws to the statutory changes made earlier in the year with respect to the appointment of the board by the Governor. On motion duly made and seconded, the proposed bylaw modifications were approved.

Executive Director:

- Personnel Updates – Turner provided an update on recent vacancies and reported that he has become aware of how understaffed HC is as he visits other museums. His short term focus is on immediate staffing needs. Salazar asked for clarification on Steve’s overall direction in filling these vacancies. Turner noted that he is looking to staff the organization in a way that makes sure we have the capability of striking a good balance between offerings aimed at families, which was a very heavy focus of prior leadership, and offerings aimed at other segments of our core audience. Musgraves feels that anytime we have an opening, we need to resist the temptation to simply “replace in kind,” and instead take a hard look at how the position might be reshaped to better drive our overall strategic direction.

- Kathi Grummel introduced Carson Maczuzak who will work on memorials, tributes and planned giving. Turner noted that exhibit sponsors CSU & Boettcher will be our models for corporate sponsorship going forward. Dea asked if CSU plans to move any of their events or exhibits to HC. Turner replied that CSU will have a few events at HC, including their 150th anniversary exhibit on the 2nd floor in 2020. In addition, there will be CSU Day pep rallies. The Borderlands exhibit in Pueblo is a partnership with CSU Pueblo. Pritzlaff stated her view that we need an HC footprint in Ft. Collins.
- SHF Grant Applications – Turner presented the list of approved and unapproved SHF Grant Applications. As is standard practice, staff has offered to assist the five unapproved applicants with rewriting/elaborating the applications so they can resubmit with an improved chance for future funding. On motion duly made and seconded, the proposed grants recommended for funding were approved (Musgraves abstained with respect to any grants applied for by Colorado Preservation, Inc. because of his conflict of interest).
- Archaeology & Historic Preservation Committee (AHPC) – The proposed charter for the AHPC was approved by the board at the last meeting. However, the terms of the initial committee members were not specifically discussed. Musgraves proposed that the initial terms expire on June 30, 2019 to coincide with the organization’s regular fiscal year. On motion duly made and seconded, the change was approved.
- Pritzlaff asked Turner to discuss the tax credit issue. Steve reported that there is a misunderstanding that is creating a bit of headache for HC staff and at the Department of Revenue. The old historic preservation credit program limits the use those credits during periods of low State revenue growth; however, those same limitations do not apply under the newer tax credit program. This difference is creating confusion. Salazar offered to reach out to the new executive director at Revenue.
- Turner thanked those Board members who were able to make the recent board member trip to the Pueblo Community Museum. Ward said she gained a better understanding of how much of an anchor the Pueblo museum is in the community.
- Turner noted that he had learned recently that our facility in Trinidad had received a very small sponsorship from a marijuana-related company in Trinidad for the Museum’s gardens. This prompts him to raise the issue of HC’s generally seeking and taking sponsorships from the marijuana industry with the board to get its position on the question. Salazar pointed out that that the State had made this a legal activity in the State, so in that regard it is no different than any other legal business. However, Ward questioned whether we might potentially jeopardize our Federal funding by accepting marijuana monies since marijuana remains illegal under Federal law. Pritzlaff asked whether the Governor’s Office has taken a position on the issue. The board decided that we should not pursue funding from the marijuana industry for the time being, but would be prepared to reassess the issue down the road as the industry, and particularly its status under Federal law, evolves.
- Turner reported that after getting a green light from the Governor’s Office, HC is continuing to pursue legislative action to provide General Fund support to cover any incremental increase in

HC's annual charges from the Office of Information Technology (OIT). The Department of Natural Resources sought and received similar funding in the past. HC OIT costs last year were \$400K; this year it will be \$700K. We continue to look at ways in which we can reduce this cost, including a formal separation from OIT (which would also require legislative approval).

- Turner has created a new Innovation Fund intended to support future exhibit development. He is soliciting Fund donors who will agree to provide a total of \$100K over a four-year period, with an overall Fund goal of \$1M. He reported that HC has already received a commitment for the first \$100K.
- Kelly Williams provided an overview of the Marketing & Education Department. Her primary goal is to build trust, increase communication, commitment and collaboration among her team. They are working to create “unique HC experiences” and are exploring exhibitions, happenings and other similar events.
- George Sparks, President & CEO of the Denver Museum of Nature & Science, joined the meeting. He had been invited by Steve to talk to the HC board about his own museum's strategic planning experience and, in particular, the role of his board in that process. He discussed the steps and progress that DMNS has made under his leadership. Sparks reported that it has been a 13 year journey of strategic planning. One significant improvement was bringing the community and the community's needs and perspectives into the process, which has greatly contributed to the DMNS success. His board consists of community leaders with a passion for science who can introduce people who may be interested in partnering with the museum in fundraising, governing or providing resources. In addition, having a monthly rotating board member lunch with a curator has been invaluable in connecting his board with what is going on at the museum.
- Financials – Turner reviewed the financials. HC remains in a good financial position.
- Colorado! - Cathey Finlon reported that there are now 31 Colorado! members. The goal for growing Colorado! in 2019 is 60 members and \$150,000 annually for exhibitions and programs (\$2500 x 60). She asked board members to think of additional potential Colorado! members and to send any names to Cheyenne Johnson.
- Advisory Board – Musgraves reminded that there had been discussion about creating an advisory council to help with the strategic planning process. Kathi Grummel distributed and discussed an article about the distinction between an advisory board and a regular board of directors. Turner suggested that the HC board and staff come up with a list of people who might be approached about joining such a group. Abarca asked whether, instead of (or maybe in addition to) creating an advisory council, we might want to consider seeking an expansion of the regular board of directors from 9 to something like 12 or 15. Musgraves liked the suggestion since it would avoid creating another layer of governance that would require supervision and could potentially conflict with the existing board. Dea supports doing both. The advisory board can be more creative and not on the record like the HC Board is. Salazar thinks an advisory board might serve as more of a community connection. Turner suggested that the advisory board work on the strategic plan only. Pritzlaff suggested starting with a strategic plan advisory

council that could morph into an advisory board. Grummel recommended approaching people who bring a particular needed skillset/experience. Turner will call each HC board member to get further thoughts and input.

- Other business – Musgraves suggested that we move future meetings from two hours to three hours. He feels that two hours isn't sufficient to get through regular business and also spend time on more strategic issues. The board agreed. Future 2018 meeting dates will be modified to be from 8-11am.
- Turning back to the subject of strategic planning, Musgraves suggested that we have the staff develop some initial thoughts around mission, vision and values and report back to the board in January. Turner is planning to hold a staff leadership retreat in December and will begin working on those items.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Directors, the meeting was adjourned.