



History Colorado  
Board of Directors Meeting  
September 26, 2018  
Minutes

The Board of Directors of History Colorado (a/k/a The Colorado Historical Society) (“HC”) met on September 26, 2018, at 8:00am, at History Colorado Center (Denver). Present were directors Marco Abarca, Cathy Carpenter Dea, Cathey Finlon, Bob Musgraves, Rick Pederson, Chris Tetzeli and Tamra Ward. History Colorado staff in attendance were Steve Turner, Dawn DiPrince, Kathi Grummel, Jason Hanson, Shannon Haltiwanger, Tim Stroh and Michelle Zale. Also attending was Volunteer Council President Judy Durzo and volunteers Mavis Kacena and Margaret Conable. Dianne Brown served as recording secretary.

Bob Musgraves, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:02am and confirmed the presence of a quorum. He noted that this was the last meeting for which he would serve as chair. Cathey Finlon will assume that role with the November meeting. He thanked the group for the opportunity to serve as chair. The July minutes were approved.

Executive Director Update - Turner invited the Board to the Opening Reception on Dec. 7 for Written on Land Ute Stories Exhibition. There will be a pre-reception at 5pm with the Colorado Historic Foundation Board and History Colorado Board followed by the Opening Reception at 6pm in the Colorado Room. There is a new Board orientation scheduled for October 22 at 11:30am. Turner invited Board members to join new members for lunch around 12:30pm. In addition, that evening is our Colorado! event at the Governor’s Mansion. We expect that the Governor will discuss thoughts about his term and share his vision for the future for History Colorado. The State Historians Council have also been invited to the October 22 event.

Turner also reported that the State Historians Council held its first meeting. The meeting was very positive and focused mostly on orientation. Council members discussed their thoughts on the future of History Colorado. The Council would like to be effective at serving the entire state. Tom Noel is keen on taking steps to improve the content of Heritage magazine. The Council is going to conduct a student essay competition with the essays judged and the winner selected by the Council. The winning essay will be published in Heritage

We are close to signing the agreement regarding the Governor’s Mansion collection with Boettcher. Those items are technically part of the HC collection, but do not fit into our collection strategy because many require periodic refurbishment and restoration for which we do not have the necessary funds or skills. Boettcher will become responsible for taking care of the inventory that is deaccessioned (sofa, tables, and other items that wear with use).

Larimer Square has made a proposal to redevelop portions of the historic district in ways that would require modification of the landmarking ordinance governing the area. Preservationists have concerns this could create issues in other historic districts and have submitted a letter opposing the proposal. SHPO is concerned and wants the Board to be aware of this. Dea needs more information due to her

potential conflict. Musgraves reminded the Board that it had previously agreed to defer to staff technical expertise on this and other technical preservation decisions so that they remained technical preservation decisions and did not get politicized at the Board level. Finlon asked where the preservation staff stands on the issue? Turner stated that the proposal includes modifying current zoning code to add additional buildings, modify height and density restrictions, and other issues impacting the historic district. If this goes through, the concern is that no historic district in Denver would truly be protected any longer. These proposed changes in Larimer Square also mean that the property would no longer be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because only the facades would be historic.

Attention turned to History Colorado's proposed communications plan. At the next Board meeting, Turner will present an update on HC's media approach. We are looking to more actively and aggressively market all of the positive things going on at History Colorado. In addition, the October SHF grant round will break the \$300 million dollar mark (since inception). We hope the Governor will speak at a celebration of the occasion.

The Governor's Office is considering a change to the formula for distributing State taxes on limited gaming that would allow History Colorado to keep a larger portion of the taxes. This will not affect distributions to other programs that receive gaming funds, but will reduce the amount of gaming funds that flow back into the General Fund. Steve reminded the Board that Amendment 50, which expanded the program of limited gaming and apportioned a share of the funds to the Community Colleges, placed a 3% annual growth cap on the share going to preservation. Currently the increasing costs associated with preservation programs must come out of History Colorado's share of gaming funds or its earned revenue, reducing the ability of Museums to spend funds on Museum-related activities (including revenue-generating activities). This cap has meant that over the last ten years, that while the average annual increase in gaming taxes has been 1.38%, the annual growth in the share coming to History Colorado has been only 0.24%. Turner will keep the Board apprised on the status of this item.

Philanthropy update – Grummel presented the Philanthropy dashboard for Period 12 (June), noting that total fundraising for FY18 ended at \$2.2M compared with \$1.2M in FY 17. In addition, \$500,000 has been raised already in Period 1 (July). She thanked the Board for approving the new Major Gifts position. Cheyenne Johnson has been promoted into this new position and has already closed a \$100K donation to the Directors Innovation Fund. Turner and the Board congratulated Philanthropy team.

Comprehensive Campaign – Grummel discussed a proposed “comprehensive campaign” which would include raising funds for both capital and operating needs. Anticipated needs through 2024 total around \$24-34M. She sought feedback on the notion of conducting a feasibility study for such a campaign. Finlon thinks this may be getting ahead of Dan Ritchie's strategic planning effort. Grummel sees this as a consultant helping and working closely with Dan and Steve on strategic planning. Finlon believes we ought to be planning our vision first through the strategic planning effort and then turning attention to the funds needed to support that vision. In her view, it is critical that the Board be fully behind any such campaign and that may be the case only if it is fully behind the vision that is developed. Dea asked what this feasibility study would answer. Grummel sees this as a third party interviewing key stakeholders on the will of the people (what's important to you?, why would you not invest again?, etc.) It may be helpful for Grummel to be on the Strategic Planning Committee in order to better understand the vision and the fundraising needs. Finlon thinks the feasibility study would be premature at this point, but will go along with what Board wants to do.

Pederson would like to understand what the expected \$65K cost of a feasibility study would cover. Grummel sees the consultant in the office 2-3 days a week for 6-8 weeks interviewing key stakeholders. The consultant's role would be to help answer questions like whether the prospect pool is deep enough; help coordinate with other cultural institutions so we aren't all in the fundraising market at the same time; suggesting campaign options and timing; etc. Pederson suggests that HC and the Board take on the feasibility study directly itself. He believes that we personally know the people we are likely to want to reach out to and Board could help identify prospects and have those conversations first hand. Abarca doesn't believe we need consultants to tell us we need more money. He urges letting the needs of the Museums drive us, not necessarily what a consultant may tell us. Musgraves notes that one benefit of hiring a consultant is that prospect screening then becomes that person's job rather than something that gets done only as Board and Staff time permit. Turner wants to rethink this one with staff and come back to the Board at an upcoming meeting.

Crowdfunding Campaign – Grummel reported that on October 9, HC is kicking off a Crowdfunding Campaign to help with the conservation of artifacts. She thanked the Abarca Family Foundation for providing a \$10K match on funds raised. She asks everybody to go online in the first two days of the campaign and make some type of donation or create a team in order to help stir activity and interest.

Strategic Planning -- Dan Ritchie joined the Board to discuss the strategic planning effort. His desire is to be sure these efforts fully align with the Board's own thinking and sense of direction. To be useful, he will need to do some further homework to understand everything going on at the organization and its needs. He would like to hear from the Board on what we are doing and what should be done. He sees this as a joint mission, and his role is to be a useful adjunct to the Board. We need people on the Strategic Planning Committee with credibility within State government, as we may need to ask for additional funding or permissions from the Legislature. Consequently, he proposes to hold off until after the November election before actually building the Committee.

Finlon thinks this effort is critical to the organization's long-term future and helping to solve embedded challenges History Colorado can't seem to overcome. Fresh eyes may help Board find new pathways. Dea thanked Dan for being a part of this; we appreciate his time and commitment; would love to help figure out how to reinvigorate past and future donors and decide how we engage them and ignite statewide interest in History Colorado. She notes that the Board is willing to move this forward with Ritchie's help.

Ritchie commented that his strategic planning experiences at DCPA and DU were always team efforts with the boards involved. Those efforts resulted in major changes, both apparent and not as apparent. We have to set our sights high in order to become terrific. The DPCA team started with struggles and debt, but developed trust and teamwork to move forward and fix things.

Musgraves sees this group as an extension of the Board—it takes a larger group to develop a broader vision and do fundraising around that vision. This group will be an extension to help develop that vision and pull together something exciting that we can sell.

Musgraves commented that it is essential this Board stay in lockstep with the strategic planning effort, moving in the same direction and at the same speed.

Ritchie asked the Board to think about who would be good persons to serve on the Committee. This is not going to be a quick process; DU process took 2 years to work through. Ritchie cautioned that we need to take the amount of time needed to do it right. He plans to visit other museums and with community groups to help develop a better sense of the proper direction.

Finlon asked Ritchie if he sees this as a group of 10-12 with reach into a variety of communities? He replied yes – this will require lots of orchestration to accomplish.

Ritchie mentioned his work with the Building A Better Colorado effort, which held community meetings throughout the State. One lesson learned in that effort was that a surprising number of people do understand our problems and want to do something about it. They just are not sure how to take steps to fix them. One surprising outcome from those meetings was that the votes in Boulder and Colorado Springs were nearly identical despite the political differences between the two communities).

Dea asked Ritchie how long before we are hosting meetings on the Western Slope? Ritchie believes this wouldn't be until sometime after the first of the year in order to allow time to pull everything together and get organized. He would like to think about the possibility of having regional groups to advise the Committee.

Atrium presentation – Mike Wallace with Falcon Creative Group and Darren Morgan with Z21, presented the most recent atrium redesign concept. The three driving tenets in preparing the design concept were people, places and promises of Colorado. Turner commented that he is seeking the Board's overall reaction to the concept as opposed to the specifics. Finlon commented that she thought it is gorgeous. She asked if the content development comes thru HC or Falcon? Mike responded that anybody who understands content and interpretation could do it. Finlon asked if there is a yearly operating budget? Mike replied it is expected to be roughly \$39K/year, but that number could go down depending on certain factors.

Abarca questioned the adequacy of the building's electrical supply. Darren indicated they would evaluate and address. Dea commented that this is exciting, but technology changes. She asked how we could keep things fresh without having to invest an additional \$7M? Mike replied that the concept is that we are building a canvas that allows for future content change. Abarca was concerned that this is just "razzle dazzle." He asked if this is really what we are going for and whether it essential to what we are trying to do as an organization? Turner agreed that it is somewhat "razzle dazzle," but it also provides a visitor introduction to the Museum and the State's history that we don't currently have, as most history museums do. Mike noted that this sort of technology is becoming more and more commonplace in spaces like this--National Geographic has an exhibit in Times Square and the Kennedy Space Center has a 7 minute show with powerful media content. Musgraves is nervous about being an early adopter when it comes to the kinetic sculpture. Pederson questions the kinetic "wow factor." Turner indicated he will send the link to the video to the Board as the sound quality in the room didn't do it justice. He believes we need something like this to innervate the space that is otherwise pretty dead. Dea was previously excited about the virtual reality potential (e.g., climbing Pikes Peak) and this design concept doesn't have any of that. How much and how often will content need to change to keep people engaged? Haltiwanger replied that it all comes down to how much future funding is applied to keeping the content new and exciting.

The Board was generally supportive in concept and encouraged Turner to carry on with the development of a firmer proposal.

Financials – Zale provided FY2018 recap. We ended the last fiscal year with net of \$522,790. Dea asked for a breakout on which exhibits are being visited and by how many guests.

El Pueblo – DiPrince reported on the El Pueblo campus partnership with the City of Pueblo. She showed an aerial overview of the campus and the areas owned by History Colorado and the City. The City owns the area of the El Pueblo archaeology dig that has been largely dormant for 15 years. Master Planning

for the City of Pueblo has recommended that the City give this property to History Colorado. The City has proposed transfer of that space (except for the parking lot) and is eager to move forward. Turner would like Board to approve taking ownership. Finlon asked DiPrince if she has any concerns with proposal; DiPrince replied no. Musgraves asked why the parking lot is not included; DiPrince replied that she isn't sure why it wasn't included. She notes that there is still lots of work to do on the archaeological dig, as they have only uncovered down to portions of the 1910 hotel that was on site. Musgraves asked again whether we see any downsides to taking on the property, DiPrince doesn't see any. Finlon moved to accept the conveyance of the property; Dea seconded; motion passed.

State register properties – Turner reminded the Board that properties proposed for addition to the State Register are reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Board and finally by the HC Board for approval. HC is not involved in approving properties proposed for the National Register Turner reviewed the four properties currently being proposed for the State Register. Finlon moved to include the four properties nominated on the State Register; Dea seconded; motion passed.

Hart Award nominations –Turner reminded the Board that staff first reviews nominations for the Hart Award and then makes a recommendation to the SHPO. From there, it goes to the Archaeology and Historic Preservation Committee and then finally to the HC Board. Finlon moved to approve the proposed nominee; Tetzeli seconded; motion passed. Musgraves abstained from voting because he is on the board of Colorado Preservation, Inc.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.